



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



Government
Statistical Service

Statistical Digest of Rural England:

2 - Housing

September 2026





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Cover photos

		Ward 2021	Rural-Urban Classification 2021
TL	Helmsley marketplace	Helmsley	Larger rural: Further from a major town or city
TC	Horton-in-Ribblesdale train station with Penyghent behind	Settle & Penyghent	Smaller rural: Further from a major town or city
TR	St Giles Church, Skelton	Rural West York	Larger rural: Nearer to a major town or city
CL	Fishing Boat, Marske-by-the-Sea with Hunt cliff in the distance	St Germain's; Saltburn	Larger rural: Nearer to a major town or city
CR	Thornton Force Waterfall, Ingleton Waterfalls Trail	Bentham & Ingleton	Smaller rural: Further from a major town or city
BL	Farmer working the fields in Knapton	Rural West York	Smaller rural: Nearer to a major town or city
BC	Remote pub at Ribbleshead viaduct	Bentham & Ingleton	Smaller rural: Further from a major town or city
BR	Glamping pod in the North York Moors	Pickering	Larger rural: Further from a major town or city

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.

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

Appendix 1 shows the sub-themes within each of the 8 Digest reports. Thematic reports will be updated individually and not every report will be updated every month. The most recent updates for this theme are shown in Table 1. In September 2026, some subsections have been split, as indicated in Table 1; this table also shows the most recent updates. 'Additions to affordable housing', 'Households on local authority housing registers', 'Second homes', and 'Empty homes' contain new analysis.

Table 1: Update monitor for Housing subsections

where "✓" indicates the topic has been updated, "✗" indicates the topic has not been updated, and "New" indicates a new topic with analysis not previously included within the Digest. 'Split' indicates a new topic with analysis previously included within another subsection in the Digest.

Section	Nov 2023	Jul 2024	Jun 2025	Sep 2025	Jul 2026	Sept 2026
Housing stock characteristics from the census						Split
Housing stock characteristics from the EHS						Split
Additions to the housing stock						✗
Additions to affordable housing						Split
Households on local authority housing registers						Split
Second homes						Split
Empty homes						Split
Homelessness	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Home ownership						Split
Private rental market						Split
Housing quality						✗
Land use change for housing	New	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗

Official Statistics

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

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

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

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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. Table 2 identifies the geography and classification used for each section.

Table 2: Geographies used within subsections of the Housing report

For the specified geography, the ‘boundary year’ has been presented in brackets. Shorthand has been used in this table: ‘OA’ represents Census Output Areas; ‘WPCon’ represents Westminster Parliamentary Constituencies; ‘LA’ represents Local Authorities. ‘England’ indicates data are from a survey sample. ‘RUC21’ represents the 2021 Census-based Rural-Urban Classification, whilst ‘RUC11’ represents the older 2011 Census-based classification. ‘EHS’ refers to the classification used within the English Housing Survey.

Section	Geography	Classification
Housing stock characteristics from the census	OA (2021)	RUC21
Housing stock characteristics from the EHS	England	EHS
Additions to the housing stock	LA (2024)	RUC21
Additions to affordable housing	LA (2024)	RUC21
Households on local authority housing registers	LA (2025)	RUC21
Second homes	LA (2025)	RUC21
Empty homes	LA (2025)	RUC21
Homelessness	LA (2024)	RUC21
Home ownership	LA (2024); WPCon (2024)	RUC21
Private rental market	LA (2024)	RUC21
Housing quality	England	EHS
Land use change for housing	OA (2021)	RUC11

Housing

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

- characteristics of the existing housing stock has two chapters: the first is for information from the Census (Section A) and the second is for information from the English Housing Survey (Section B)
- additions to the housing stock, including housebuilding and other changes (Section C)
- additions to affordable housing (Section D)
- households on local authority housing registers (Section E)
- homes not in use by local residents because they are second homes (Section F) or empty homes (Section G)
- people who are homeless, in priority need or “sleeping rough” (Section H)
- the housing market has been split into home ownership (Section I) and the private rental market (Section J)
- housing quality (Section K)
- land use change statistics for new residential addresses (Section L)

A. Housing stock characteristics from the Census

There are proportionally more rural homes that are detached and or in private ownership than in urban areas.

Housing stock characteristics from the Census - key findings

A higher proportion of detached houses and proportionally fewer flats in rural areas

- In the 2021 Census, 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.
- 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.

A higher proportion of home-owners in rural areas

- In the 2021 Census, proportionally more rural households owned their homes outright than urban households, at 44% and 30% respectively. However, the proportion of households owning their homes with a mortgage or loan was similar between rural (30%) and urban (29%) areas.

A lower proportion of social housing in rural areas

- The more rural the settlement type, the lower the proportion of households in the social rent sector, corresponding to just 8% of households in smaller rural settlements.

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.

In the 2021 Census, there were just under 23.4 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. The more rural the area, the higher the proportion of households who own their home outright, and the lower the proportion of people in the private or social rent sectors. Within rural settlements, it was more common for households in remote areas to own their homes outright compared with those nearer to major towns or cities.

Housing stock by type in the 2021 Census

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 around 23.4 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 22% of residential properties, with no change from 2011 to 2021.

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 detached and semi-detached properties were equally common, both representing 35% of the housing stock. 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, Census 2021 (Note A-1, Note A-2)

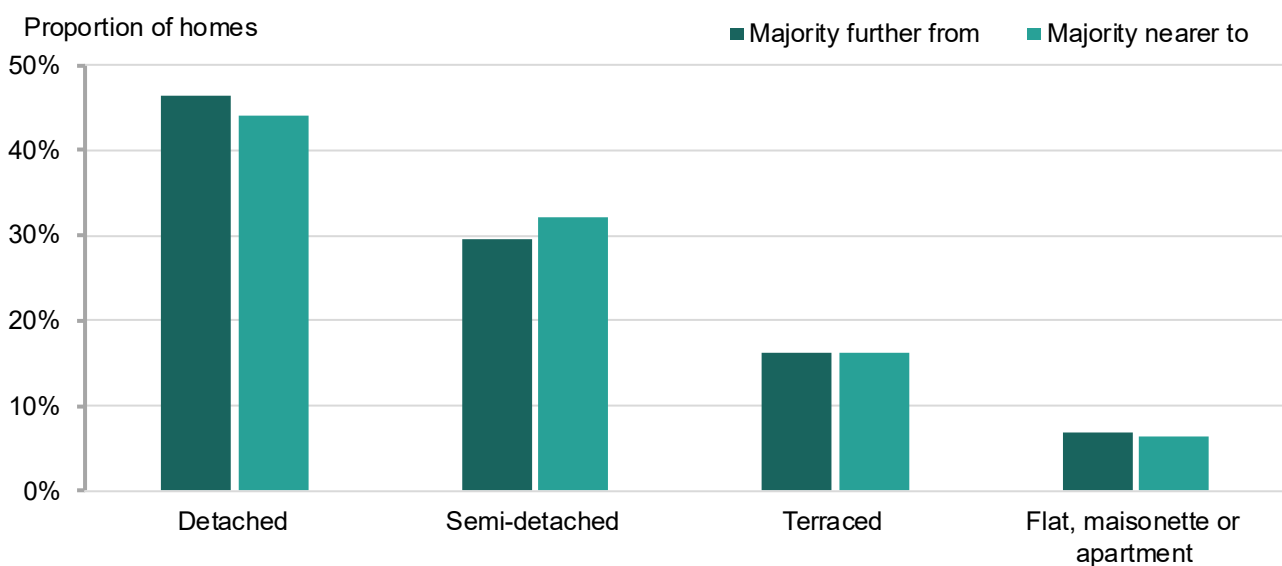
The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns. The clusters are presented in order of rurality with the most rural on the left and most urban on the right.



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, Census 2021 (Note A-1, Note A-2)

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



Housing stock by tenure in the 2021 Census

Data from the 2021 Census can be used to create estimates of the housing stock by tenure 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.

Of the 23.4 million households in England in the 2021 Census, around 4.1 million lived in rural settlements. It was more common for rural households to own their homes compared with urban households.

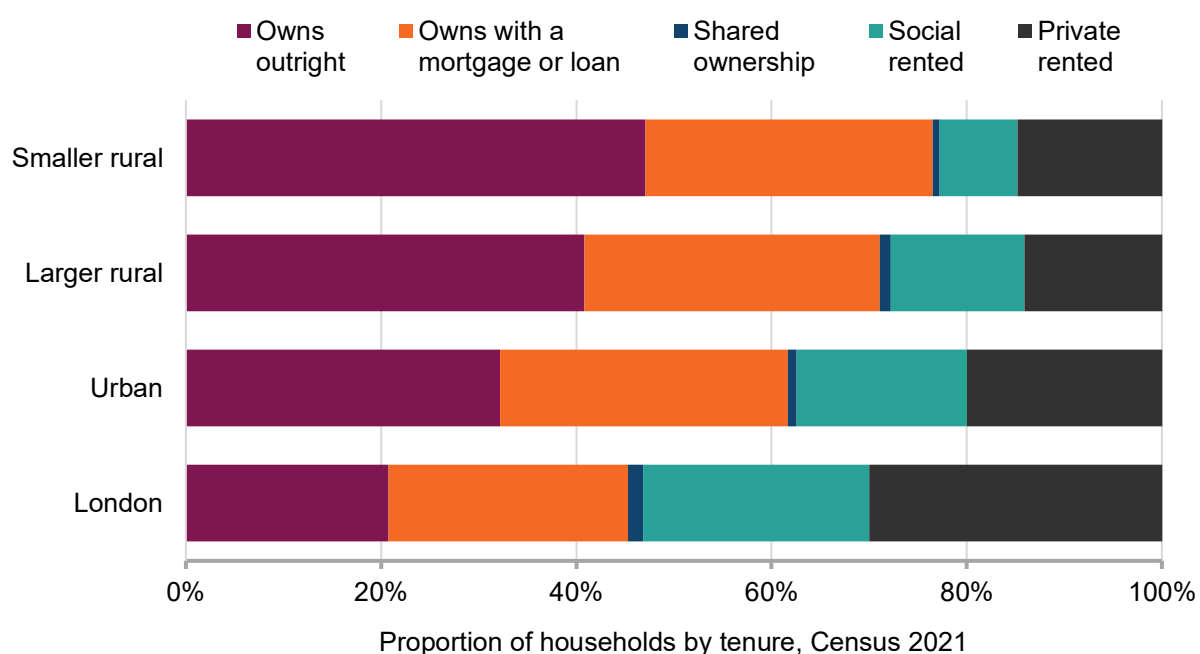
Proportionally more households in rural areas owned their homes outright than in urban areas, at 44% and 30%, respectively. A similar proportion of households owned their homes with a mortgage or loan, at 30% in rural areas and 29% in urban areas. Combining these, there were proportionally more home-owning households in rural areas (74%) than in urban areas (59%).

Consequently, private rents make up smaller proportions of rural households (14%) than urban households (22%). This is also true for social rents, at 11% and 18%, respectively. Around 1% of households in both rural and urban areas used shared ownership schemes.

The more rural the settlement, the higher the proportion of home-owners, as shown in the bar chart in Figure A-3; the chart presents the distribution of housing stock by tenure in the 2021 Census, by 2021 rural-urban classification of output areas in England.

Figure A-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of households by tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification of output areas in England, Census 2021 (Note A-1)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. ‘Urban’ excludes London. Very small proportions of households lived rent-free, which have not been included on the chart.



The bar chart in Figure A-3 can be described as follows:

- The more rural the settlement type, the higher the proportion of households who own their home outright. In smaller rural settlements, 47% of households owned their homes outright.

41% of households in larger rural settlements owned their homes outright, followed by 32% of households in urban areas outside London, and 21% of households in London.

- Outside London, the proportions of households who owned their homes with a mortgage or loan were similar between settlement types, at around 29% (30% in larger rural settlements). In London, 24% of households owned their homes with a mortgage or loan.
- The proportion of households using shared ownership schemes was small, corresponding to just 1% of households outside of London, and 2% in London.
- The more rural the settlement type, the lower the proportion of social renting households. Social renting made up just 8% of households in smaller rural settlements. 14% of households in larger rural settlements were in the social rent sector, followed by 17% in urban areas outside London, and 23% in London.
- Within rural areas, the proportion of households who rented privately was similar in smaller rural (15%) and larger rural (14%) settlements. The proportion of households renting privately is higher in urban areas than in rural areas, accounting for 20% of households in urban areas outside London, and 30% in London.

Overall, 43% of renting households rented from a social landlord, such as a council, local authority, or housing association. Social renting was less common in rural areas - in smaller rural settlements it represented 35% of renting households. In comparison, in urban areas outside London, 47% of renting households rented socially, while in London the proportion was 44%.

Relative access is considered within the 2021 rural-urban classification; for output areas specifically, it is possible to analyse housing tenure for rural settlements that are remote, or nearer to a small urban area, a medium-sized urban area, or a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note A-4.

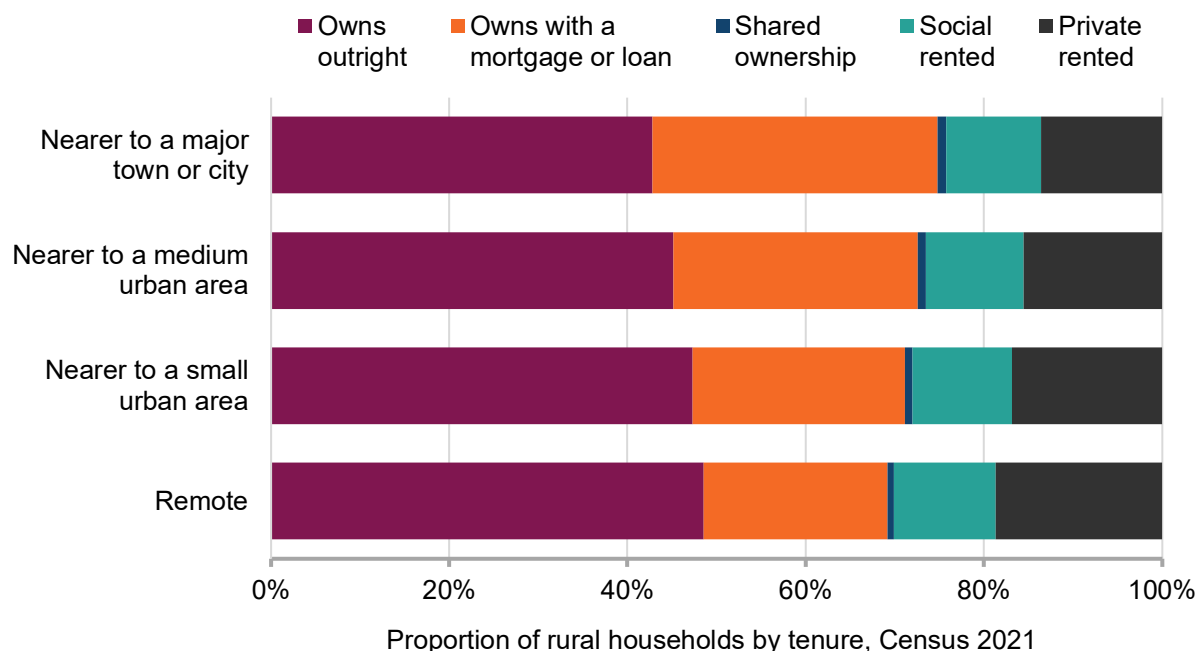
Of the 4.1 million rural households, around 88,000 were in remote settlements. In the 2021 Census, it was more common for rural households in remote settlements to own their homes outright compared with those nearer to major towns or cities. The bar chart in Figure A-4 shows the proportion of rural households by tenure in the 2021 Census, by relative access.

The bar chart in Figure A-4 can be described as follows:

- In remote rural settlements, 49% of households owned their homes outright. 47% of rural households that lived nearer to small urban areas owned their homes outright, followed by 45% that lived nearer to medium urban areas, and 43% that lived nearer to major towns or cities.
- 21% of households in remote rural settlements owned their homes with a mortgage or loan. 24% of rural households that lived nearer to small urban areas owned their homes with a mortgage or loan, followed by 27% that lived nearer to medium urban areas, and 32% that lived nearer to major towns or cities.
- There was little difference in the proportion of rural households using shared ownership schemes, or that were in the social rented sector, between proximity groups.
- 19% of households in remote rural settlements were in the private renting sector. 17% of rural households that lived nearer to small urban areas were in the private renting sector, followed by 16% that lived nearer to medium urban areas, and 14% that lived nearer to major towns or cities.

Figure A-4: Bar chart showing the proportion of rural households by tenure and relative access from the 2021 rural-urban classification of output areas in England, Census 2021 (Note A-1, Note A-4)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. Data are for rural households only. Very small proportions of households lived rent-free, which have not been included on the chart.



Housing stock characteristics from the Census - explanatory notes

- Note A-1**

Tables showing the data expressed in this section 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**

Results from the 2011 Census for Rural areas are available in this [publication](#).

- Note A-4**

For the relative access categories at output area-level, 'nearer to a major town or city' is defined as being within a 30-minute drive of a built-up with at least 75,000 residents. 'Nearer to a medium urban area' is defined as being within a 30-minute drive of a built-up area with at least 30,000 residents. 'Nearer to a small urban area' is defined as being within a 30-minute drive of a built-up area with at least 10,000 residents. 'Remote' is defined as having no access to any of these built-up areas; that is, a remote settlement is one where a built-up area of at least 10,000 residents cannot be reached within a 30-minute drive. More information regarding the detailed 2021 Census-based rural-urban classification can be found via: [Rural Urban Classification Methodology \(2021\) - Office for National Statistics](#).

- Note A-5**

Values presented within this section may not sum to totals due to rounding; commentary figures have been rounded to the nearest 1%.

B. Housing stock characteristics from the English Housing Survey

There are proportionally more rural homes that are detached and or pre-1919 than in urban areas and on average homes in rural areas have larger floor areas.

Housing stock characteristics from the English Housing Survey - key findings

Proportionally more pre-1919 housing stock in rural areas 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%). So, 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 lower proportion of social housing in rural areas

- In 2023, local authorities provided just 22% of social housing in rural areas with the remaining 78% provided by housing associations. In both the suburbs and urban areas local authorities provided around 40% of social homes with the remaining 60% from housing associations.

Rural homes are larger and often have a garage

- In 2023, the average floor area across all rural areas was 127m², which was around 50% larger than the average floor area of an urban home.
- In 2023, just over half of homes in rural areas had a garage (53%) compared to 37% in the suburban areas and just 14% 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.

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 of houses 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 more energy efficient and there was a similar proportion of these in rural and urban areas in 2020.

The more rural the area the larger the property floor area. In 2023, the average floor area across all rural areas was 127m² compared to 83m² in urban areas and 93m² in suburban areas. Over the period 2008 to 2023 average floor area has increased but more so in rural areas - average floor area has increased by 11m² in rural areas compared to just a 4m² increase in urban areas.

Types of tenure have been split fairly consistent over the period 2008 to 2023. In 2023 in rural areas 8% of homes were in the social sector and the remaining 92% in the private sector. In urban areas in 2023, 21% of homes were in the social sector. This means that the proportion of homes in the social sector was 13 percentage points lower in rural areas than in urban areas. The social housing sector is a mix of homes provided by both local authorities and housing associations. Local authorities provided just 2% of homes in rural areas, while in urban areas this was 9%. Housing associations provide more homes than local authorities, 6% in rural areas and 13% in urban areas.

The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas

This section includes the analysis in relation to housing stock characteristics derived from the English Housing Survey (EHS). There is analysis of housing age and housing type based on data from 2020; given that these variables change very little over short periods of time, this analysis was not updated in July 2026. The analysis of tenure from Census 2021 in Chapter A is complemented by an analysis of tenure from EHS. New analysis on floor area and parking provision at domestic premises provide context for other sections of the Digest, such the [Energy](#) report and the access to public electric vehicle charging chapter in the [Connectivity and Accessibility](#) report.

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 B-2.

The older analysis of housing stock by age and type in 2020 was done as a simple rural and urban split whereby suburban residential was included within the urban category. The newer analysis in the second half of the chapter uses the methodology first used in the Housing quality chapter. With this methodology, categories 1 and 2 are presented as “all city and urban centres”, category 3 is left on its own as “suburban residential” and categories 4 to 6 are grouped as “all rural areas”. To simplify the commentary the 3 categories are just referred to as urban, rural and suburban areas respectively. Where the commentary refers to only category 6 the convention will be to use the term “most rural”.

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

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 B-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 B-1).

EHS data distinguishes between end-terraced and mid-terraced properties. As Figure B-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 B-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 in end-terrace properties are in fuel poverty than those living mid-terrace properties (Note B-4).

Figure B-1: Percentage of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

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

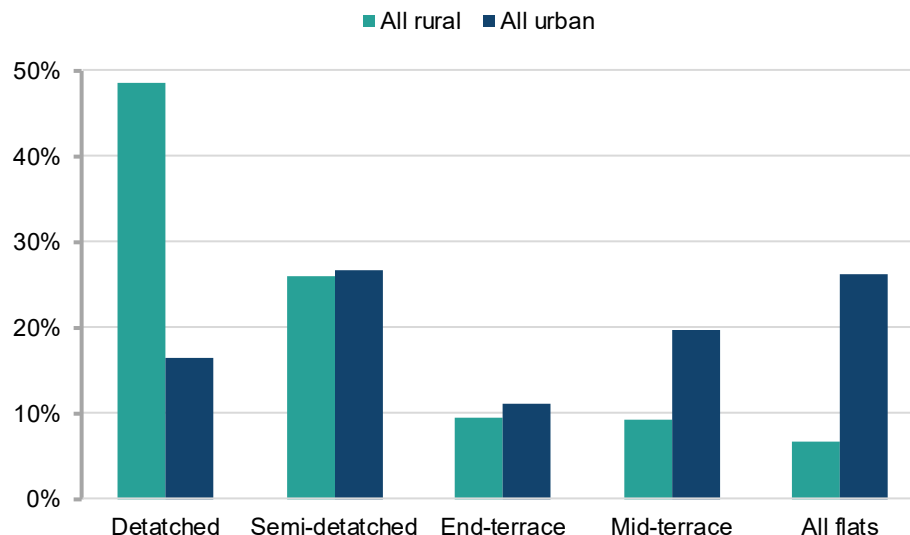


Table B-1: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building type and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

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 B-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 B-2).

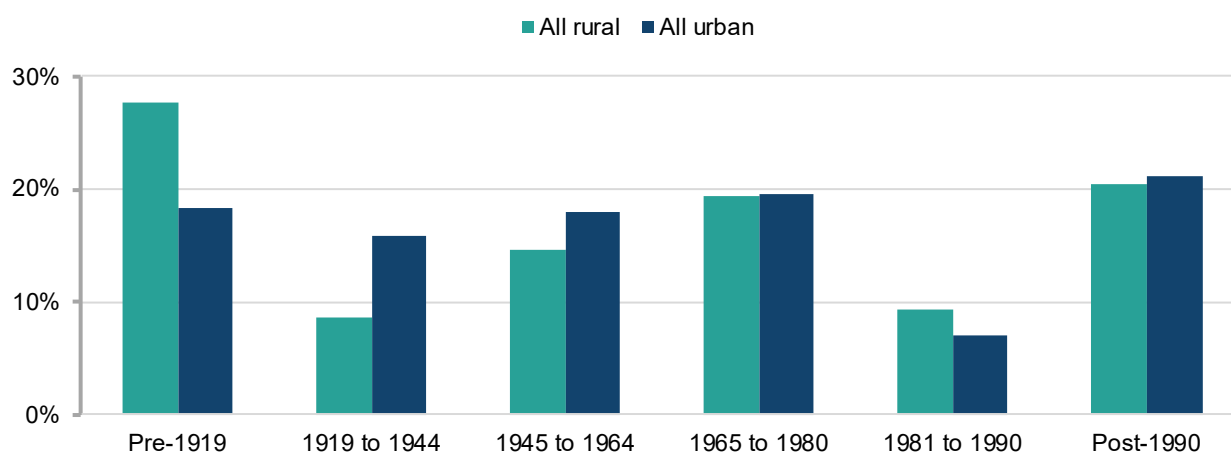
Figure B-2 also shows that there is a greater proportion of urban properties (16%) dating from the period 1919-1944 than among rural properties (9%). There is a similar proportion of residential properties originating from the periods 1965 to 1980 and post-1990 in both rural and urban areas but there is a marginally higher proportion in rural areas that date from the period 1981 to 1990 than in urban areas (Figure B-2).

Table B-2: Number (millions) of residential properties, by building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

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 B-2: Percentage of residential properties, by building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

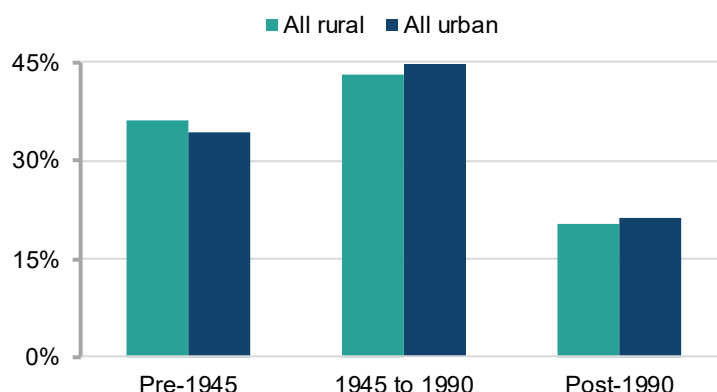
The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.



It is a commonly held belief that there is a higher proportion of old, and therefore energy inefficient, 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 B-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 B-3: Percentage of residential properties, by 3-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

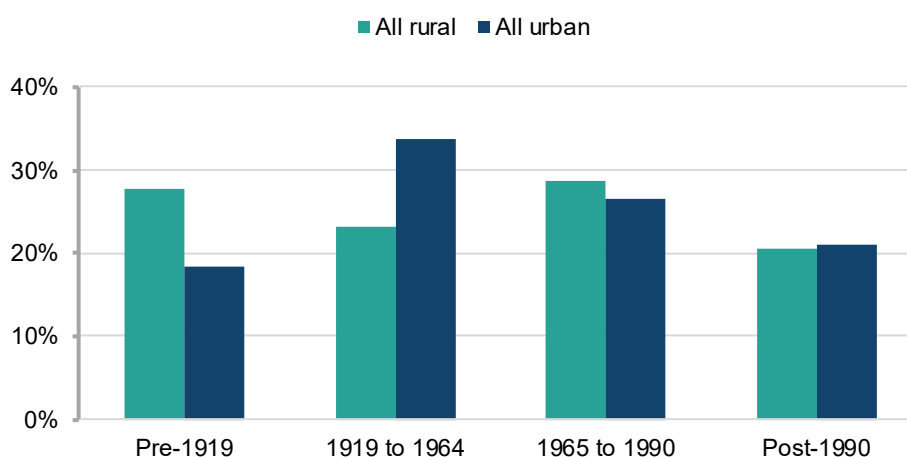
The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the cluster of columns.



An alternative approach is to have a 4-tier scale and consider only those properties that are more than 100 years old (Pre-1919) as 'Old'. This approach has been applied in Figure B-4, and it shows that rural areas have a higher proportion of Pre-1919 residential buildings than urban areas. Figure B-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.

Figure B-4: Percentage of residential properties, by 4-tier building age band and area type in England in 2020 from the English Housing Survey (Note B-2, Note B-3)

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



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 in properties with solid uninsulated walls are in fuel poverty than those living in mid-terrace properties (Note B-4). Section [G. Energy Performance Certificates](#) discusses the energy efficiency of homes in more detail.

Floor area from the English Housing Survey

The size of a home can affect a range of housing outcomes, including living space, property values and energy use - especially if the property has a low energy efficiency. [Chapter 1](#) of this report considers house prices and the [Energy report](#) considers the energy efficiency of homes.

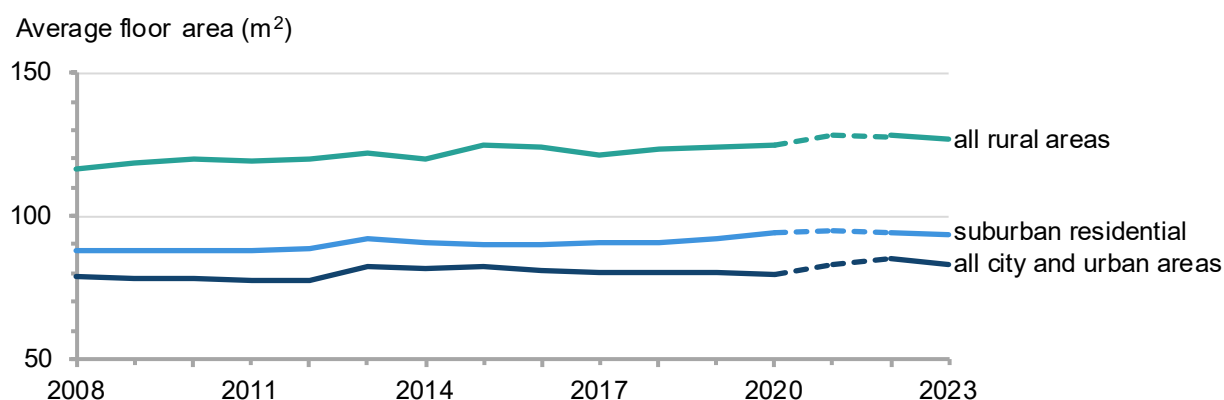
The line chart in Figure B-5 shows that: (1) on average the more rural an area, the larger the property; and (2) floor area in square meters (m²) has increased over the 2008 to 2023 period in both rural and urban areas. The following bullet points describe Figure B-5 in more detail.

- In 2023, the average floor area across all rural areas was 127m², compared with 116m² in 2008, which is an increase of 11m².
- In urban and suburban areas, the average floor areas are smaller than 100m², and in 2023 were 83m² and 93m² respectively. This means that the average floor area for a home in rural areas was around 50% larger than the average floor area of a home in urban areas.
- Whilst the average floor area is also growing in urban and suburban areas, the increase in area relative to 2008 has been just 4m² in urban areas and 5m² in suburban areas.

So, as well as homes in rural areas being larger than those in urban areas, they are also getting larger at a faster rate than in urban areas.

Figure B-5: Line chart showing the average floor area of residential properties in England by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

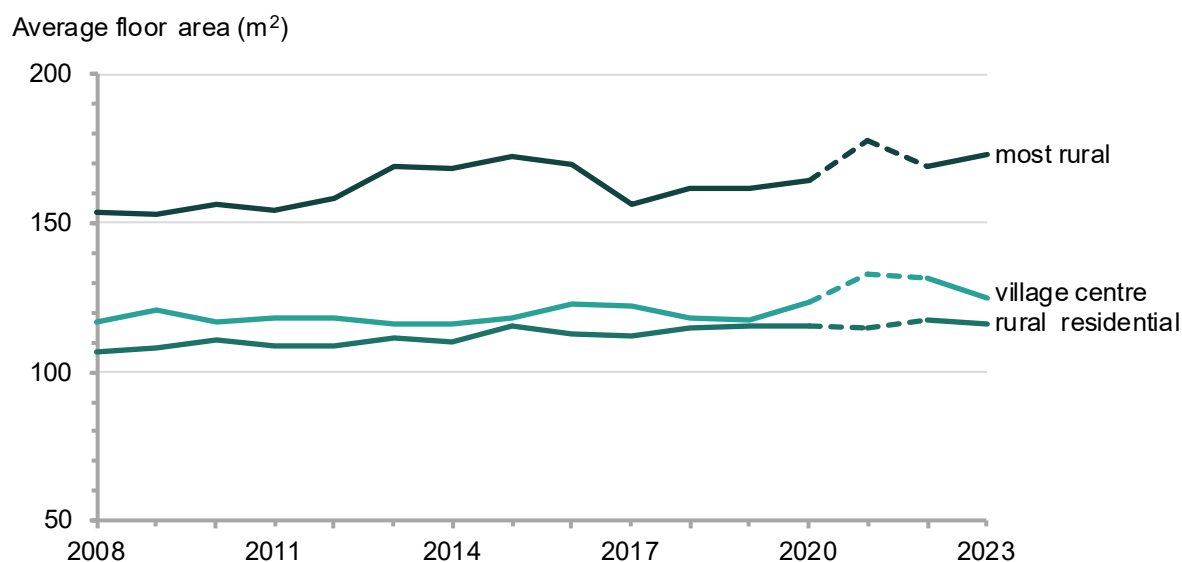
The lines connecting the datapoints for 2021 and 2022 have been dashed because of the impact on COVID-19 on the data collection process making these datapoints more uncertain (Note B-5). Note that the y-axis starts at 50 square meters (m²) not zero.



As explained in the section entitled The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas, rural can be split into 3 area types on EHS. Using this classification, in 2023 around 65% of the homes in rural areas were rural residential, around 20% were in “village centres” and the remaining 16% were in the “most rural” areas. The line chart in Figure B-6 shows the change in floor area of properties within rural areas over the period 2008 to 2023. The chart shows that within rural areas, the more rural an area the larger the floor area, and the greater the increase in over the reference period.

Figure B-6: Line chart showing the average floor area of residential properties within rural areas on the EHS classification system, 2008 to 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

The lines connecting the datapoints for 2021 and 2022 have been dashed because of the impact on COVID-19 on the data collection process making these datapoints more uncertain (Note B-5). Note that the y-axis starts at 50 square meters (m²) not zero.



The following bullet points describe Figure B-6 in more detail.

- In 2023, the average floor area in rural residential areas was 127m², compared with 107m² in 2008, which is an increase of 20m².
- In “village centres”, the average floor area was 125m² in 2023, which is an increase of 8m² from the average area of 117m² in 2008.
- The “most rural” areas had a much larger average floor area than either rural residential or “village centres”. In 2008 it was 153m² and by 2023 this average floor area had increased to 173m², which is an increase of 20m².

So, as well as homes in the “most rural” areas being larger than those in urban areas, they are also getting larger at a faster rate than in other rural areas.

Tenure from the English Housing Survey (EHS)

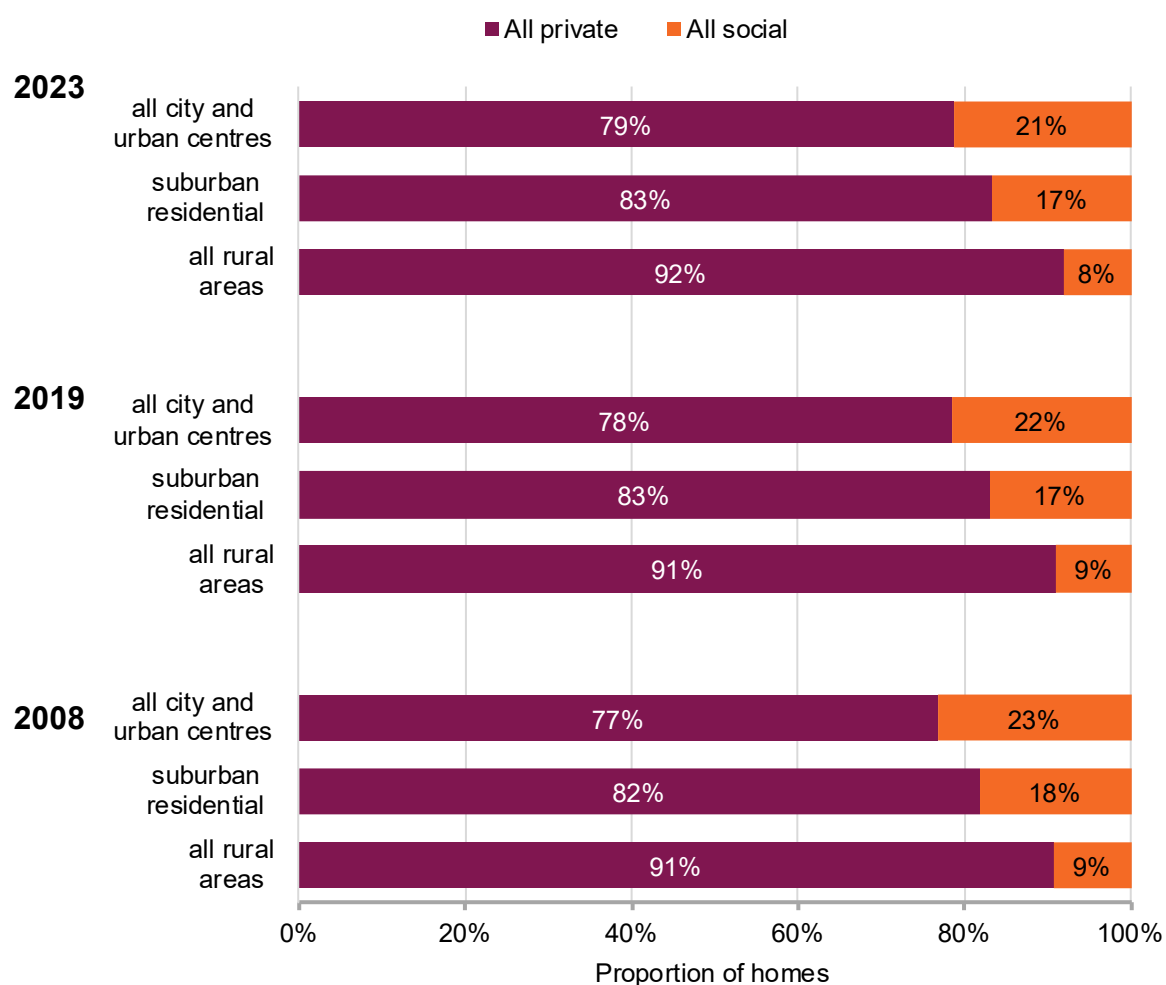
Tenure data from Census 2021 was explored in Chapter A. Analysing the tenure data from EHS allows consideration of some different variables and changes over time - in particular allowing local authority and housing association provision to be distinguished within the social housing sector.

Figure B-7 is a stacked bar chart that shows tenure split between the broad categories of “all private” and “all social” for 2008, 2019 and 2023 split by EHS classification area for each year. “All private” includes both owner-occupied and private rented. “All social” includes homes provided by both local authorities and housing associations. These three years were chosen as the earliest and most recent data points and offer a robust datapoint prior to the more limited data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic. The chart shows two main things: (a) at these broad levels the tenure split between the private and social sectors is fairly stable over time for each EHS classification area; and (b) the more rural the area the lower the proportion of social sector homes.

The following bullet points describe Figure B-7 in more detail.

- In 2008 just 9% of rural homes were in the social sector and the remaining 91% were in the private sector. By 2023 the proportion of homes in the social sector was little changed at 8% with the remaining 92% of homes in the private sector.
- Similarly in suburban areas there was little change between 2008 and 2023. The proportion of private sector homes was 82% in 2008 and 83% in 2023, with the balance (18% and 17% respectively) being social sector homes. This means that in 2023 the proportion of homes in the social sector was 8 percentage points lower in rural areas than in suburban areas.
- In urban areas, 23% of homes were in the social sector in 2008, which was 14 percentage points higher than in rural areas. By 2023 the proportion of homes in the social sector in urban areas had decreased slightly to 21%, but this proportion was still 13 percentage points higher than in rural areas.

Figure B-7: A stacked bar chart showing the proportion of homes in private and social tenure in England in 2008, 2019 and 2023 by EHS classification areas (Note B-2, Note B-3)
 “All private” includes both owner-occupied and private rented. “All social” includes homes provided by both local authorities and housing associations. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the bars.

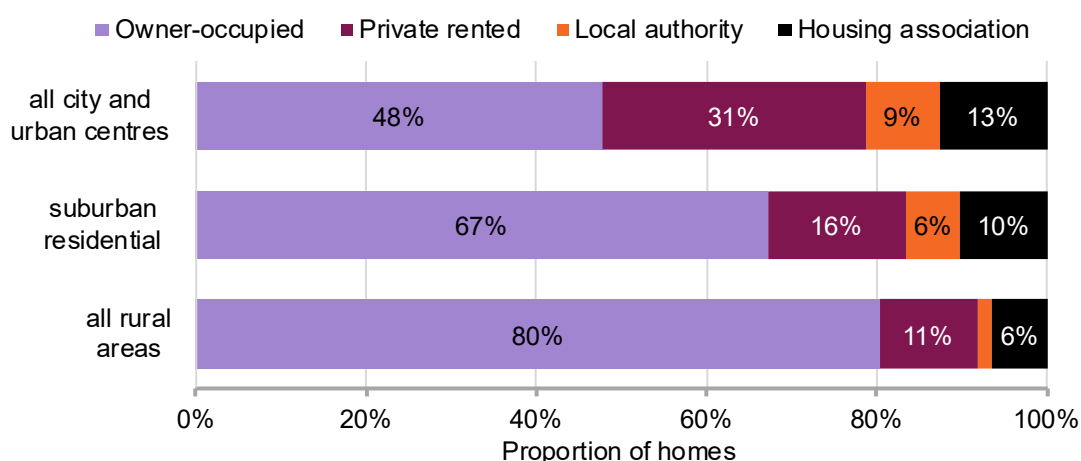


Having established that there was little change over time for broad tenure categories, Figure B-8 is a stacked bar chart that breaks the 2023 data down into more detailed tenure categories. Private housing is split into owner-occupied and private rented and social housing is split into homes provided by local authorities and housing associations. The chart shows that in rural areas homes were predominantly owner-occupied properties and as rurality increases the proportion of both private rented homes and housing association homes decreases. The following bullet points describe Figure B-8 in more detail.

- In rural areas, 80% of homes in 2023 were owner-occupied; this was 13 percentage points higher than in the suburban areas (67%) and 33 percentage points higher than in urban areas (48%).
- The private rented sector accounted for 11% of homes in rural areas and 16% of homes in the suburbs. In both cases these proportions were much smaller than in urban areas where the private rented sector accounted for 31% of homes – 19 percentage points higher than in rural areas.
- Housing associations provided 6% of homes in rural areas, 10% in the suburbs and 13% of urban homes. Housing associations in rural areas provided 6 percentage point fewer homes in urban areas.
- Local authorities provided the smallest proportion of homes, with just 2% in rural areas and 9% in urban areas.

Figure B-8: A stacked bar chart showing the proportion of homes by tenure and EHS classification areas in England in 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Bars smaller than 5% have not been labelled. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the bars. Owner-occupied and private rented dwellings are private sector, local authority and housing association form the social-rented sector.



When the dataset for these more detailed tenure categories was evaluated for 2008 (chart not shown), the proportion of homes for each tenure type in rural areas was very similar to the 2023 proportions. Worksheet BC in the [housing supplementary data tables](#) contains the data presented in Figure B-8 and the complementary data for 2008.

As explained in the section entitled The English Housing Survey (EHS) classification areas, rural can be split into 3 area types on EHS. Figure B-9 is a stacked bar chart that presents tenure data for the more detailed tenure categories within rural areas in 2023. It shows in the “most rural” areas housing is predominantly in the private sector (owner-occupied or private rented), whilst in “village

centres” and rural residential areas, the proportion of homes that are social housing is greater than in the “most rural” areas. The following bullet points describe Figure B-9 in more detail.

- In 2023, in rural residential areas 82% of the homes were owner-occupied compared to 77% in “village centres” and 78% in the “most rural” areas.
- Private rental properties accounted for 18% of homes in the “most rural” areas, 14% in “village centres” and just 9% in rural residential areas. It is this larger private rental sector that is the main reason for a larger private housing sector in the “most rural” areas when compared to other rural areas.
- The proportion of homes provided by local authorities was around 2% in both rural residential and “village centres” and less than 1% in the “most rural” areas.
- Housing associations provided 7% of the homes in both rural residential and “village centre” areas, but only 3% of homes in the “most rural” areas.

Figure B-9: A stacked bar chart showing the proportion of homes by tenure within rural areas on the EHS classification system in 2023 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

Bars smaller than 5% have not been labelled. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the bars. Owner-occupied and private rented dwellings are private sector, and local authority and housing association form the social-rented sector.

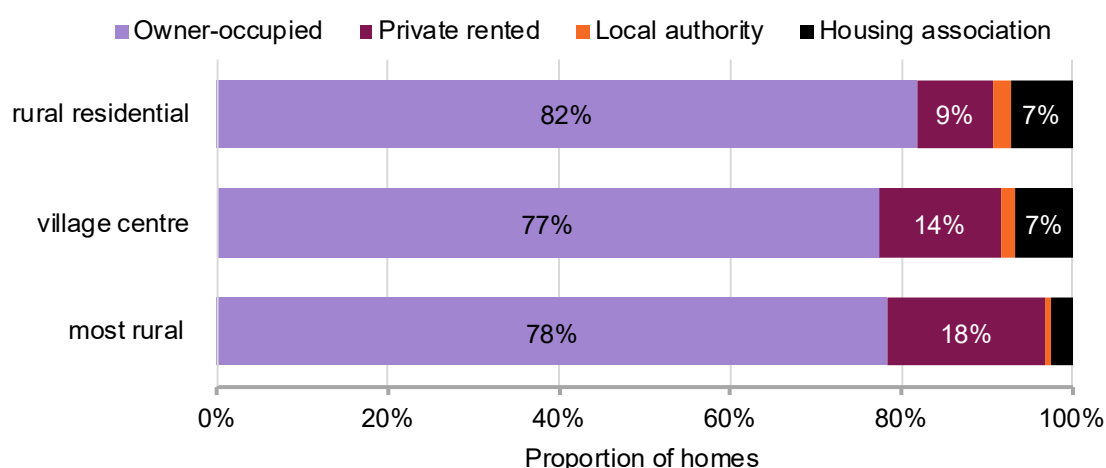


Figure B-10 is a stacked bar-chart showing how social housing is split between local authority housing and housing association homes in rural areas, urban areas and the suburban areas. Housing associations are providing a larger proportion of the social housing particularly in rural areas. In 2023 (on the upper portion of Figure B-10) in suburban areas and in urban areas the split was roughly 40:60 with 40% of social housing provided by local authorities and 60% provided by housing associations. Whereas in rural areas the split was closer to 20:80 with 22% of social housing provided by local authorities and 78% provided by housing associations. In other words, in rural areas in 2023 it was close to 1 in every 5 social homes provided by local authorities instead of two in every 5 in more urban areas.

In 2008 (on the lower portion of Figure B-10) in suburban areas and in urban areas the split was close to 50:50 with just over half of the social housing provided by local authorities and just under half provided by housing associations. In urban areas 53% of social housing was provided by the local authorities. Whilst in rural areas the split was 36:64 with 36% of social housing provided by local authorities and 64% provided by housing associations. In other words, in rural areas in 2008 it

was closer to one in three social homes provided by local authorities instead of the one in two in more urban areas.

The change in the social housing split between 2008 and 2023 was similar in all 3 EHS area type. In rural areas the proportion of social housing provided by local authorities decreases by 14 percentage points; and in suburban and urban areas, this proportion decreased by 13 percentage points. So, over the 2008 to 2023 period, the shift in balance of social housing that is transferring away from local authorities and towards housing associations is happening at a similar rate in rural areas to more urban areas. However, the overall proportion of social homes that are provided by local authorities is lower in rural areas because it started from a lower base level.

As Table B-3 shows in 2008 and 2023 there is limited variation across rural EHS categories in the proportion of social homes provided by local authorities. Whilst all rural area types experienced this shift away from local authority and towards housing association provided premises over the period 2008 to 2023, the shift was larger in the “most rural areas”. In 2008, 40% of the social housing stock was provided by local authorities; but in 2023 local authorities owned just 19% of the local housing stock. This resulted in the “most rural” areas switching from having the highest proportion of social housing provided by local authorities in 2008 to the lowest proportion in 2023. In numeric terms, this is a reduction of 21 percentage points in the proportion of social housing provided by local authorities over the period 2008 to 2023 in the “most rural” areas compared to a reduction of 13 percentage points in rural residential areas.

Figure B-10: A stacked bar chart showing the proportion of social sector homes provided by both local authorities and housing associations by EHS classification areas in England in 2023 and 2008 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

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

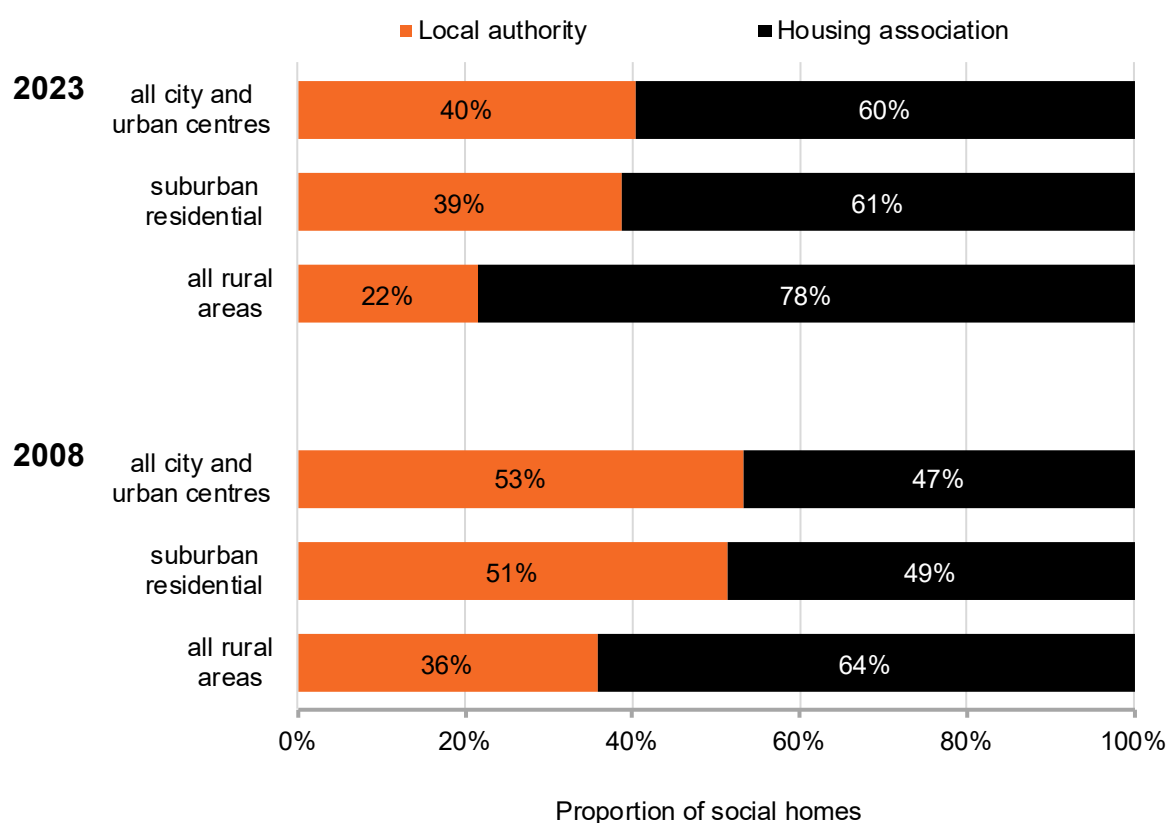


Table B-3: The proportion (%) of social homes provided by both local authorities and housing associations within rural areas on the EHS classification system in 2023 and 2008 (Note B-2, Note B-3)

The all rural areas values are displayed on Figure B-10, and these are the same as the Rural residential values when rounded because almost two-thirds of rural homes in 2023 were in the rural residential category.

Rural area type based on EHS	Local authority: 2023 (%)	Housing association: 2023 (%)	Local authority: 2008 (%)	Housing association: 2008 (%)
Rural residential	22	78	36	64
“Village centre”	21	79	36	64
“Most rural”	19	81	40	60
All rural areas	22	78	36	64

Parking provision from the English Housing Survey

Being able to park your vehicle at or near your home can be essential for some households – and affects those wishing to operate and charge an electric vehicle. Section [D. Access to vehicles and charging infrastructure](#) from the Connectivity and Accessibility report explores publicly available charging provision.

The English Housing Survey collects annual data regarding parking provision within the specified area types. The line charts in Figure B-11 show the change in parking provision over time. The top left-hand chart highlights those with garage parking, whilst the top right-hand chart shows those with other forms of off-road parking (e.g. driveways). The bottom left-hand chart shows those with street parking, whilst the bottom right-hand chart highlights dwellings with no parking provision.

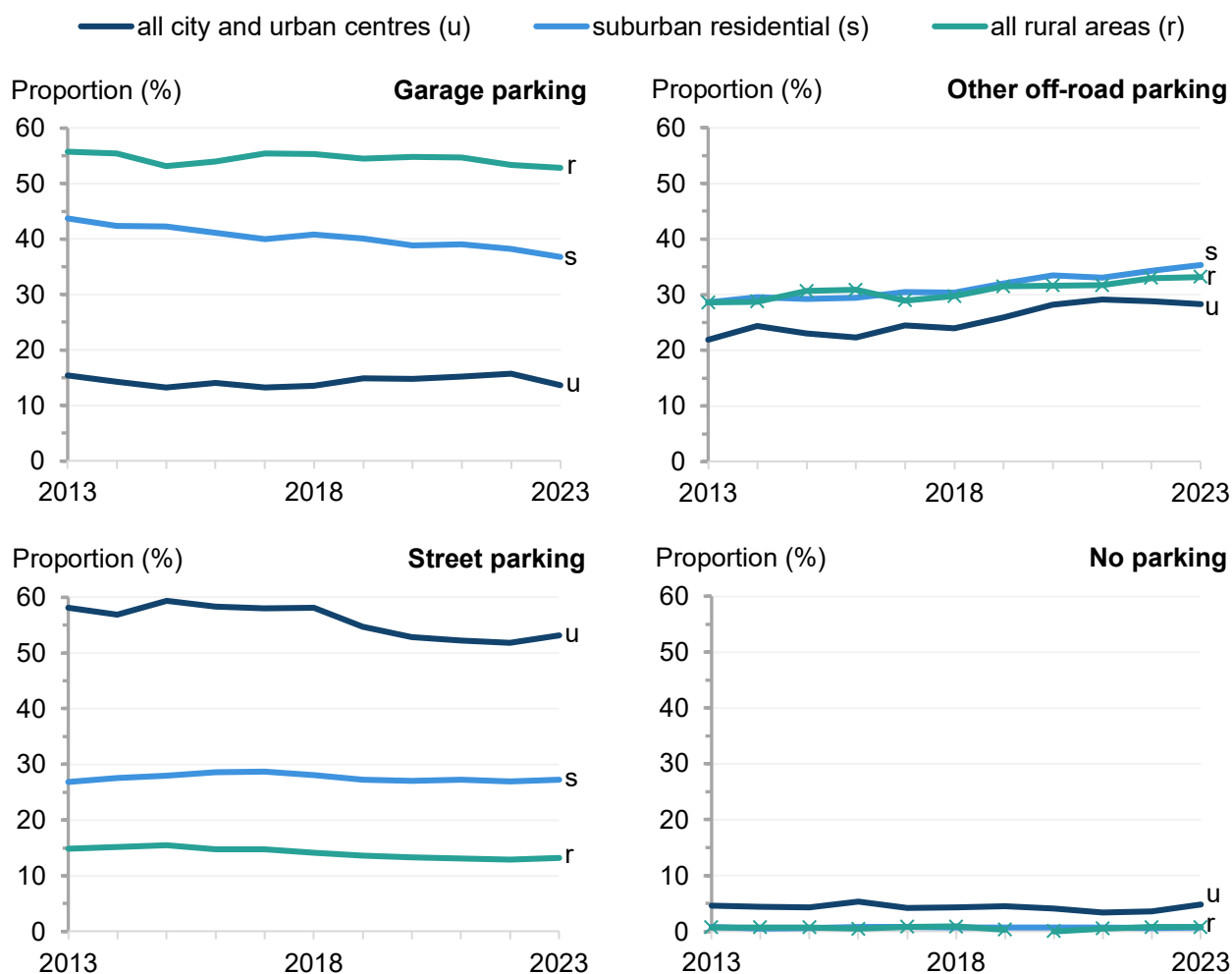
The line charts can be described as follows:

- **Garage parking** was much more common in rural areas than in other area types. In 2023, 53% of rural dwellings had garage parking, compared with 37% in suburban residential areas, and around 14% in cities and urban centres.
 - There have been small decreases in garage parking provision over time, but more so in suburban residential areas than in other area types. In rural areas, the proportion of dwellings with garage parking decreased by 3 percentage points between 2013 and 2023, from 56% to 53%. Over the same period, garage parking provision decreased by around 2 percentage points in cities and urban centres, and by 7 percentage points in suburban residential areas.
- Provision of **other types of off-road parking**, such as driveways, is similar between rural and suburban residential areas (at 33% and 35% respectively in 2023), and slightly lower in cities and urban centres (28%).
 - There have been increases in the provision of other types of off-road parking over time. In rural areas, the proportion of dwellings with other types of off-road parking increased by 5 percentage points between 2013 and 2023, from 29% to 33%. Over the same period, other

off-road parking provision increased by around 6 percentage points in cities and urban centres, and 7 percentage points in suburban residential areas.

Figure B-11: Line charts showing the change in dwelling parking provision over time, by EHS classification areas, 2013 to 2023 (Note B-6)

The EHS classification areas have been presented in shorthand on the charts: u = all city and urban centres; s = suburban residential; r = all rural areas. In the 'no parking provision' and 'other off-road parking' charts, trends for suburban residential and all rural areas overlap; markers have been applied to the rural line to aid comparison.



- **Street parking** was much more common in cities and urban centres than in other area types; it was least common in rural areas. In 2023, 13% of rural dwellings had street parking, compared with 27% in suburban residential areas, and 53% in cities and urban centres.
 - There has been little overall change in street parking provision over time, although it has fluctuated in cities and urban centres. In rural areas, the proportion of dwellings with street parking decreased by 2 percentage points between 2013 and 2023, from 15% to 13%. Over the same period, street parking provision decreased by 5 percentage points in cities and urban centres but had no overall change in suburban residential areas.

- Few dwellings had **no parking** provision, although this was more common in cities and urban centres than in other area types. In 2023, 1% of dwellings in both rural and suburban residential areas had no parking provision, compared with 5% in cities and urban centres.
 - There has been little to no change in the proportion of dwellings with no parking provision over time, with proportions in rural and suburban residential areas staying below 1%. In cities and urban centres, rates fluctuated between 3% and 5%.

Housing stock characteristics from the English Housing Survey - explanatory notes

• Note B-1

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

• Note B-2

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 B-3

The [English Housing Survey](#) (EHS) does not define rurality according to the RUC, in uses a looser definition as explained in Note B-2. 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 B-4

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

- **Note B-5**

As explained in the [English Housing Survey 2021-22 technical report](#) the full internal and external inspection of dwellings was replaced by an ‘external plus’ approach where the inspection was restricted to an assessment of the exterior of the dwelling, supplemented by information about the interior of the dwelling the surveyor collected (socially distanced) at the doorstep. This means that the internal dimensions of dwellings, which are used in part to calculate the total floor area were not measured by surveyors in 2021-22.

- **Note B-6**

In 2020, data were suppressed for the proportion of dwellings with no parking provision in rural areas due to the small counts recorded in the sample. This has been represented by a broken line on the chart.

- **Note B-7**

Values presented within this section may not sum to totals due to rounding; commentary figures have been rounded to the nearest 1% (or 1m² for floor area).

C. Additions to the housing stock

Dwelling stock growth was highest in majority rural authorities, primarily through new building – particularly in authorities where the majority of people live nearer to major towns and cities – although rates have declined in recent years.

Key findings – Additions to the housing stock

Proportionally more newly built dwellings in majority rural authorities

- In 2024-25, there were 9.1 newly built dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities. This compared with 6.6 newly built dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings in urban authorities outside of London.
- Of all majority rural authorities, there were more newly built dwellings in authorities where the majority of people lived nearer to major towns or cities than where the majority lived further away, at 10.2 and 7.4 newly-built dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings, respectively.

Private enterprise accounted for the majority of newly built dwellings

- In majority rural, intermediate rural, and urban authorities outside London, private enterprise represented 77% of all housebuilding completions in 2024-25, followed by 71% in London, and 70% in intermediate urban authorities.
- In majority rural authorities, housing associations accounted for 23% of all housebuilding completions – this was proportionally less than in intermediate urban authorities, similar to intermediate rural authorities, but more than in urban authorities.
- There were little to no local authority completions in majority rural authorities, with less than 1% in all types of authority outside London.

Summary

The availability of 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.

Net additional dwellings were highest in majority rural authorities in 2024 to 2025, driven primarily by new building development. Other components of change were similar across all types of authority. Majority rural authorities recorded 9.8 net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings, including 9.1 newly built dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings; this compared with 7.3 total additions (and 6.6 newly built dwellings) per 1,000 existing dwellings in urban authorities outside London. Within majority rural authorities, delivery was higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to major towns and cities than those further away.

Housebuilding completions (dwellings where construction has been completed and the dwelling is considered ready for occupation) were highest in majority rural authorities and were driven primarily by private enterprise development, which accounted for most of the completions across

all types of authority in 2024 to 2025 (77% in majority rural authorities). Completion rates fluctuate, with particular decreases around the COVID-19 pandemic and in recent years. Within majority rural authorities, completion rates for private enterprise and housing association developments were generally higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to major towns and cities, whilst completions by the local authorities themselves remained low.

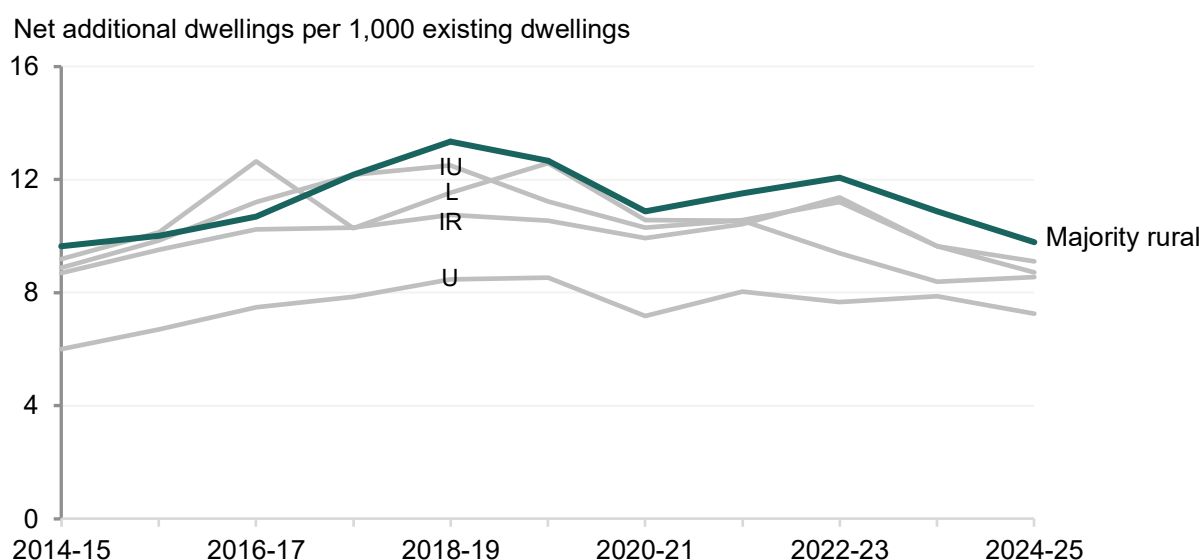
Net additions to housing stock

The absolute change in dwelling stock between one year and the next – including losses and gains from newly built dwellings, conversions, change of use, and demolitions – are known as net additions. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government publish '[Housing supply: net additional dwellings, England](#)' annually; the latest data are for 2024 to 2025.

The rate of housebuilding and other changes to the housing stock fluctuates over time but has generally been higher in majority rural authorities than in other types of authority. The line chart in Figure C-1 shows the net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, from 2014-15 to 2024-25.

Figure C-1: Line chart showing net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2014-15 to 2024-25

The line representing majority rural authorities is coloured to draw focus. Shorthand is used on this chart: 'IR' = intermediate rural; 'IU' = intermediate urban; 'U' = urban (excluding London); 'L' = London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CA in the [supplementary data tables](#).



The line chart in Figure C-1 can be described as follows:

- Between 2014-15 and 2024-25, the rate of net additions to the housing stock was generally proportionally highest in majority rural authorities. The exception to this was in 2016-17, where the rate of net additional dwellings was highest in London at 12.6 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings; this compares with 10.7 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities.

- Across the period, in majority rural authorities the rate of net additions to the housing stock was highest in 2018-19, at 13.3 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings. This decreased to 10.9 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2020-21 – potentially due to the COVID-19 pandemic – followed by increases to 12.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2022-23. By 2024-25, the rate had decreased to 9.8 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings. Other types of authority showed similar fluctuations across the period.
- Urban authorities outside of London saw the lowest rates across the period. Between 2014-15 and 2024-25, the highest rate was in 2019-20, where there were 8.5 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings.
- For all types of authority, the lowest rates were generally seen in 2014-15, although in recent years rates have declined and are approaching these levels again.

The majority of net additional dwellings across England are newly built dwellings, and there were proportionally more newly built dwellings in majority rural authorities than in any other type of authority in 2024-25. Table C-1 presents the net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings. Figures for newly built dwellings presented as part of the net additional dwellings may not correspond to the housebuilding completion rates shown in Figure C-5. Data for newly built dwellings data collected for net additional dwellings are more comprehensive; for more information regarding the differences in statistics for newly built dwellings, see Note C-6.

Table C-1: Net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings, by selected flow components and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, 2024-25 (Note C-4)

A small number of other gains and losses occurred which have not been presented in the table, and therefore figures shown do not sum to totals. Demolitions are presented as a negative value as they reduce the total net additional dwellings. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CA in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-Urban Classification 2021	Newly built	Net conversions	Net change of use	Demolitions	Total net additional dwellings
Majority rural	9.1	0.1	0.7	-0.2	9.8
Intermediate rural	8.5	0.1	0.7	-0.2	9.1
Intermediate urban	8.1	0.1	0.7	-0.2	8.7
Urban (excluding London)	6.6	0.1	0.7	-0.2	7.3
London	7.5	0.5	0.5	-0.1	8.6
England	7.4	0.2	0.7	-0.2	8.1

Table C-1 can be described as follows:

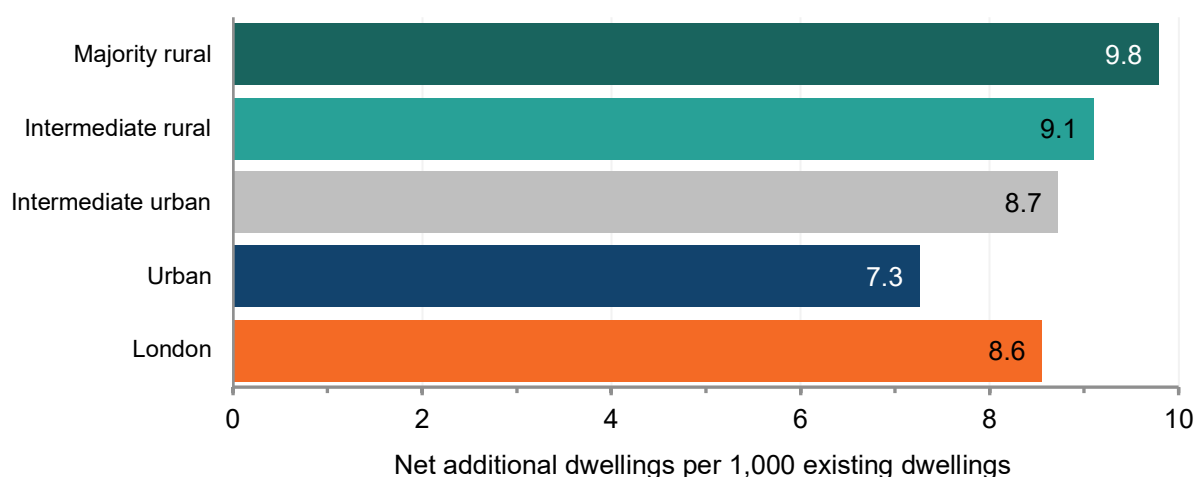
- There were proportionally more newly built dwellings in majority rural authorities than in other types of authority. In 2024-25, there were 9.1 new dwellings built per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, compared with 6.6 newly built dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings in urban authorities outside of London (the lowest of all types of authority).
- There were similar rates of conversions or changes of use outside of London for all types of authority, at 0.1 and 0.7 net additions per 1,000 existing dwellings, respectively.

- There were similar rates of demolitions outside of London for all authority types, at 0.2 net demolitions per 1,000 existing dwellings. The rate of housebuilding was more than 40 times the rate of demolition across England (45 times in majority rural authorities).

Outside of London, the more rural the type of authority, the higher the rate of net additional dwellings in 2024-25. Overall, there were more net additional dwellings in majority rural authorities (9.8 additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings) than in other types of authority. There were 9.8 additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities; this is 2.5 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings more than in urban authorities outside of London (the lowest of all types of authority). In London, there were 8.6 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings; this was similar to rates seen in intermediate urban authorities. The rates of net additional dwellings across types of authority are shown in Figure C-2.

Figure C-2: Bar chart showing net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note C-4)

‘Urban’ excludes London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CA in the [supplementary data tables](#), alongside data for all other types of authority.



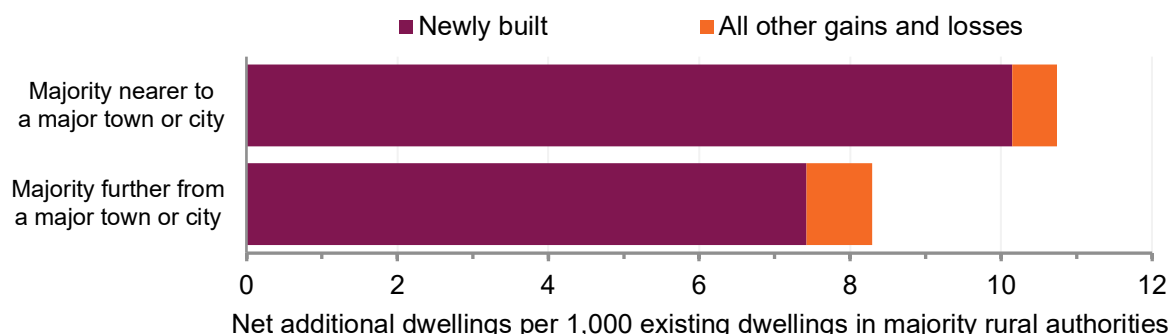
Proximity to major towns and cities has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside ‘nearer to’ or ‘further from’ a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note C-3. The bar chart in Figure C-3 shows the net additional dwellings in majority rural authorities in 2024-25 by relative access. The majority of net additions come from newly built dwellings, and the contribution of other gains and losses (including conversions, changes of use, demolitions, and more) was minimal; for this reason, they have been combined into a single category in Figure C-3.

Of all majority rural authorities, there were more net additional dwellings from newly built development where the majority of people lived nearer to a major town or city than where the majority lived further away. Rates were 10.2 additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings for authorities where the majority of the population lived nearer to a major town or city, compared with 7.4 per 1,000 for those further away.

The contribution of other components of change (including net conversions, changes of use and demolitions) was similar across both types of majority rural authority. Rates for the individual flow components can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Figure C-3: Bar chart showing component flows of net additional dwellings per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, by proximity to major towns or cities for the majority of the population, 2024-25 (Note C-3, Note C-4)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CB in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Housebuilding completions

As shown within the [net additions to housing stock](#) subsection, newly built dwellings are the biggest contributor to the increase in the housing supply. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government publish '[Housing supply: indicators of new supply](#)' quarterly, accompanied by an annual subnational summary; the latest annual data are for 2024 to 2025. Housebuilding completion rates may not correspond to the figures for newly built dwellings presented within the net additional dwellings analysis. Data on newly built dwellings collected for net additional dwellings are more comprehensive; for more information regarding the differences in statistics for newly built dwellings, see Note C-6.

For the housebuilding statistics, the tenure of the developer refers to the nature of the organisation responsible for the development of a new housing start or completion (Note C-5). The proportions of completions of new dwellings differ by tenure. The bar chart in Figure C-4 shows the proportion of housebuilding completions by tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification in 2024-25.

Private enterprise completions represent dwellings completed by private sector developers, including speculative housebuilders and other private companies; these accounted for the majority of housebuilding completions in 2024-25 across all types of authority. In majority rural, intermediate rural, and urban authorities outside London, private enterprise represented 77% of all housebuilding completions, followed by 71% in London, and 70% in intermediate urban authorities.

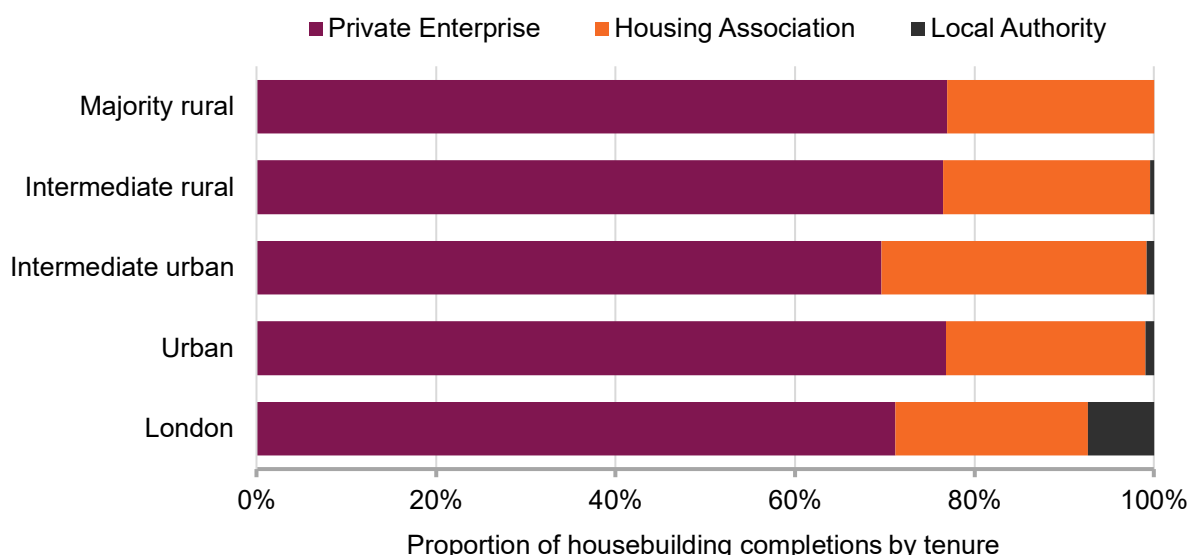
Housing association completions represent dwellings completed by registered providers, typically as part of affordable housing programmes; these generally contribute towards social rent, affordable rent, and shared ownership schemes. Housing associations accounted for between 21% and 23% of all housebuilding completions in all types of authority except intermediate urban (30%).

Local authority completions refer to those completed directly by councils. They accounted for the smallest proportion of housebuilding in 2024-25. There were little or no local authority completions in majority rural authorities. Fewer than 1% of completions in intermediate rural authorities were by the local authorities themselves, followed by 1% in both intermediate urban and urban authorities outside of London. In London, local authorities accounted for 7% of all

housebuilding completions; this means that more than 60% of local authority housebuilding completions in England were in London.

Figure C-4: Bar chart showing the proportion of housebuilding completions by developer tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note C-5)

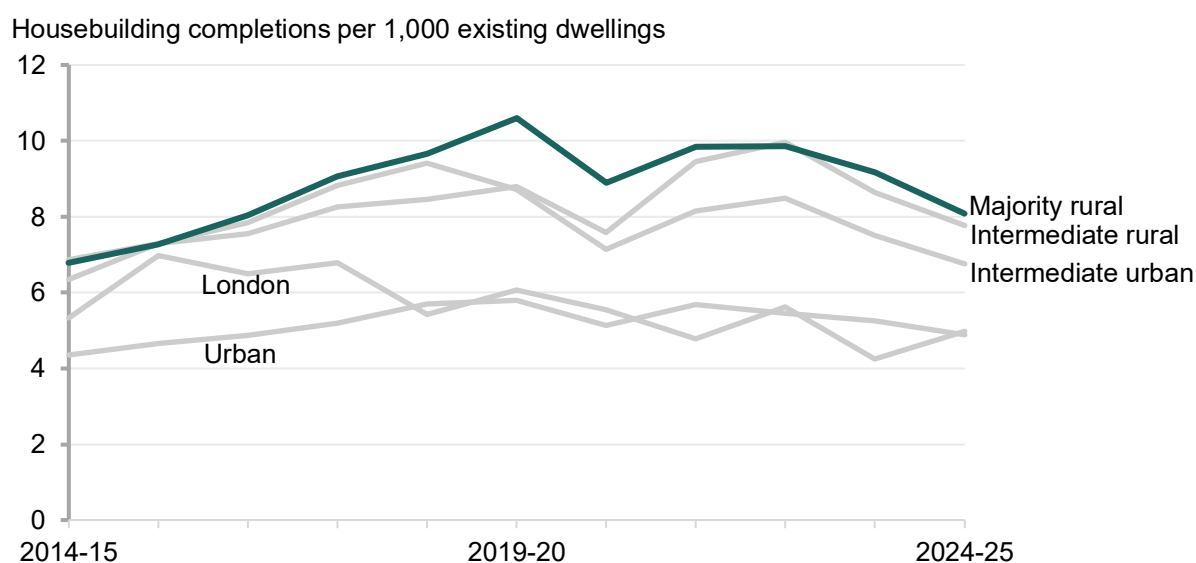
The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. 'Urban' excludes London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CC in the [supplementary data tables](#).



The rate of housebuilding completions fluctuates over time, but generally, is highest in majority rural authorities. The line chart in Figure C-5 shows the trends in housebuilding completions between 2014-15 and 2024-25, by 2021 rural-urban classification.

Figure C-5: Line chart showing the change in housebuilding completions over time, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2014-15 to 2024-25 (Note C-6)

The line representing majority rural authorities is coloured to draw focus. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CD in the [supplementary data tables](#).



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

- The rate of housebuilding completions was generally highest in majority rural authorities, and lowest in urban authorities, across the period. In 2024-25, there were 8.1 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, compared with 4.9 and 5.0 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in urban authorities and in London, respectively.
- Between 2014-15 and 2019-20, housebuilding completion rates increased overall across all types of authority, before decreasing sharply around 2020-21; this was likely an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- From 2021-22, rates began to return to normal. However, in recent years there have been further decreases in housebuilding completion rates in all types of authority outside of London. Between 2022-23 and 2024-25, rates decreased by 1.8 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, and by 2.2 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in intermediate rural authorities. In intermediate urban authorities, rates decreased by 1.7 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings. In urban authorities (both in and outside London), rates decreased by 0.6 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings.
- Although not presented directly in the chart, trends in housebuilding completion rates differ by developer tenure. The rate of private enterprise completions was generally highest in majority rural authorities across the period, but housing association and local authority completion rates were more variable. Data for trends by developer tenure can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Proximity to major towns and cities has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside 'nearer to' or 'further from' a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note C-3.

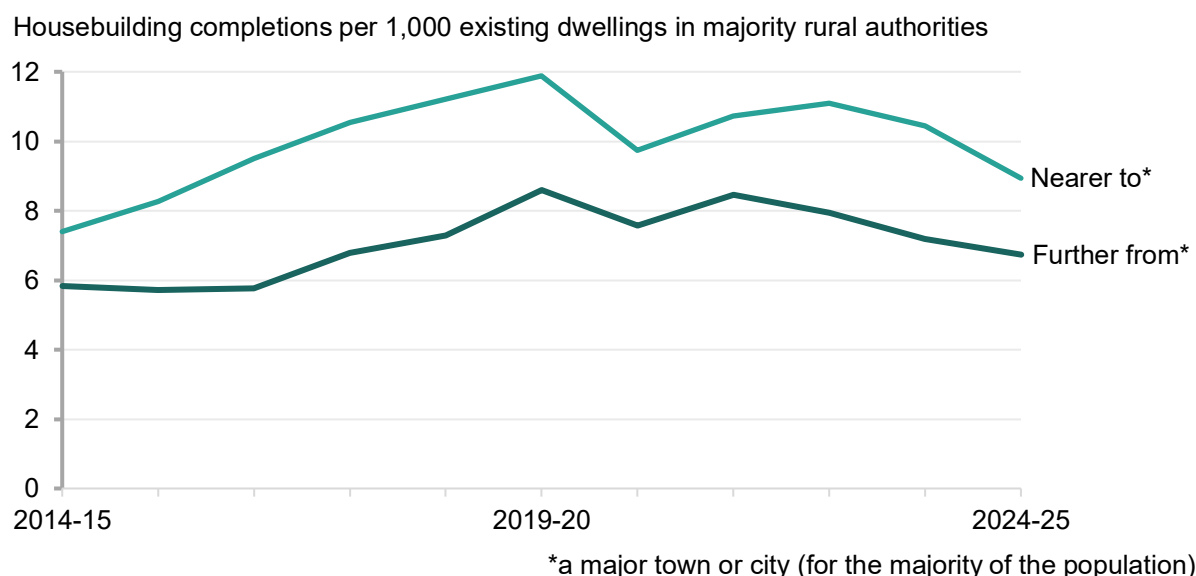
The rate of housebuilding completions fluctuates over time, but generally, is highest in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to major towns or cities. The line chart in Figure C-6 shows the trends in housebuilding completions in majority rural authorities between 2014-15 and 2024-25, by relative access. It can be described as follows:

- Housebuilding completion rates were higher in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to major towns or cities. In 2024-25, there were 8.9 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in these authorities, compared with 6.7 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in authorities where the majority of residents lived further from major towns or cities.
- Both types of majority rural authority – whether the majority of the population live nearer to or further from a major town or city – showed similar trends in housebuilding completion rates between 2014-15 and 2024-15.
- Between 2014-15 and 2019-20, completion rates increased in both types of authority, before decreasing sharply around 2020-21 - a likely an effect of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- From 2021-22, rates recovered. However, in recent years there have been decreases in housebuilding completion rates in both types of authority. Between 2022-23 and 2024-25, rates decreased by 2.2 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities where

the majority of the population live nearer to major towns or cities; this compares to a decrease of 1.2 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in authorities where the majority of residents live further from major towns or cities.

Figure C-6: Line chart showing the change in housebuilding completions in majority rural authorities over time, by proximity to major towns or cities for the majority of the population, England, 2014-15 to 2024-25 (Note C-3, Note C-6)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CD in the [supplementary tables](#).

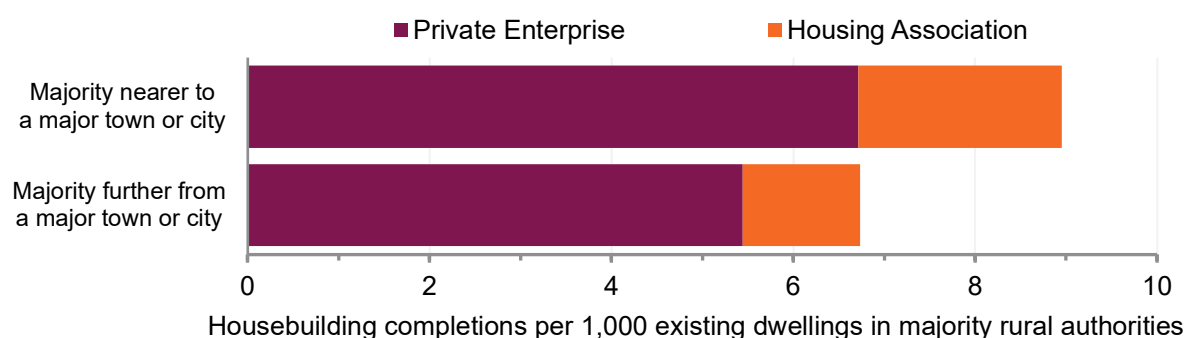


Housebuilding completion rates in majority rural authorities differ depending on the tenure of the developer. Private enterprise and housing association completion rates were higher in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population lived nearer to major towns or cities. There were little or no local authority completions in majority rural authorities in 2024-25.

The bar chart in Figure C-7 shows the housebuilding completion rates within majority rural authorities, by developer tenure.

Figure C-7: Bar chart showing housebuilding completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, by developer tenure and proximity to major towns or cities for the majority of the population, 2014-15 to 2024-25 (Note C-3, Note C-5, Note C-6)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. There were little to no local authority housebuilding completions in majority rural authorities, and therefore these have been excluded from the chart. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet CE in the [supplementary data tables](#).



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

- In 2024-25, there were 6.7 **private enterprise** completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population lived nearer to a major town or city, compared with 5.4 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in authorities where the majority lived further away.
- In 2024-25, there were 2.2 **housing association** completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population lived nearer to a major town or city, compared with 1.3 completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in authorities where the majority lived further away.

Additions to the housing stock - explanatory notes

• Note C-1

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

• Note C-2

Data for housebuilding completions are rounded to the nearest 10 dwellings. Rates specified within this section are rounded to the nearest 0.1 dwellings (e.g. completions, demolitions, etc.) per 1,000 existing dwellings. Values presented for the latest year are provisional and subject to revision.

• Note C-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 C-4

Other gains and losses comprise changes to the dwelling stock that are not classified as newly built, conversion, change of use, or demolition, and mainly include dwellings such as caravans and houseboats. For more information, see [Housing supply: net additional dwellings, England - technical notes - GOV.UK](#)

• Note C-5

For the purposes of the building control statistics, the term tenure (or tenure of developer) refers to the nature of the organisation responsible for the development of a new housing start or completion. It does not necessarily describe the terms of occupancy for the dwelling on completion. For example, some housing associations develop homes for sale on the open market. Such homes would be reported in the Housing Association tenure of these statistics but would ultimately most likely be owned and occupied in the private sector. For more information, see [Housing supply: indicators of new supply, England - technical notes - GOV.UK](#).

• Note C-6

The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government state that:

"New build figures from the annual 'housing supply; net additional dwellings' statistical release may not correspond to new build data from the quarterly 'Housing supply: indicators of supply' building control reported completions statistical release. New build data collected for 'net additions dwellings' is more comprehensive, as collection is over a longer time period, is based on all available evidence (e.g. site visits, council tax records, planning databases, building control records and any other sources), and may pick up some elements missing from the quarterly P2 and AIR collections (which are based on building control reported completions only)."

For more information about how these datasets compare, see the 'related statistics' section within the latest [housing supply: net additional dwellings: technical notes](#).

D. Additions to affordable housing

Outside London, the delivery of new affordable housing relative to housing stock was highest in majority rural authorities, with additions concentrated in areas nearer to a major town or city.

Additions to affordable housing - key findings

Affordable housing delivery for rent has increased

- Between 2015-16 and 2024-25, majority rural authorities saw the largest increase in the rate of additions of affordable housing for rent, relative to the housing stock, rising from an average of 0.9 to 1.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings.
- In comparison, in urban authorities outside London, rates increased from an average of 0.9 to 1.3 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings – the lowest increase in the average of all types of authority.

Social rent accounts for around one-third of affordable rented housing delivery

- In majority rural authorities, 32% of new affordable rented homes were delivered for social rent in 2024-25.

Intermediate affordable housing delivery has increased

- Between 2015-16 and 2024-25, majority rural authorities saw the largest increase in the rate of additions to intermediate affordable housing (below-market-cost housing) relative to existing house stock, rising from an average of 0.4 to 1.2 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings.
- In comparison, in urban authorities outside London, rates increased from an average of 0.2 to 0.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings – the lowest increase of all types of authority.

Almost all intermediate affordable housing delivery was for shared ownership

- In majority rural authorities, 93% of intermediate affordable housing (below-market-cost housing) additions were for shared ownership schemes, followed by 3% for affordable home ownership schemes, and 2% each for intermediate rent and first homes.
- In comparison, in urban authorities outside London, 91% of intermediate affordable housing additions were for shared ownership schemes; this was the lowest rate outside London, however the rate in London was considerably lower (71%).

Summary

This section presents statistics on additional affordable housing based on the [affordable housing supply](#) release. Additional affordable housing supply includes newly built affordable homes and acquisitions of private housing by affordable housing providers. The figures measure gross additions to the affordable housing stock and do not take account of losses, such as demolitions, sales to tenants or other disposals. Within this section, additions are presented separately for affordable housing for rent (e.g. social rent, affordable rent) and intermediate affordable housing.

For affordable housing for rent, majority rural authorities generally recorded higher rates of delivery than other types of authority outside London. In 2024-25, there was an average of 1.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities, compared with 1.3 in urban authorities outside London. Rates were generally higher in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city. Affordable rent schemes accounted for most additions. Just over half (52%) of affordable housing additions for rent in majority rural authorities were delivered through Section 106 agreements (planning obligations) in 2024-25.

For intermediate affordable housing (below-market-cost housing), majority rural authorities had the highest average rate of additions across authority types in 2024-25, with an average of 1.2 per 1,000 existing dwellings. Rates have tended to be higher in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city. Shared ownership schemes accounted for most additions across all types of authority, whilst around 46% of additions in majority rural authorities were delivered through Section 106 agreements.

The total number of affordable housing additions across settlements with populations below 3,000 fluctuated between 4,000 and 6,000 homes between 2015-16 and 2024-25. The number of newly built affordable homes delivered on rural exception sites (sites for local affordable housing) showed an overall decline between 2015-16 and 2024-25, falling from a peak of 1,071 homes in 2016-17 to a low of 395 homes in 2024-25.

Additions to affordable housing for rent

Within this publication, affordable homes for rent includes those delivered for 'affordable rent' (including London affordable rent) and 'social rent'. Definitions of these tenures can be found in Note D-3.

Affordable housing for rent often overlaps with the definition of social housing, as explained in Note D-1. Additional affordable housing supply includes newly built affordable homes and acquisitions of private housing by affordable housing providers. The figures measure gross additions to the affordable housing stock and do not take account of losses, such as demolitions, sales to tenants or other disposals. This subsection analyses the change in the rate of additions to affordable housing for rent over time, as well as looking at additions to affordable housing by tenure, and also evaluates the proportion delivered through Section 106 agreements (planning obligations).

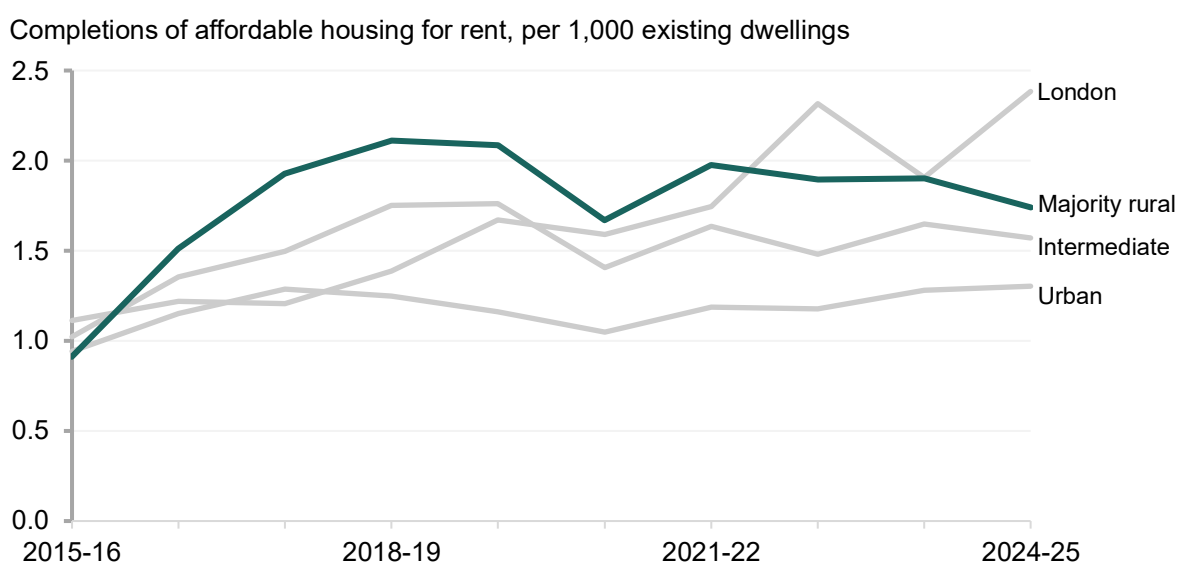
Change in the rate of additions to affordable housing for rent over time

In 2024-25, there were 4,930 new affordable homes for rent in majority rural authorities. With around 2,831,000 existing dwellings in these authorities, that means there were 1.7 additions to affordable housing for rent per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities in 2024-25. In this context existing dwellings means the entire housing stock irrespective of tenure. In comparison, in urban authorities outside London, there were 16,320 new affordable homes for rent and around 12,538,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25, resulting in 1.3 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings; this is a lower rate than in majority rural authorities.

The line chart in Figure D-1 shows the rate of new affordable homes for rent relative to existing house stock between 2015-16 and 2024-25 by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England. Rates were generally highest in majority rural authorities for much of the period, although London experienced stronger growth and recorded the highest rate by 2024-25.

Figure D-1: Line chart showing affordable housing completions for rent, per 1,000 existing dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-3, Note D-7, Note D-10)

The line representing majority rural authorities is coloured to draw focus. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DA in the [supplementary data tables](#).



In 2015-16, the average completion rates of new affordable homes for rent relative to existing house stock were similar across all types of authority in England, ranging from averages of 0.9 to 1.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings. Average rates subsequently increased across most types of authority. The increase was greatest in majority rural authorities, where average rates rose to a peak of 2.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2018-19, before dropping to 1.7 in 2020-21; this coincides with a decrease in housebuilding activity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rates in majority rural authorities recovered to an average of 2.0 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2021-22, before dropping to 1.7 by 2024-25. Intermediate authorities followed a similar pattern but at lower rates, peaking at an average of 1.8 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2019-20 and remaining between 1.4 and 1.6 thereafter.

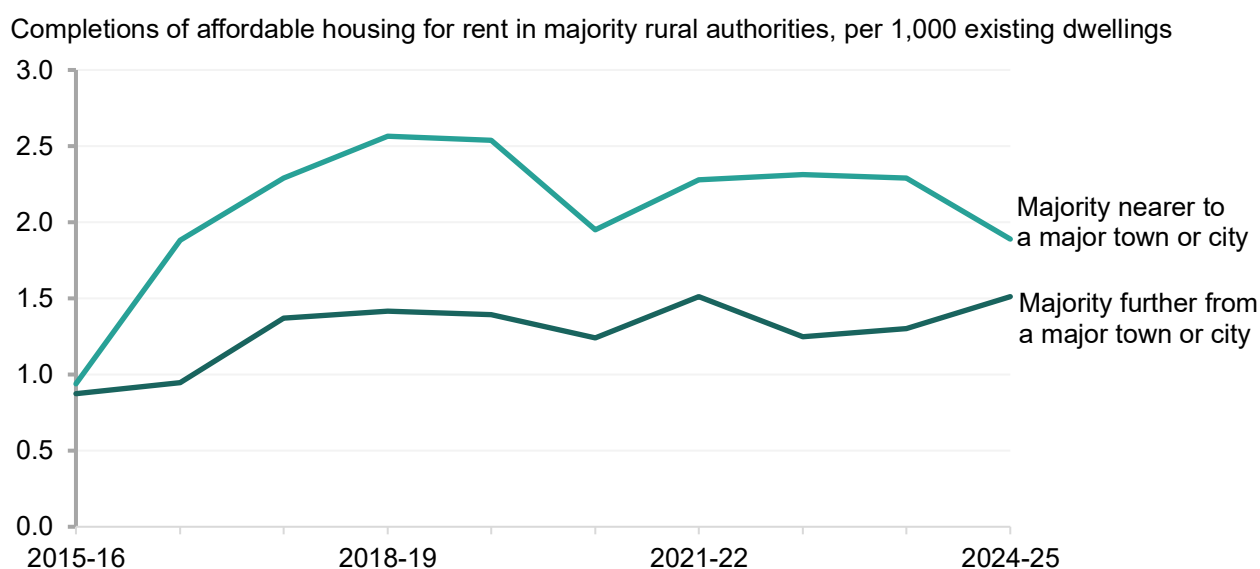
London showed a different trend. Rates generally increased over the period, reaching an average of 2.4 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25, the highest rate of any authority type. In

contrast, urban authorities outside London consistently recorded the lowest rates, fluctuating between an average of 0.9 and 1.3 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings.

Proximity to a major town or city has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside 'nearer to' or 'further from' a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note D-9. The line chart in Figure D-2 shows the rate of new affordable homes for rent between 2015-16 and 2024-25 in majority rural authorities, by relative access. Throughout most of the period, average rates were higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

Figure D-2: Line chart showing affordable housing completions for rent, per 1,000 existing dwellings, in majority rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by relative access, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-3, Note D-7, Note D-9)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DA in the [supplementary data tables](#). Scales differ between this chart and Figure D-1.



Rates of new affordable homes for rent were similar in both groups of majority rural authorities in 2015-16, at around an average of 0.9 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings. From 2016-17 onwards, average rates were consistently higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

In these authorities, average rates increased rapidly to a peak of 2.6 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2018-19, before falling to 1.9 in 2020-21. Average rates subsequently recovered to around 2.3 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings before declining again to 1.9 in 2024-25.

In authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city, average rates were lower and less variable throughout the period. Average rates increased overall from an average of 0.9 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2015-16 to 1.5 in 2024-25. Average rates generally fluctuated between 1.2 and 1.5 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings from 2017-18 onwards.

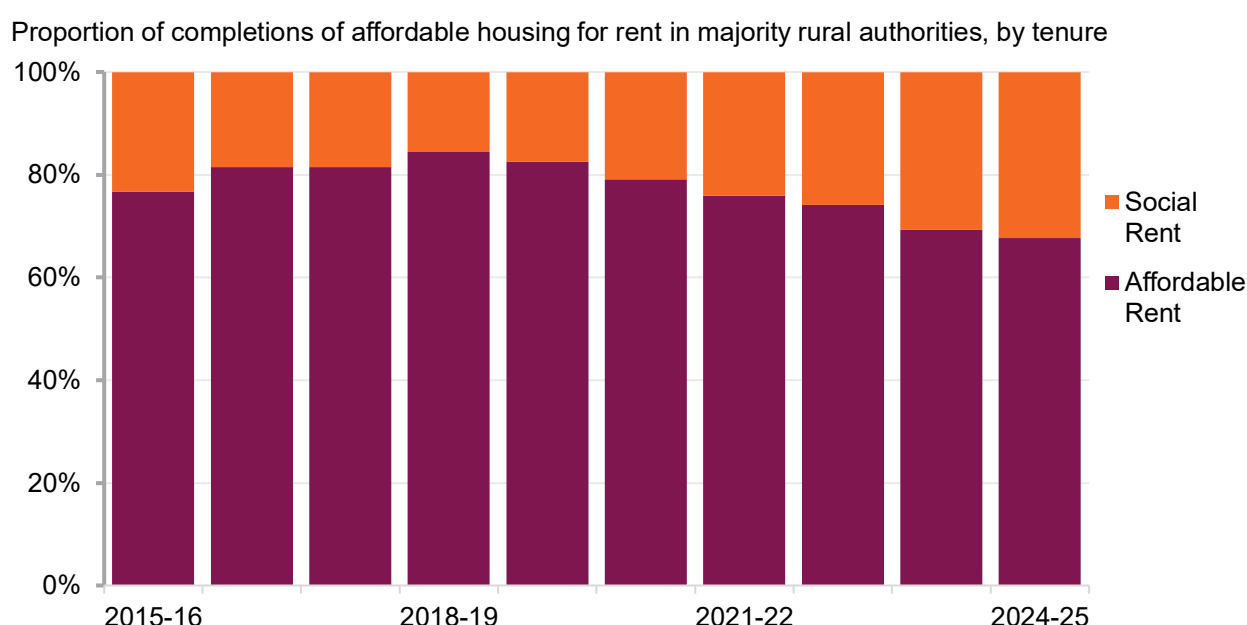
The gap between the two groups widened between 2015-16 and 2018-19 and remained evident throughout the remainder of the period.

Additions to affordable housing for rent, by tenure

The line chart in Figure D-1 showed that additions to affordable housing for rent varied between types of authority. However, the tenure composition also varied. Affordable housing for rent comprises homes let at either social rent or affordable rent. Social rents are set using a national rent formula and are typically lower than affordable rents, which may be charged at up to 80% of local market rents. The bar chart in Figure D-3 shows the proportional change in the tenure composition of completions of affordable housing for rent in majority rural authorities between 2015-16 and 2024-25.

Figure D-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of affordable housing completions for rent in majority rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by tenure, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-3, Note D-7)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DB in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Affordable rent accounted for the majority of new affordable homes for rent in majority rural authorities throughout the period. Its share increased from 77% in 2015-16 to a peak of 84% in 2018-19, before declining to 68% in 2024-25. The proportion of completions for social rent followed the opposite trend, falling from 23% in 2015-16 to 16% in 2018-19 before increasing to 32% in 2024-25. Despite this increase, affordable rent remained the most common tenure in every year shown.

In other types of authority, the tenure composition followed similar trends. In 2024-25, 35% of new affordable rented homes were delivered for social rent in urban authorities outside London, followed by 34% in intermediate urban authorities, 24% in London, and 19% in intermediate rural authorities. The full data table for all types of authority can be found within the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

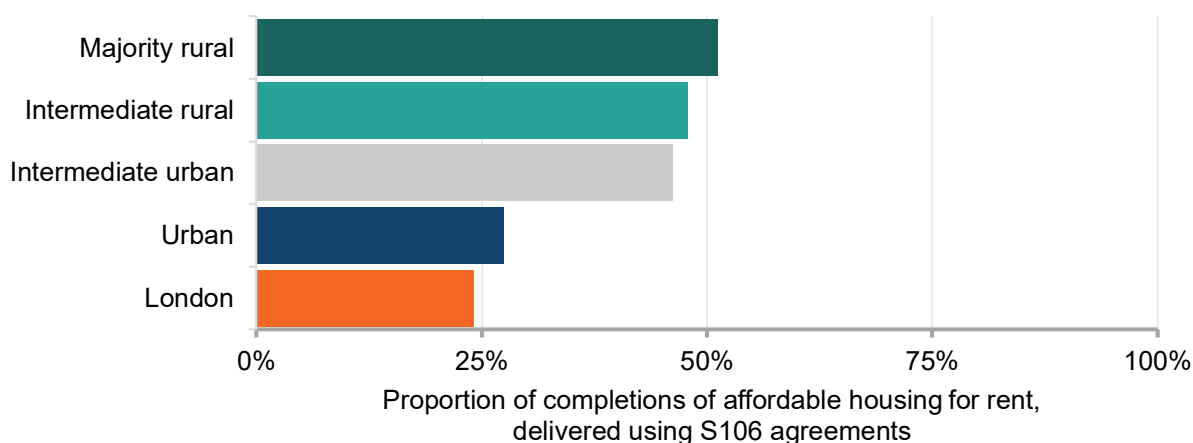
Affordable housing for rent delivered through Section 106 agreements

A [Section 106 \(S106\) agreement](#) is a legally binding agreement between a local planning authority and a property developer under which the developer agrees to provide defined facilities, such as affordable housing, as part of the proposed development (Note D-14). The bar chart in Figure D-4 shows the proportion of affordable housing additions delivered for rent through S106 agreements in 2024-25, by 2021 rural-urban classification.

The more rural the type of authority, the higher the proportion of additions delivered through S106 agreements. In majority rural authorities, just over half (51%) of new affordable homes for rent were delivered through S106 agreements in 2024-25. This compared with 48% in intermediate rural and 46% in intermediate urban authorities, 28% in urban authorities outside London, and 24% in London.

Figure D-4: Bar chart showing the proportion of affordable housing completions for rent delivered using Section 106 (S106) agreements, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note D-3, Note D-7)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DC in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Additions to intermediate affordable housing

Intermediate affordable housing provides a route into home ownership or lower-cost housing for households whose needs are not met by the open market, but who may not be eligible for social rented housing. Within this publication, intermediate affordable housing includes those delivered for the following tenures: 'affordable home ownership', 'first homes', 'intermediate rent', and 'shared ownership'. Definitions of these tenures can be found in Note D-4.

Additional affordable housing supply includes newly built affordable homes and acquisitions of private housing by affordable housing providers. The figures measure gross additions to the affordable housing stock and do not take account of losses, such as demolitions, sales to tenants or other disposals. This subsection analyses the change in the rate of additions to intermediate affordable housing over time, as well as looking at additions by tenure, and also evaluates the proportion delivered through Section 106 agreements.

Change in the rate of additions to intermediate affordable housing over time

In 2024-25, there were around 3,280 additions to intermediate affordable housing in majority rural authorities. With around 2,831,000 existing dwellings in these authorities, that means there were an average of 1.2 additions to intermediate affordable housing per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities in 2024-25. In comparison, in urban authorities outside London, there were around 8,320 additions to intermediate affordable housing and around 12,538,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25, resulting in an average of 0.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings; this is a lower rate than the average for majority rural authorities.

The line chart in Figure D-5 shows the rate of additions to intermediate affordable housing between 2015-16 and 2024-25, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England. Across the period, majority rural authorities saw the largest increase in the rate of completions.

Figure D-5: Line chart showing intermediate affordable housing completions per 1,000 existing dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-4, Note D-7)

The line representing majority rural authorities is coloured to draw focus. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DD in the [supplementary data tables](#). Scales differ between this chart and Figure D-1.



In 2015-16, the average completion rates of intermediate affordable housing were similar across all types of authority in England, ranging from 0.2 to 0.5 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings. Rates subsequently increased across all types of authority. The increase was greatest in majority rural authorities, where rates rose to a peak of an average 1.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2019-20, before falling to 0.9 in 2020-21; this coincides with a decrease in housebuilding activity throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

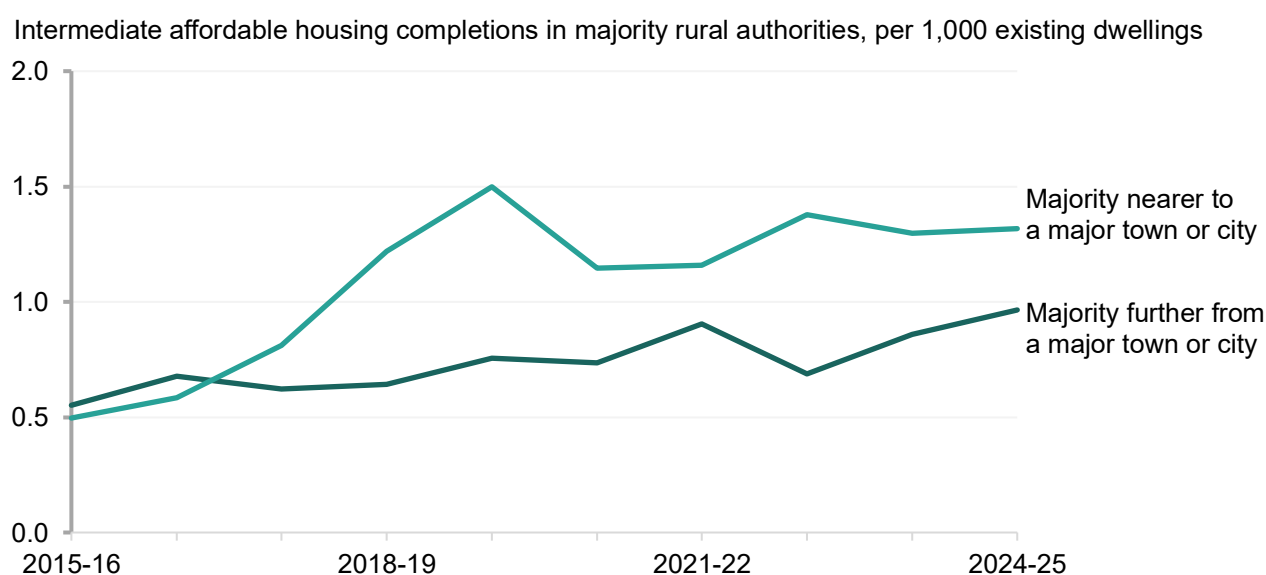
Rates in majority rural authorities gradually recovered, reaching an average of 1.2 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25. Intermediate rural authorities followed a similar pattern, but at lower rates, increasing to an average of around 1.0 addition per 1,000 existing dwellings from 2022-23 onwards. In intermediate urban authorities, rates were more variable, fluctuating between an average of 0.8 and 1.0 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings from 2018-19 to 2024-25.

London initially followed a similar trend, but experienced a smaller decline in 2020-21 and subsequently increased to a peak average of 1.2 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2022-23. Whilst rates remained relatively stable thereafter in other types of authority, rates in London fell to an average of 0.8 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25 – lower than in all other types of authority except urban. Rates in urban authorities outside London increased more steadily over the period, reaching an average of 0.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25.

Proximity to major towns and cities has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside 'nearer to' or 'further from' a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note D-9. The line chart in Figure D-6 shows the rate of additions to intermediate affordable housing, between 2015-16 and 2024-25, in majority rural authorities only, by relative access. In recent years, rates were typically higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

Figure D-6: Line chart showing intermediate affordable housing completions per 1,000 existing dwellings in majority rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by relative access, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-4, Note D-7, Note D-9)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DD in the [supplementary data tables](#). Scales differ between this chart and Figure D-5.



Rates of intermediate affordable housing completions were similar in both groups of majority rural authorities at the start of the period, with averages ranging from 0.5 to 0.7 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings between 2015-16 and 2016-17. From 2017-18 onwards, rates were consistently higher in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

In these authorities, rates increased rapidly to a peak average of 1.5 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2019-20, compared with an average of 0.8 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in authorities where the majority live further from a major town or city. Rates then fell to an average of 1.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2020-21 before recovering to an average of around 1.3 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings by 2024-25.

In authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city, rates followed a more gradual upward trend, increasing from an average of 0.6 additions per 1,000

existing dwellings in 2015-16 to 1.0 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings in 2024-25. The gap between the two groups widened between 2016-17 and 2019-20 and remained evident throughout the remainder of the period.

Additions to intermediate affordable housing, by tenure

The line chart in Figure D-5 showed that additions to intermediate affordable housing varied between types of authority. However, the tenure composition also varied. Intermediate affordable housing comprises homes for sale or let through the following tenures: 'affordable home ownership', 'first homes', 'intermediate rent', and 'shared ownership'. Table D-1 shows the proportion of additions to intermediate affordable housing, by tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification.

Table D-1: Proportion of additions to intermediate affordable housing, by tenure and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note D-4, Note D-7)

Proportions are rounded to the nearest 0.1%. A full table of data relating to this figure can be found within Worksheet DE in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-urban classification 2021	Shared Ownership	Intermediate Rent	Affordable Home Ownership	First Homes
Majority rural	93.4	2.0	2.6	2.0
Intermediate rural	91.9	1.9	4.3	1.9
Intermediate urban	92.0	5.0	2.6	0.5
Urban (excluding London)	90.6	6.1	1.6	1.7
London	71.3	27.5	1.2	0.0
England	87.8	8.7	2.2	1.3

Across England, shared ownership schemes accounted for most of the additions to intermediate affordable housing in 2024-25. In comparison, intermediate rent, affordable home ownership, and first homes schemes accounted for relatively small proportion of additions.

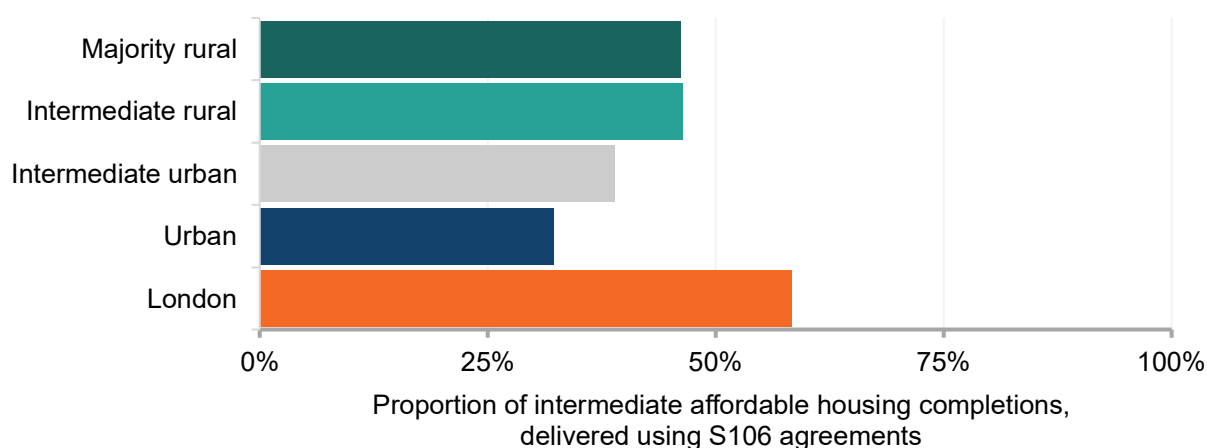
- Across majority rural authorities, 93% of intermediate affordable housing additions were for shared ownership schemes; this was similar to the rate in intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities, slightly higher than urban authorities, and more than 20 percentage points higher than in London.
- Outside London, intermediate rent accounted for small proportions of intermediate affordable housing additions, ranging from 2% to 6%. In London, rates were considerably higher, at 27%.
- Affordable home ownership schemes (e.g., equity loans, rent-to-buy) accounted for just 3% of intermediate affordable housing additions in majority rural and intermediate urban authorities; rates were similar across types of authority, ranging from 1% to 4% of additions.
- First homes schemes accounted for just 2% of intermediate affordable housing additions in majority rural, intermediate rural, and urban authorities outside London in 2024-25. In intermediate urban authorities and in London, there were little to no additions to first homes schemes.

Intermediate affordable housing delivered through Section 106 agreements

A [Section 106 \(S106\) agreement](#) is a legally binding agreement between a local planning authority and a property developer under which the developer agrees to provide defined facilities, such as affordable housing, as part of the proposed development (Note D-14). The bar chart in Figure D-7 shows the proportion of intermediate affordable housing additions delivered through S106 agreements in 2024-25, by 2021 rural-urban classification.

Figure D-7: Bar chart showing the proportion of additions to intermediate affordable housing delivered using Section 106 (S106) agreements, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note D-4, Note D-7)

‘Urban’ excludes London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DF in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Nearly half (46%) of additions to intermediate affordable housing in majority rural authorities were delivered through S106 agreements in 2024-25, the highest proportion amongst all types of authority outside London; rates in intermediate rural authorities were similar. In intermediate urban authorities, 39% of intermediate affordable housing additions were delivered through S106 agreements, compared with 32% in urban authorities. In London, 58% of additions were delivered through S106 agreements – 12 percentage points more than in majority rural and intermediate rural authorities.

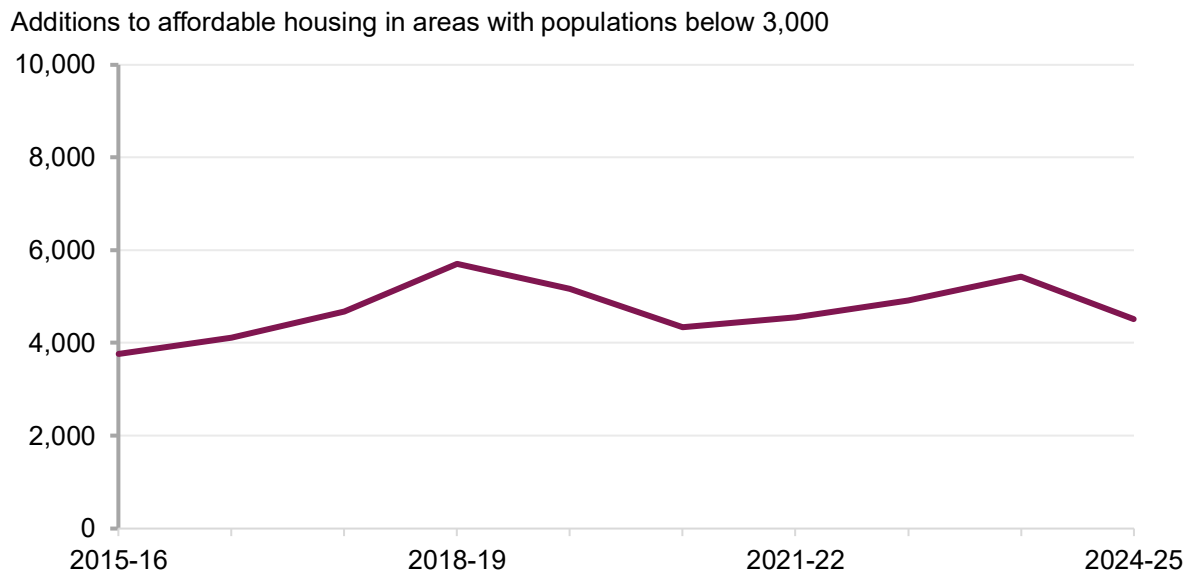
Additions to affordable housing in small settlements

Affordable housing delivery in settlements with populations below 3,000 provides an indication of whether the availability of affordable housing is increasing in smaller rural communities, where housing options may be limited.

The line chart in Figure D-8 shows that the total number of additions to affordable housing across settlements with populations below 3,000 varied between 4,000 and 6,000 over the period 2015-16 to 2024-25. Affordable housing additions across such settlements increased from 3,760 homes in 2015-16 to 4,520 homes in 2024-25. Additions peaked at total of 5,700 homes in 2018-19 before declining and then fluctuating between around 4,300 and 5,400 homes in subsequent years.

Figure D-8: Line chart showing the number of additions to affordable housing in settlements with populations below 3,000, 2015-16 to 2024-25 (Note D-7, Note D-12)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DJ in the [supplementary data tables](#).

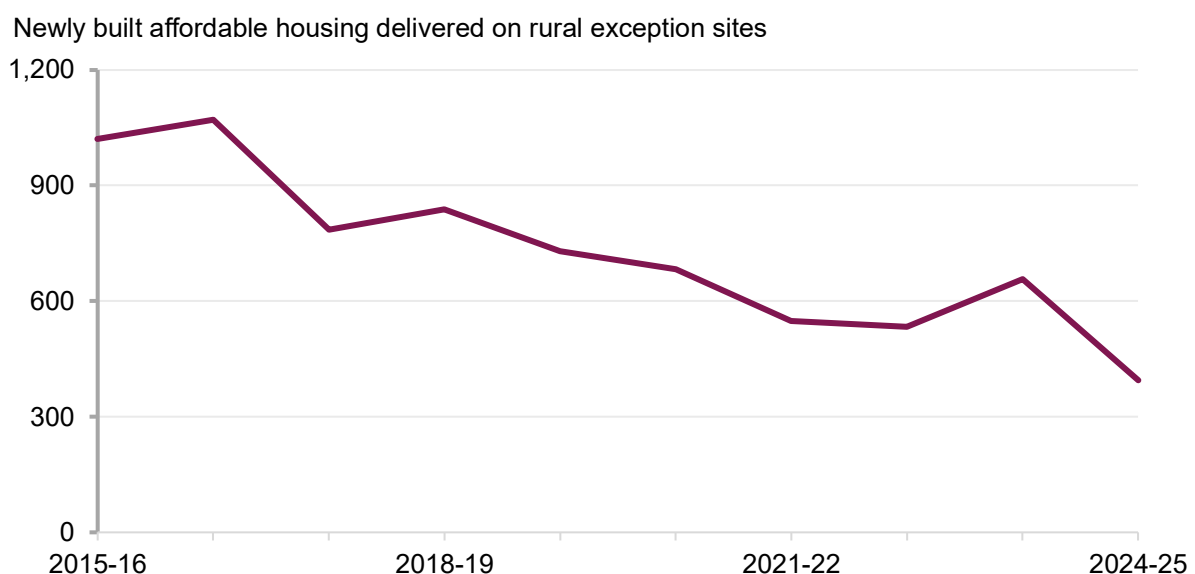


Newly built affordable housing on rural exception sites

Rural exception sites are a mechanism for delivering affordable housing in rural areas. They are small sites, typically on the edge of existing settlements, where affordable housing may be developed on land that would not normally be used for housing in order to meet local housing needs.

Figure D-9: Line chart showing the number of newly built affordable housing delivered on rural exception sites in England, 2015-15 to 2024-25 (Note D-7, Note D-12)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet DJ in the [supplementary data tables](#). Scales differ between this chart and Figure D-8.



The line chart in Figure D-9 shows that the number of newly built affordable housing delivered on rural exception sites showed an overall downward trend between 2015-16 and 2024-25. Delivery peaked at a total of 1,071 homes in 2016-17 before declining over much of the period. Although the number of homes delivered increased to 657 in 2023-24, delivery subsequently fell to 395 homes in 2024-25, the lowest level in the series. The increase in 2023-24 was partly driven by activity in Somerset, where 202 affordable homes were delivered on rural exception sites. This accounted for almost one-third of all homes delivered on rural exception sites in England that year and was substantially higher than the number delivered in Somerset in most other years.

Additions to affordable housing - explanatory notes

• Note D-1

New affordable housing supply is defined as housing units (or bed spaces) provided to specified eligible households, whose needs are not met by the market, in addition to existing stock of affordable housing.

The definitions of affordable and social housing overlap for the vast majority of properties, although there are a few differences. First Homes, an affordable housing tenure, does not count as social housing (tenure being the type of housing, such as social rent, affordable rent or shared ownership). There are also some other instances where social housing and affordable housing differ, particularly in intermediate rent and affordable home ownership tenures, but it is not possible to identify these instances in the underlying data.

Additionally, affordable housing owned by non-registered providers is not counted as social housing in the department's statistical releases. The vast majority of social housing providers are registered with the Regulator of Social Housing and only these providers can apply for grant funding to provide low-cost rental accommodation, such as social rent and affordable rent.

Because the data on new supply is collected for affordable housing only, for statistical purposes, an estimate of new social housing can be considered a subset of new affordable housing provided by local authorities, private registered providers and where there is no provider information (provider unknown) for all tenures excluding First Homes but including units where the tenure is unknown.

For further information, see [Affordable housing supply statistics in England: 2024 to 2025 - technical notes](#).

• Note D-2

Homes England (previously the Homes and Communities Agency) is responsible for the delivery of affordable housing in England, except London. They are responsible for increasing the number of new homes that are built in England, including affordable homes.

• Note D-3

Within the analysis presented in this section, affordable homes for rent can be delivered via:

- **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. Within this analysis, this has been combined with the 'affordable rent' category.
- **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 D-4

Within the analysis presented in this section, intermediate 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).
- **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. Intermediate rent therefore sits between social housing and the open market. It is aimed at households whose incomes are too high for social housing, but who cannot afford market housing.
- **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.

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

• Note D-5

Additions to social housing are measured using completions rather than starts. Dwelling completions are added into the stock in the specified year through new building or acquisition.

• Note D-6

The underlying data relating to this section can be found within the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

• Note D-7

The periods specified within this section are financial years, e.g. 2024-25 represents data for year ending March 2025. Data are presented from 2015-16 for fair comparison; in 2014-15, a spike in delivery occurred due to the end of the Affordable Homes Programme. For more information about the longer-term trends, see the source report ([Affordable housing supply in England: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)).

• Note D-8

Proportions are rounded to the nearest 1%; rates are rounded to the nearest 0.1 additions per 1,000 existing dwellings; and absolute numbers of additions are rounded to the nearest 10, unless otherwise stated. Therefore, figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

• Note D-9

Rurality and relative access are independent dimensions of the 2021 rural-urban classification. Relative access is based on the proportion of an authority's total population living within or beyond a 30-minute drive of a major town or city (defined as a built-up area with a population of at least 75,000), regardless of whether those residents live in rural or urban areas. As a result, a local authority classified as both 'majority rural' and 'majority further from a major town or city' is not necessarily one where most of the rural population live further from a major town or city. 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 D-10**

In Figure D-1, intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities have been combined into one category to aid comparison due to their rates and trends being similar.

- **Note D-11**

Data for rural exception sites and settlements with populations below 3,000 are sourced from [Local authority housing data - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note D-12**

Not all local authorities held data for the number of additions to affordable housing on rural exception sites or in areas with less than 3,000 residents. Within the source data, these are indicated with an '[x]', suggesting the data were not available. For example, in 2024-25, 26 local authorities had no data regarding the number of new affordable homes built on rural exception sites. Similarly, 30 authorities had no data for the number of new affordable homes built in areas with less than 3,000 residents, and 41 authorities had no data for the number of acquisitions of affordable housing in these areas. For more information, see the [Local Authority Housing Statistics: Technical notes 2024-25 - GOV.UK](#).

- **Note D-13**

This publication was developed using support from generative AI tools to assist with drafting. All analysis, interpretation and final wording were produced, checked and quality-assured by Defra statisticians in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

- **Note D-14**

Local planning authorities are responsible for preparing local plans and determining planning applications. In most areas, the local planning authority is the local authority; however, some areas have separate planning authorities, including National Park Authorities, the Broads Authority and Development Corporations. For more information, see [Local Planning Authority Dataset | Planning Data](#).

E. Households on local authority housing registers

Majority rural authorities had more households on housing registers relative to their social housing stock than other types of authority outside London.

Households on local authority housing registers - key findings

The size of housing registers increased relative to the social housing stock

- In majority rural authorities, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings, there were 337 households on housing registers in 2024-25, up from 274 in 2019-20.
- In 2024-25, majority rural authorities had more households on housing registers relative to their social housing stock than any other type of authority outside London.
- By comparison, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings in urban authorities outside London, there were 299 households on housing registers in 2024-25 – also up from 274 in 2019-20.

Proximity to major towns and cities influences the size of housing registers

- In 2024-25, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city, there were 401 households on housing registers. This compares with 296 households for every 1,000 social dwellings in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

Summary

This section presents statistics on the number of households on local authority housing registers (commonly known as ‘waiting lists’) based on the [Local Authority Housing Statistics \(LAHS\)](#) release. The number of households on these registers can provide an indication of – but is not equivalent to – the demand for social housing. For more information, see Note E-3.

The number of households on local authority housing registers increased relative to the size of the social housing stock in majority rural authorities between 2019-20 and 2024-25. For every 1,000 social housing dwellings, there were 337 households on housing registers in 2024-25, up from 274 households in 2019-20. Amongst majority rural authorities, the average number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock was consistently highest in authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city between 2019-20 and 2024-25.

Across all types of authority, one-bedroom properties accounted for the largest proportion of housing register requirements in 2024-25. In majority rural authorities, 56% of households on housing registers required a one-bedroom property, the highest proportion amongst all types of authority. Two-bedroom properties were the second most common requirement, whilst households requiring four or more bedrooms represented only a small proportion of those on housing registers across England.

There was substantial variation between local authorities in the number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock. In majority rural authorities, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings, the number of households on housing registers ranged from 81 in Herefordshire to 704 in Cornwall.

Background information on housing registers

Local authority housing registers - commonly known as waiting lists - record households seeking access to social housing through a local authority. Local authorities use these registers to allocate social housing to eligible households, often in partnership with private registered providers (PRPs), such as housing associations. Demand for social housing typically exceeds the number of homes available. The number of households on a housing register is only a partial measure of housing need (Note E-3, Note E-5). Housing register data are collected through the annual [Local Authority Housing Statistics \(LAHS\)](#) return, with the latest data for year ending March 2025.

This analysis explores the relationship between the demand for social housing and the size of the social housing stock. Social housing stock is defined here as the combined stock of local authority-owned and private registered provider (PRP) rented dwellings. Low-cost home ownership dwellings are excluded because they are not typically allocated through local authority housing registers.

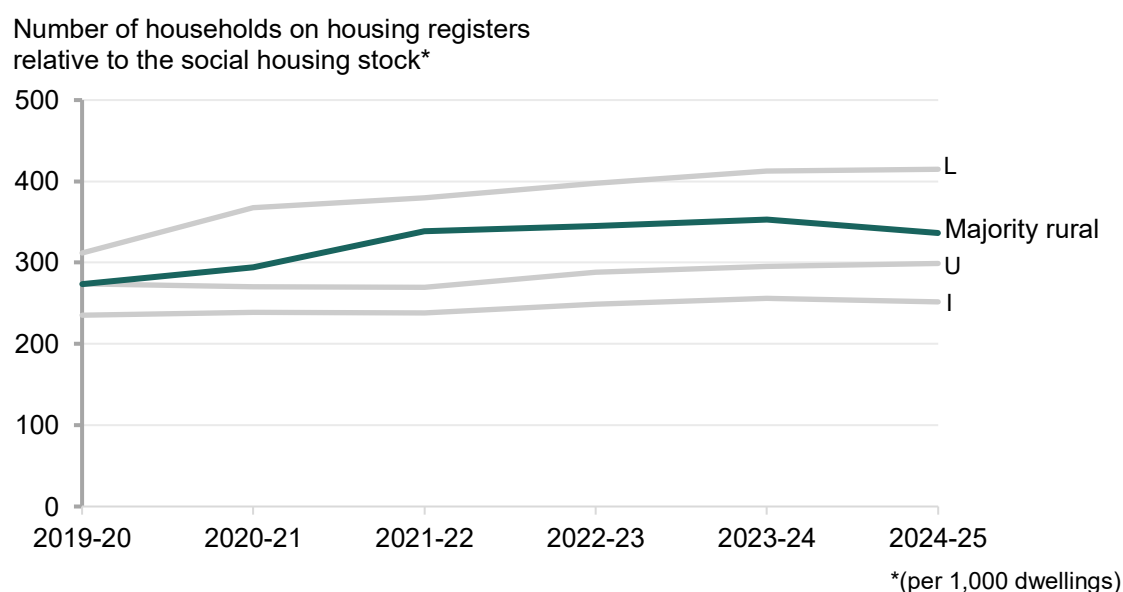
Change in the number of households on housing registers

The line chart in Figure E-1 shows the number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock between 2019-20 and 2024-25. This measure varied by type of authority; it was generally higher in majority rural authorities than in other types of authority outside London, but lower than in London.

In majority rural authorities, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings, there were 274 households on housing registers in 2019-20. This increased to a peak of 353 in 2023-24, before falling slightly to 337 in 2024-25. In other types of authority, this measure was comparatively stable over time. There were generally fewer households on housing registers relative to the social housing stock in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities than in any other type of authority.

Figure E-1: Line chart showing the number of households on housing registers relative to the social housing stock, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2019-20 to 2024-25 (Note E-3)

The line representing majority rural authorities is coloured to draw focus. Shorthand is used on this chart: 'I' = intermediate (rural or urban); 'U' = urban (excluding London); 'L' = London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet EA in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Proximity to major towns and cities has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside 'nearer to' or 'further from' a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note E-2.

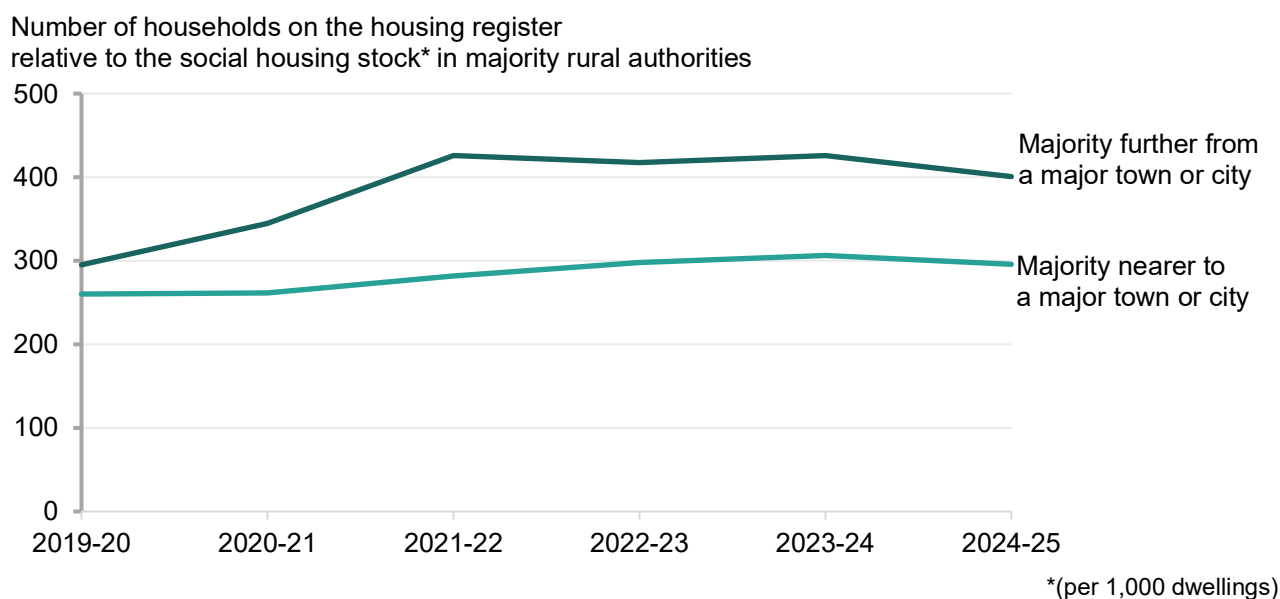
The line chart in Figure E-2 shows the number of households on housing registers relative to the social housing stock in majority rural authorities between 2019-20 and 2024-25, by proximity to a major town or city for the majority of the population. This measure was consistently higher in authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city than in those where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city.

For every 1,000 social housing dwellings in authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city, there were 295 households on housing registers in 2019-20. This

increased to a peak of 426 in 2021-22, before falling slightly to 401 in 2024-25. In comparison, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city, there were 260 households on housing registers in 2019-20, increasing to 296 in 2024-25.

Figure E-2: Line chart showing the number of households on housing registers for every 1,000 social housing dwellings in majority rural authorities as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by relative access, 2019-20 to 2024-25 (Note E-2, Note E-3)

The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet EA in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Requirements of households on housing registers

Households on housing registers are required to bid for properties. However, the size of property that a household can bid for may be restricted based on factors such as household size, age, and relationships, where this information is available. The bar chart in Figure E-3 shows the proportion of households on housing registers by the number of bedrooms required and 2021 rural-urban classification in 2024-25.

Households requiring one-bedroom properties accounted for the largest proportion of those on housing registers across all types of authority in 2024-25. In majority rural authorities, 56% of households on housing registers required a one-bedroom property, the highest proportion amongst all types of authority. In comparison, the corresponding proportion was 46% in both urban authorities and London.

Two-bedroom properties were the second most common requirement, accounting for around one-quarter of households on housing registers across all types of authority.

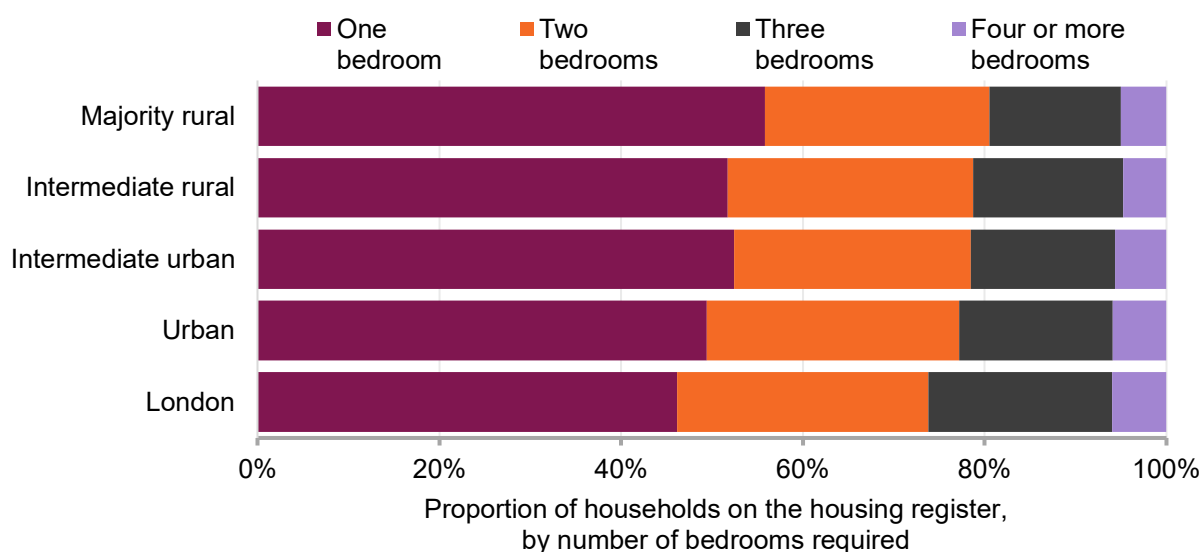
In majority rural authorities, 14% of households on housing registers required a three-bedroom property, the lowest proportion amongst all types of authority. The corresponding proportions were 17% in urban authorities and 20% in London.

Households requiring four or more bedrooms represented a small proportion of those on housing registers across all types of authority. In majority rural and intermediate rural authorities, just 5% of households on housing registers required four or more bedrooms.

A small proportion of households had an unknown bedroom requirement (Note E-4); these have not been included on the chart.

Figure E-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of households on housing registers, by number of bedrooms required and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note E-3, Note E-4)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the stacked bars. ‘Urban’ excludes London. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet EC in the [supplementary data tables](#).



Subnational comparison of households on housing registers

Variation in the number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock may reflect differences in demand for, and the availability of, social housing between local authorities. Table E-1 highlights the local authorities with the highest number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock.

Amongst majority rural authorities, ‘Cornwall’ had the highest number of households on the housing register relative to the size of its social housing stock in 2024-25; here, for everyone 1,000 social housing dwellings there were 704 households on the housing register. By comparison, for every 1,000 social housing dwellings in ‘Herefordshire’, there were 81 households on the housing register; this was the lowest figure amongst majority rural authorities. Although this is not shown in the table, figures for all local authorities in England can be found in Worksheet EB within the [supplementary data tables](#).

The figure for Cornwall was lower than that of the highest-ranking authority in each of the other authority groups. In England overall, ‘Blackpool’ had the highest rate, with 1,603 households on the housing register for every 1,000 social housing dwellings.

Table E-1: Local authorities with the highest number of households on the housing register relative to the social housing stock, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2024-25 (Note E-5, Note E-8)

'Rate' represents the number of households on housing registers for every 1,000 social housing dwellings. 'Urban' excludes London.

Rural-urban classification 2021	Authority	Households on housing registers	Social housing dwellings	Rate
Majority rural	Cornwall	23,730	33,730	704
Intermediate rural	Westmorland and Furness	8,500	11,040	770
Intermediate urban	East Staffordshire	9,770	7,230	1,350
Urban	Blackpool	11,840	7,390	1,603
London	Brent	36,530	27,500	1,328
England	Blackpool	11,840	7,390	1,603

The number of households on housing registers relative to the size of the social housing stock varies across the country. Table E-2 highlights the ten majority rural authorities with the highest number of households on their housing register relative to their social housing stock in 2024-25. These were concentrated in southern England, particularly the South West, with six of the ten authorities located in the region. Several of these authorities also have relatively high proportions of [second homes](#). However, there was substantial variation between authorities. 'Cornwall' recorded the highest figure, with 704 households on housing registers for every 1,000 social housing dwellings; 'Torridge', ranked tenth, recorded 408 households.

Table E-2: The ten majority rural local authorities with the highest number of households on housing registers relative to their social housing stock, 2024-25 (Note E-5, Note E-8)

Rank 1 represents the highest rate and rank 10 the tenth highest amongst majority rural authorities. 'Rate' represents the number of households on housing registers for every 1,000 social housing dwellings.

Rank	Authority	Region	Households on housing registers	Social housing dwellings	Rate
1	Cornwall	South West	23,730	33,730	704
2	East Devon	South West	4,910	7,420	662
3	West Lindsey	East Midlands	3,190	5,140	620
4	Stratford-on-Avon	West Midlands	5,540	9,120	607
5	Isles of Scilly	South West	80	160	506
6	Cumberland	North West	11,490	22,750	505
7	North Devon	South West	2,210	5,100	435
8	Mid Devon	South West	1,930	4,600	420
9	South Oxfordshire	South East	3,450	8,340	414
10	Torridge	South West	1,230	3,020	408

Households on local authority housing registers - explanatory notes

• Note E-1

The periods specified within this section are financial years, e.g. 2024-25 represents data for year ending March 2025. Data for the numerator (the number of households on the waiting list) are available from 2009-10 onwards, whereas data for the denominator (social housing stock) were first collected for 2019-20. Therefore, rates cannot be calculated for data prior to 2019-20.

• Note E-2

Rurality and relative access are independent dimensions of the 2021 rural-urban classification. Relative access is based on the proportion of an authority's total population living within or beyond a 30-minute drive of a major town or city (defined as a built-up area with a population of at least 75,000), regardless of whether those residents live in rural or urban areas. As a result, a local authority classified as both 'majority rural' and 'majority further from a major town or city' is not necessarily one where most of the rural population live further from a major town or city. 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 E-3

The number of households on local authority housing registers (commonly known as waiting lists) is not the same as the number of households waiting for social housing. Local authorities periodically review their registers to remove households who no longer require housing, and the frequency of these reviews varies between local authorities. In addition, some households may be counted on the housing register of more than one local authority. It is therefore likely that the total number of households on housing registers will overstate the number of households who still require social housing at any one time. For further information, see [Local Authority Housing Statistics: Technical notes 2024-25](#).

• Note E-4

There were a small number of households on the waiting list with unknown requirements, typically meaning the necessary details were missed off the application, or they had duplicated applications with differing information.

• Note E-5

Households on local authority housing registers provide an indication of demand for social housing but are influenced by local authority allocation practices and administrative arrangements. For example, in 'Telford and Wrekin', there were no households on the housing register in 2024-25 according to the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) release. However, this is not caused by an absence of demand for social housing in this authority; the council closed its traditional housing register on 31 March 2021 and has since used a nomination pool instead, affecting allocation-related data fields in national reporting.

• Note E-6

This publication was developed using support from generative AI tools to assist with drafting. All analysis, interpretation and final wording were produced, checked and quality-assured by Defra statisticians in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

• Note E-7

The underlying data relating to this section can be found within the [housing supplementary data tables](#).

• Note E-8

Rates are expressed per 1,000 social housing dwellings and rounded to the nearest whole number. The number of households and dwellings are rounded to the nearest 10.

F. Second homes

More than 2 in every 100 homes in majority rural authorities is a second home – twice the national average.

Second homes - key findings

Proportionally more second homes in majority rural authorities than other types

- In majority rural authorities, 2.3% of dwellings were classed as second homes, equivalent to 62,800 properties in absolute terms.
- The second homes rate in majority rural authorities was more than three times higher than in urban areas outside of London (0.7%; equivalent to 88,400 properties).

Proportionally more Band A properties as second homes compared to other bands

- In majority rural authorities, 3.1% of all Band A (the lowest council tax band) properties were classed as second homes in 2025, equivalent to 14,400 properties in absolute terms.
- In comparison, in urban authorities outside of London, just 0.8% of Band A properties were classed as second homes, equivalent to 32,300 properties.
- 1.8% of Band B dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes, compared with 2.1% of properties in Bands C to E, and 2.7% in Bands F to H.

Summary

Second homes form part of the housing stock but are not occupied as a main residence. In areas with high concentrations of second homes, fewer dwellings are available for permanent occupation by local households.

In 2025, 2.3% of dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes for council tax purposes; this was nearly three times higher than the proportion of second homes in urban authorities outside of London (0.8%). The proportion of second homes in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city was more than double that of authorities where the majority live nearer to a major town or city (3.7% and 1.4%, respectively).

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 2025, the proportion of Band A dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities (3.1%) was higher than any other council tax band or groups of bands, followed by Bands F to H (2.7%).

There were slightly fewer dwellings classed as second homes in 2025 than in 2024 in majority rural authorities, for all council tax bands. The proportion of Band A second homes had decreased from 3.2% to 3.1%. Similar reductions were observed across all other bands and groups of bands, where rates each fell by 0.2 percentage points.

Background information on second homes

Second homes are dwellings which are furnished and do not have anyone living in them as a main residence. For the purposes of this analysis, these do not include properties that are used as holiday lets or self-catering units that are charged business rates; for information about all second homes, see the [English Housing Survey: second homes - fact sheet](#).

Within this publication, the [Council Taxbase](#) has been used to estimate the number of second homes, as well as the number of empty homes ([Section G](#)). 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. 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; if a person requires extra space due to being disabled, but could comfortably live in a smaller property if they were not disabled, then they may have their council tax bill reduced to the next lowest band. 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 2025

The latest data from the [Council Taxbase](#) are for 2025 (Note F-5). This section analyses the latest data by 2021 rural-urban classification, as well as providing some subnational analysis, highlighting the local authorities with the highest proportions of second homes.

Second homes by rural-urban classification in 2025

There were 267,900 dwellings classed as second homes in England in 2025. An average of 2.3% of chargeable dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as second homes for council tax purposes in 2025, equivalent to 62,800 dwellings. This is shown in Table F-1. In urban authorities outside of London, there were 88,400 dwellings classed as second homes in 2025, representing one-third of all second homes in England. However, in these authorities, second homes represented just 0.7% of the total number of chargeable dwellings.

Table F-1: Number of second homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. The number of second homes and chargeable dwellings has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The data for this table can be found within Worksheet FA of the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-urban classification 2021	Number of second homes	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes
Majority rural	62,800	2,748,100	2.3%
Intermediate	60,700	6,288,300	1.0%
Urban (excluding London)	88,400	12,281,100	0.7%
London	56,000	3,739,000	1.5%
England	267,900	25,056,400	1.1%

Whilst Table F-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, there will be variation in the prevalence of second homes between these authorities. Proximity to a major town or city has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside ‘nearer to’ or ‘further from’ a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note F-3.

In 2025, 3.7% of chargeable dwellings (equivalent to 38,600 properties) were classed as second homes for council tax purposes in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city. This is more than double the rate seen in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city (1.4%; equivalent to 24,200 properties), as shown in Table F-2.

Table F-2: Number of second homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, in majority rural authorities in England as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by relative access, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-3, Note F-5)

The number of second homes and chargeable dwellings has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The data for this table can be found within Worksheet FA of the [supplementary data tables](#).

Proximity to a major town or city	Number of second homes	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes
Majority further from	38,600	1,055,700	3.7%
Majority nearer to	24,200	1,692,400	1.4%
All majority rural authorities	62,800	2,748,100	2.3%

Subnational analysis of second homes in 2025

Whilst Table F-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes by rural-urban classification, there will be variation in the prevalence of second homes within those types of authority. Table F-3 shows the local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are classed as second homes, by 2021 rural-urban classification, as of 2025. The table excludes two authorities with relatively small dwelling stocks, as explained in Note F-6.

Table F-3: 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, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5, Note F-6)

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	Local authority	Number of second homes	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes
Majority rural	North Norfolk	5,800	10.4%
Intermediate rural	Isle of Wight	3,600	5.0%
Intermediate urban	Great Yarmouth	2,600	5.3%
Urban (excluding London)	Manchester	6,800	3.0%
London	Kensington and Chelsea	7,900	9.2%
England	North Norfolk	5,800	10.4%

In 2025, 'North Norfolk' – in the East of England - had the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes of all majority rural authorities, at 10.4%. This was equivalent to 5,800 out of a total 55,500 chargeable dwellings being second homes. 'North Norfolk' also had the highest proportion of second homes in England.

Of all intermediate rural authorities, the 'Isle of Wight' had the highest proportion of second homes, at 5.0%. Of all intermediate urban authorities, 'Great Yarmouth' – in the East of England – had the highest proportion of second homes, at 5.3%.

Of all urban authorities outside of London, ‘Manchester’ – in the North West of England – had the highest proportion of second homes, at 3.0%. Rates were higher in several London boroughs; ‘Kensington and Chelsea’ had the highest proportion of second homes in London, at 9.2%.

Worksheets FB and FC within the [supplementary data tables](#) contain tables with the number and proportion of second homes for all local authorities in England. Not all authorities have high proportions of second homes; four majority rural authorities had fewer than 0.5% of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes in 2025.

Whilst Table F-3 shows the majority rural authority with the highest proportion of second homes, several authorities had particularly high rates. Table F-4 highlights the majority rural local authorities where at least 4.0% of chargeable dwellings were classed as second homes for council tax purposes in 2025. Most of these authorities are located in the South West of England. Within these authorities, there were 35,200 second homes; this means that these nine authorities accounted for more than half of the 62,800 second homes in majority rural authorities overall.

Table F-4: The majority rural local authorities with the highest proportions of chargeable dwellings that were classed as second homes, England, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5)

Rank 1 represents the highest rate and rank 8 the eighth highest amongst majority rural authorities, where ranks are based on the unrounded proportions. The table excludes the ‘Isles of Scilly’ (Note F-6).

Rank	Local authority	Region	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes
1	North Norfolk	East of England	10.4%
2	South Hams	South West	8.9%
3	Cornwall	South West	5.0%
4	Torridge	South West	4.8%
5	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	East of England	4.3%
6	North Devon	South West	4.1%
7	Chichester	South East	4.1%
8	Cotswold	South West	4.1%

Second homes by council tax band

Comparing between council tax bands gives an indication of the relative value of dwellings classed as second homes. For the purposes of this analysis, the eight council tax bands have been assigned to four groups as follows: 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, in 2025, 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 F-4 is provided for context and shows the council tax band groupings, the 1991 property values used to establish the original council tax bands, and an estimate of their equivalent value in 2025; the [Nationwide house price calculator](#) has been used to work out estimated progression in house value.

Table F-5: Current council tax bands for England and how they have been grouped for the purposes of this report (Note F-7)

Values have been rounded to the nearest £1,000.

Council tax band	Market value of property on 1 April 1991	Estimated value in Q4 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

This section analyses the latest data by council tax band and 2021 rural-urban classification, as well as providing some subnational analysis, highlighting the local authorities with the highest proportions of empty properties for each council tax band.

Second homes by council tax band and rural-urban classification

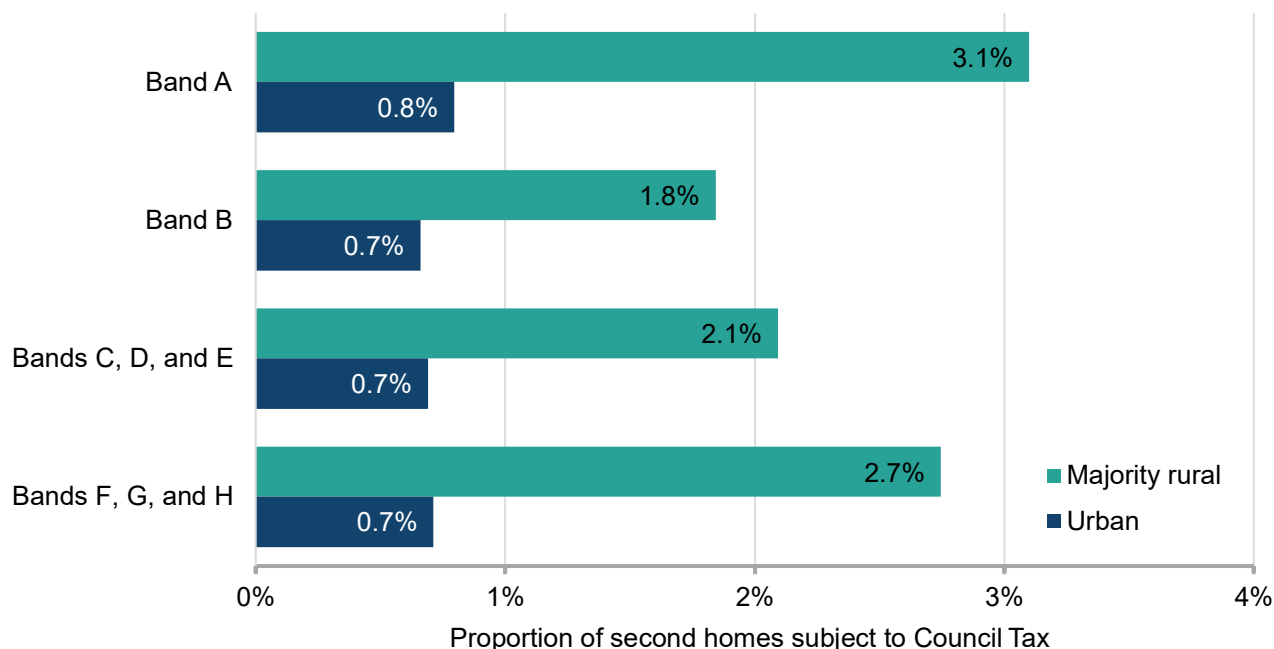
The bar chart in Figure F-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in 2025, by grouped council tax band. The chart compares majority rural authorities with urban authorities outside London; proportions for all types of authority can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

In majority rural authorities, the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes was highest for Band A dwellings, at 3.1% in 2025. This equates to around 14,400 second homes out of 465,600 chargeable Band A dwellings. The proportion was lower for Band B dwellings (1.8%), before increasing to 2.1% for Bands C, D, and E and 2.7% for Bands F, G and H. In absolute terms, there were twice as many second homes in Bands C, D, and E (29,200) compared with those in Band A.

Across all council tax bands, the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes was higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside London. In urban authorities outside London, there was little variation by council tax band, with proportions ranging from 0.7% to 0.8%. As a result, Band A dwellings in majority rural authorities were nearly four times as likely to be classed as second homes as those in urban authorities outside London (3.1% compared with 0.8%). Similar differences were observed for Bands F, G and H (2.7% compared with 0.7%).

Figure F-1: Bar chart showing the proportion of chargeable 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, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. ‘Urban’ excludes London. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet FA of the [supplementary data tables](#).



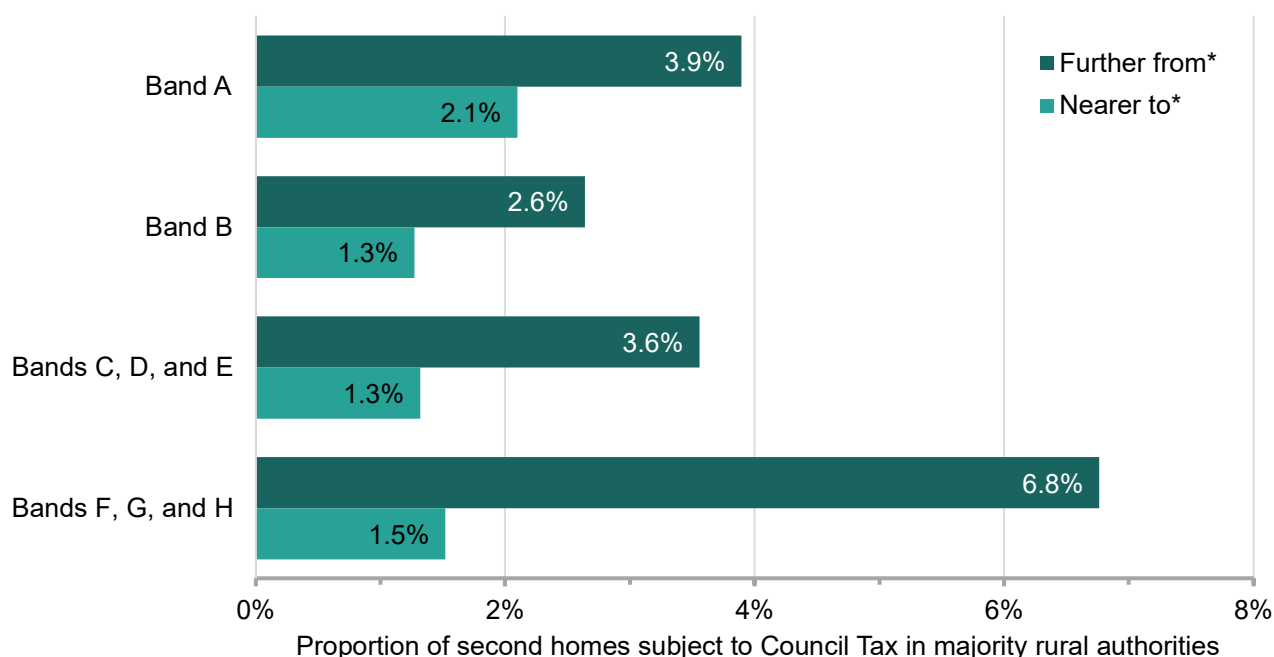
Whilst Figure F-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes by council tax band in majority rural authorities, there will be variation in the prevalence of second homes between these authorities. Proximity to a major town or city has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside ‘nearer to’ or ‘further from’ a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note F-3.

The bar chart in Figure F-2 shows that, across all council tax bands, the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes was higher in authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city. In these authorities, 3.9% of Band A dwellings were classed as second homes – almost double the rate observed in authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city (2.1%).

Differences were greatest for dwellings in Bands F, G, and H, where the proportion classed as second homes in authorities where the majority live further from a major town or city was more than four times that of authorities where the majority live nearer to a major town or city (6.8% and 1.5%, respectively). However, in absolute terms, there were 4,900 second homes in Bands F, G, and H in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city; this is half as many as in Band A in these authorities (10,100).

Figure F-2: Bar chart showing the proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped council tax bands and relative access, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-3, Note F-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. Scales differ between this chart and Figure F-1. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet FA of the [supplementary data tables](#).



* a major town or city (for the majority of the population)

Subnational analysis of second homes by Council Tax band

Whilst Figure F-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes by council tax band by rural-urban classification, there will be variation in the prevalence of second homes within those types of authority. Table F-5 specifies the majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are second homes in 2025, by council tax band. The table excludes two authorities with relatively small dwelling stocks, as explained in Note F-6. A complete table of data for all local authorities in England can be found within worksheets FB and FC in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Each majority rural local authority listed in Table F-5, which had the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes within a particular 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 in 2025 (18.2%). This was nearly six times higher than the average of Band A properties in majority rural authorities overall (Figure F-1; 3.1%). ‘Chichester’ was one of three majority rural authorities where more than 10.0% of Band A dwellings were classed as second homes.

- ‘North Norfolk’ – which intersects with the Norfolk Coast National Landscape and The Broads National Park – had the highest proportion of Band B dwellings being classed as second homes of all majority rural authorities (7.3%); this was around four times higher than the average of Band B properties in majority rural authorities overall (Figure F-1; 1.8%). ‘North Norfolk’ was the only majority rural authority where more than 5.0% of Band B dwellings were classed as second homes.
- ‘North Norfolk’ also had the highest proportion of properties in Bands C, D, and E classed as second homes (9.4%). It was one of four majority rural authorities where more than 5.0% of dwellings in Bands C, D, and E were classed as second homes.
- ‘South Hams’ – which intersects with the Dartmoor National Park and the South Devon National Landscape – had the highest proportion of properties in Bands F, G, and H classed as second homes of all majority rural authorities (15.3%). This was more than five times higher than the average of properties in Bands F, G, and H in majority rural authorities overall (Figure F-1; 2.7%). ‘South Hams’ was one of five majority rural authorities where more than 10.0% of dwellings in Bands F, G, and H were classed as second homes.

Table F-6: Majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as second homes, by Council Tax band, in England, 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5, Note F-6)

The number of empty homes has been rounded to the nearest 10 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Council tax band	Local authority	Number of second homes	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes
Band A	Chichester	560	18.2%
Band B	North Norfolk	1,050	7.3%
Bands C, D, and E	North Norfolk	2,440	9.4%
Bands F, G, and H	South Hams	1,170	15.3%

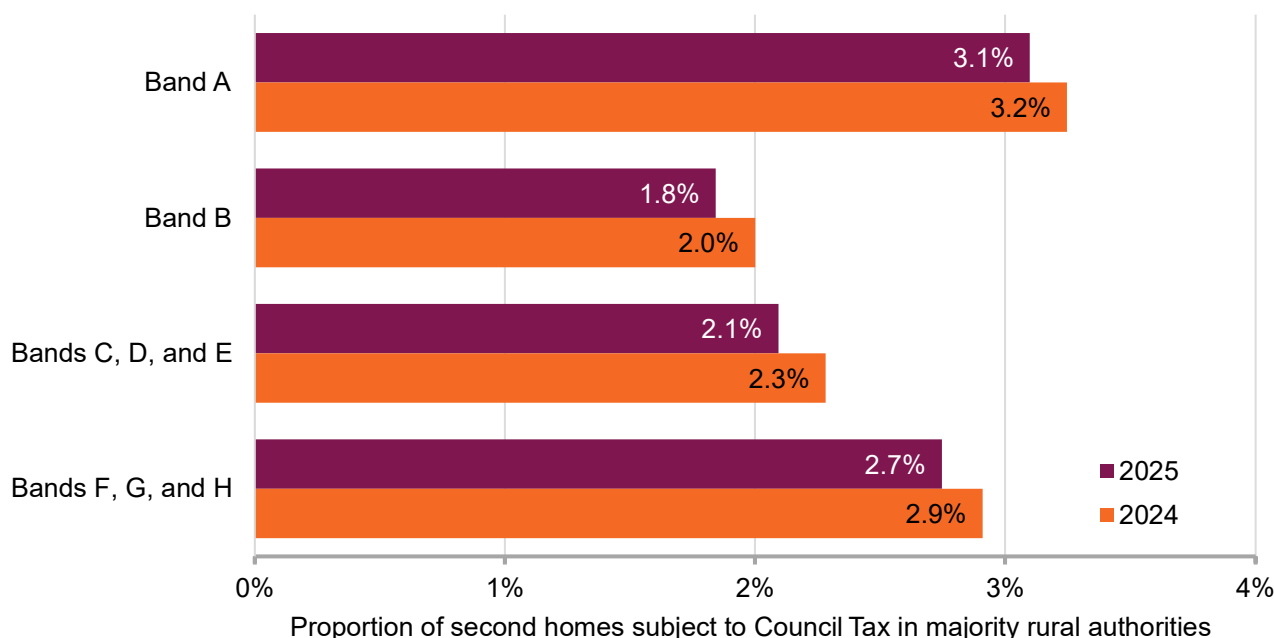
Annual comparison of second homes by council tax band

By comparing between the [Council Taxbase](#) data for the previous year, it is possible to see how the second homes stock has changed over time. The bar chart in Figure F-3 shows that the proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities decreased between 2024 and 2025 across all council tax bands. Data for other types of authority can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Band A continued to have the highest proportion of dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, although the proportion decreased slightly from 3.2% in 2024 to 3.1% in 2025. In absolute terms, the number of Band A second homes fell from 15,100 to 14,400 dwellings. Similar reductions were observed across all other bands and groups of bands, where rates each fell by 0.2 percentage points. Despite the decreases, the overall pattern by council tax band remained broadly unchanged, with the highest proportions of second homes continuing to be observed in Band A and Bands F, G and H.

Figure F-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as second homes in majority rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped council tax bands, England, 2024 and 2025 (Note F-1, Note F-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet FD of the [supplementary data tables](#).



Second homes - explanatory notes

- **Note F-1**

The data source is the [Council Taxbase in England](#) datasets, which consist 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. Supporting information for this dataset, including definitions, can be found within the [Council Taxbase in England 2025: Technical notes](#).

- **Note F-2**

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

- **Note F-3**

Rurality and relative access are independent dimensions of the 2021 rural-urban classification. Relative access is based on the proportion of an authority's total population living within or beyond a 30-minute drive of a major town or city (defined as a built-up area with a population of at least 75,000), regardless of whether those residents live in rural or urban areas. As a result, a local authority classified as both 'majority rural' and 'majority further from a major town or city' is not necessarily one where most of the rural population live further from a major town or city. 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 F-4**

Council tax is usually charged on additionally owned or rented properties. The property's local council will decide whether it is classed as a second home, and how much council tax to charge; they may charge a premium. For more information, see: [How Council Tax works: Second homes and empty properties](#).

Following the introduction from the 1 April 2025, when a premium of up to 100% can be charged for second homes, local authorities were asked to report figures on the second homes premium. 211 authorities reported that a premium had been applied, and all of these had charged a 100% premium.

- **Note F-5**

Council Taxbase data are recorded as a snapshot in time. The total number of dwellings is based on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA)'s Council Tax List snapshot as of 10 September 2025. Further information relating to council tax discounts, exemptions and premiums is then derived from this snapshot on 6 October 2025 (the 1st Monday of October). Similarly, the total number of dwellings in 2024 is as at 15 September 2024, with further council tax information as at 7 October 2024.

- **Note F-6**

The City of London has a substantially smaller dwelling stock than most local authorities in England. As a result, a relatively small number of second homes can have a disproportionate effect on the reported rate. The City of London has therefore been excluded from rankings of local authorities with the highest rates of second homes. Similarly, the Isles of Scilly have been excluded from the rankings by council tax band due to their relatively small dwelling stock.

- **Note F-7**

Council tax bands are based on the price the property would have sold for on the open market on 1 April 1991 in England. All properties are banded on the same basis, including properties bought under discount schemes, such as Right to Buy. The purchase price discounts applied to these properties are not taken into account when setting the band. Further information can be found via: [How domestic properties are assessed for Council Tax bands - GOV.UK](#).

In Table F-4, the [Nationwide house price calculator](#) has been used to estimate the equivalent value in current terms. They are estimated as of Q4 2025 (October to December) to match the snapshot of the Council Taxbase data. However, these are illustrative only; current property values do not determine council tax bands, and individual properties may fall into different bands than these estimates suggest.

- **Note F-8**

Proportions are rounded to the nearest 0.1%, and absolute numbers to the nearest 100, unless otherwise stated. Therefore, figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

- **Note F-9**

This publication was developed using support from generative AI tools to assist with drafting. All analysis, interpretation and final wording were produced, checked and quality-assured by Defra statisticians in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

G. Empty homes

Around 2% of homes in both majority rural and urban authorities are empty properties.

Empty homes - key findings

Around 2% of homes in majority rural authorities are empty

- In 2025, there were over 0.5 million dwellings classed as empty in England, with one in ten in majority rural authorities and over half in urban authorities outside of London.
- In majority rural authorities, 2.2% of dwellings were classed as empty, which is similar to the proportion in urban areas outside of London.

At least half of all empty homes had been vacant for more than six months

- 60% of empty dwellings in majority rural authorities had been vacant for more than six months (36,100 out of 59,800 empty dwellings).
- By comparison, 56% of empty dwellings in urban authorities outside of London had been vacant for more than six months (153,500 out of 275,600 empty dwellings).

There were more empty council tax Band A properties compared to other bands

- 3.5% of properties in council tax Band A (the lowest council tax band) in majority rural authorities were classed as empty in 2025, totalling 16,400 properties.
- In comparison, 3.1% of council tax Band A in urban authorities outside of London were classed as empty.
- In both majority rural and urban authorities, there were proportionally more empty Band A properties than in other council tax bands.

Summary

Empty homes (unoccupied and substantially unfurnished) are a necessary part of the turnover in housing stock. However, the extent of empty homes varies across the country and can affect local housing markets and the availability of housing.

In 2025, 2.2% 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. A substantial proportion of empty properties had been vacant long-term. In majority rural authorities, 1.3% of dwellings (to which council tax applies) had been classed as empty for more than six months in 2025, compared with 1.2% in urban authorities outside London.

Across all council tax bands the proportion of empty homes is slightly higher in majority rural authorities than in urban authorities outside of London. In 2025, 3.5% of Band A dwellings were empty in majority rural authorities - higher than within other bands. This was also true for long-term empty homes (i.e., those which had been unoccupied for more than six months).

There were proportionally more dwellings classed as empty in 2025 than in 2024 in majority rural authorities, for all council tax bands. The proportion of empty Band A properties had increased from 3.2% to 3.5%. The proportion of empty Band B properties increased similarly, with slightly smaller increases in empty properties in Bands C to H.

Background information on empty homes

Empty homes are dwellings which are unoccupied and substantially unfurnished.

Within this publication, the [Council Taxbase](#) has been used to estimate the number of empty homes, as well as the number of second homes ([Section F](#)). However, not all empty homes will be subject to council tax; exemptions often occur when properties are unoccupied for a specific reason, such as the resident moving into a care home, or the dwelling being left empty by deceased persons. For more information, see the [Council Taxbase: Technical notes](#).

Since 1 April 2013, local authorities in England have been able to apply council tax discounts of between 0% and 100% for empty dwellings or charge a premium on top of the normal council tax; this premium often increases the longer a property is empty. 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; if a person requires extra space due to being disabled, but could comfortably live in a smaller property if they were not disabled, then they may have their council tax bill reduced to the next lowest band. 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 2025

The latest data from the [Council Taxbase](#) are for 2025 (Note G-5). This section analyses the latest data by 2021 rural-urban classification, as well as providing some subnational analysis, highlighting the local authorities with the highest proportions of empty properties.

Empty homes by rural-urban classification in 2025

There were 542,300 dwellings classed as empty in England in 2025, with around one in ten being in majority rural authorities (59,800 dwellings). An average of 2.2% of chargeable dwellings in majority rural authorities were classed as empty for council tax purposes in 2025. This is shown in Table G-1. The proportion of empty homes was largely similar across all types of authority except in intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, each with an average of 2.0%. In urban authorities outside of London, there were 275,600 dwellings classed as empty homes in 2025, representing half of all empty homes in England.

Table G-1: Number of empty homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. The number of empty homes and chargeable dwellings has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The data for this table can be found within Worksheet GA of the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-urban classification 2021	Number of empty homes	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty
Majority rural	59,800	2,748,100	2.2%
Intermediate	125,000	6,288,300	2.0%
Urban (excluding London)	275,600	12,281,100	2.2%
London	81,800	3,739,000	2.2%
England	542,300	25,056,400	2.2%

Whilst Table G-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities, there will be variation in the prevalence of empty homes between these authorities. Proximity to a major town or city has been considered in the 2021 rural-urban classification. Local authorities can be grouped depending on whether the majority of the resident population reside ‘nearer to’ or ‘further from’ a major town or city. For more information about the relative access measure, see Note G-3.

In 2025, 2.1% of chargeable dwellings (equivalent to 36,200 properties) were empty for council tax purposes in majority rural authorities where the majority of the population live nearer to a major town or city. Similarly, 2.2% of chargeable homes (equivalent to 23,600 properties) were empty in authorities where the majority of the population live further from a major town or city, as shown in Table G-2.

Table G-2: Number of empty homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, in majority rural authorities in England as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by relative access, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-3, Note G-5)

The number of empty homes and chargeable dwellings has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The data for this table can be found within Worksheet GA of the [supplementary data tables](#).

Proximity to a major town or city	Number of empty homes	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty
Majority further from	23,600	1,055,700	2.2%
Majority nearer to	36,200	1,692,400	2.1%
All majority rural authorities	59,800	2,748,100	2.2%

Table G-1 and Table G-2 represent statistics for all empty dwellings. A substantial proportion of these properties had been empty for more than six months. Properties that remain empty long-term may have a greater impact on local housing availability than dwellings that are vacant only temporarily, as they are less likely to reflect routine turnover within the housing market. Table G-3 highlights the number and proportion of chargeable dwellings that had been empty for more than six months in 2025, by 2021 rural-urban classification.

309,900 dwellings had been classed as empty for more than six months in England in 2025. An average of 1.3% of chargeable dwellings in majority rural authorities had been classed as empty for more than six months in 2025. The proportion of properties that had been empty for more than six months was similar across all types of authority.

Table G-3: Number of long-term empty homes, count and as a proportion of all chargeable dwellings, by 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities in England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

‘Long-term’ empty homes represent those which had been unoccupied for more than six months. ‘Intermediate’ represents the combination of intermediate rural and intermediate urban authorities. The number of empty homes and chargeable dwellings has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The data for this table can be found within Worksheet GB of the [supplementary data tables](#).

Rural-urban classification 2021	Number of long-term empty homes	Number of chargeable dwellings	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty long-term
Majority rural	36,100	2,748,100	1.3%
Intermediate	72,500	6,288,300	1.2%
Urban (excluding London)	153,500	12,281,100	1.2%
London	47,900	3,739,000	1.3%
England	309,900	25,056,400	1.2%

Subnational analysis of empty homes in 2025

Whilst Table G-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty by rural-urban classification, there will be variation in the prevalence of empty homes within those types of authority. Table G-4 shows the local authorities with the highest proportion of dwellings that are classed as empty, by 2021 rural-urban classification, as of 2025. The table excludes one authority (the 'Isles of Scilly') due to its relatively small dwelling stock, as explained in Note G-6.

Table G-4: Local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as empty within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5, Note G-6)

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	Local authority	Number of empty homes	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty
Majority rural	Cotswold	1,400	3.0%
Intermediate rural	Bolsover	1,300	3.4%
Intermediate urban	Fylde	1,300	3.1%
Urban (excluding London)	Hastings	1,800	4.0%
London	Camden	4,100	3.8%
England	Hastings	1,800	4.0%

In 2025, the 'Cotswold' authority – in the South West of England - had the highest proportion of dwellings classed as empty of all majority rural authorities, at 3.0% (1,400 out of a total 45,100 chargeable dwellings being empty). However, the highest rates were seen within other types of authority.

Of all intermediate rural authorities, 'Bolsover' – in the East Midlands - had the highest proportion of empty homes, at 3.4%; this was higher than the rate in the 'Cotswold' authority. Of all intermediate urban authorities, 'Fylde' – in the North West – had the highest proportion of empty homes, at 3.1%.

Of all urban authorities outside London, 'Hastings' – in the South East – had the highest proportion of empty homes, at 4.0%; this was higher than any other authority in England. Similarly, in London, 'Camden' had the highest proportion of empty homes, at 3.8%. 17 urban authorities (including 4 London boroughs) had a higher proportion of empty homes than the 'Cotswold' authority.

Worksheets GC and GD within the [supplementary data tables](#) contain tables with the number and proportion of empty homes for all local authorities in England. Not all authorities have high proportions of empty properties; 12 majority rural authorities had fewer than 2.0% of chargeable dwellings classed as empty in 2025.

Whilst Table G-4 shows the majority rural authority with the highest proportion of empty homes, several authorities had particularly high rates, as shown in Table G-5. These authorities are located in the South West, East Midlands, and East of England. Each of these authorities had between around 1,000 and 2,100 empty homes. 'Isles of Scilly' is again excluded (Note G-6).

Table G-5: The majority rural local authorities with the highest proportions of chargeable dwellings that were classed as empty, England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

Rank 1 represents the highest rate and rank 7 the seventh highest amongst majority rural authorities, where ranks are based on the unrounded proportions. The table excludes the 'Isles of Scilly' (Note G-6).

Rank	Local authority	Region	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty
1	Cotswold	South West	3.0%
2	West Lindsey	East Midlands	2.9%
3	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	East of England	2.8%
4	Derbyshire Dales	East Midlands	2.8%
5	South Cambridgeshire	East of England	2.8%
6	Stratford-on-Avon	West Midlands	2.7%
7	East Lindsey	East Midlands	2.7%

Table G-4 and Table G-5 represent statistics for all empty dwellings. In England, nearly 60% of empty homes had been unoccupied for more than six months. Properties that remain empty long-term may have a greater impact on local housing availability than dwellings that are vacant only temporarily, as they are less likely to reflect routine turnover within the housing market. Table G-6 highlights the local authorities with the highest proportion of properties that had been empty for more than six months in 2025, by 2021 rural-urban classification. The table excludes one authority (the 'Isles of Scilly') due to its relatively small dwelling stock, as explained in Note G-6.

Table G-6: Local authorities with the highest proportions of long-term empty homes within each category of the 2021 rural-urban classification, in England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

'Long-term' empty homes represent those which had been unoccupied for more than six months. The number of long-term empty homes has been rounded to the nearest 100 dwellings, and proportions to the nearest 0.1%. The table excludes the 'Isles of Scilly' (Note G-6).

Rural-urban classification 2021	Local authority	Number of long-term empty homes	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty long-term
Majority rural	Cotswold	1,000	2.1%
Intermediate rural	Westmorland and Furness	2,700	2.3%
Intermediate urban	Brentwood	7,00	1.9%
Urban (excluding London)	Torbay	1,700	2.5%
London	Kensington and Chelsea	2,000	2.4%
England	Torbay	1,700	2.5%

In 2025, the 'Cotswold' authority – in the South West of England - had the highest proportion of dwellings that had been classed as empty for more than six months among majority rural authorities, at 2.1%. This was equivalent to just under 1,000 out of a total 45,100 chargeable dwellings being empty.

Of all intermediate rural authorities, 'Westmorland and Furness' – in the North West - had the highest proportion of long-term empty homes, at 2.3%; this was marginally higher than the rate in the 'Cotswold' authority. Of all intermediate urban authorities, 'Brentwood' – in the East of England – had the highest proportion of long-term empty homes, at 1.9%.

Of all urban authorities, 'Torbay' – in the South West – had the highest proportion of long-term empty homes, at 2.5%; this was higher than any other authority in England. In London specifically, 'Kensington and Chelsea' had the highest proportion of long-term empty homes, at 2.4%. 6 urban authorities (including 2 London boroughs) had a higher proportion of long-term empty homes than the 'Cotswold' authority.

Worksheets GE and GF within the [supplementary data tables](#) contain tables with the number and proportion of long-term empty homes for all local authorities in England. Not all authorities have high proportions of long-term empty properties; 8 majority rural authorities had fewer than 1.0% of chargeable dwellings classed as empty for more than six months in 2025.

Empty homes by council tax band

Comparing between council tax bands gives an indication of the relative value of dwellings classed as empty. For the purposes of this analysis, the eight council tax bands have been assigned to four groups as follows: 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, in 2025, 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 G-7 is provided for context and shows the council tax band groupings, the 1991 property values used to establish the original council tax bands, and an estimate of their equivalent value in 2025; the [Nationwide house price calculator](#) has been used to work out estimated progression in house value.

Table G-7: Current council tax bands for England and how they have been grouped for the purposes of this report (Note G-7)

Values have been rounded to the nearest £1,000.

Council tax band	Market value of property on 1 April 1991	Estimated value in Q4 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

This section analyses the latest data by council tax band and 2021 rural-urban classification, as well as providing some subnational analysis, highlighting the local authorities with the highest proportions of empty properties for each council tax band.

Empty homes by council tax band and rural-urban classification

The bar chart in Figure G-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in 2025, by grouped council tax band. The chart compares majority rural authorities with urban authorities outside London; proportions for all types of authority can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#). In both majority rural and urban authorities, the proportion of dwellings classed as empty was highest for Band A dwellings, and lowest for Bands F, G, and H.

In majority rural authorities, 3.5% of Band A properties were empty; this equates to around 16,400 empty homes out of 465,600 chargeable Band A dwellings. The proportion of empty Band A homes in urban authorities outside London was slightly lower, at 3.1%.

2.4% of Band B properties in majority rural authorities were empty, equating to 13,800 empty homes in absolute terms. The proportion of empty Band B homes in urban authorities outside London was slightly lower, at 2.2%.

1.8% of properties in Bands C, D, and E in majority rural authorities were classed as empty; this was similar to the proportion in urban authorities outside London (1.7%). 1.6% of properties in Bands F, G, and H in majority rural authorities were classed as empty; the proportion in urban authorities outside London was slightly lower, at 1.4%.

Figure G-1: Bar chart showing the proportion of chargeable 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, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. ‘Urban’ excludes London. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet GA of the [supplementary data tables](#).

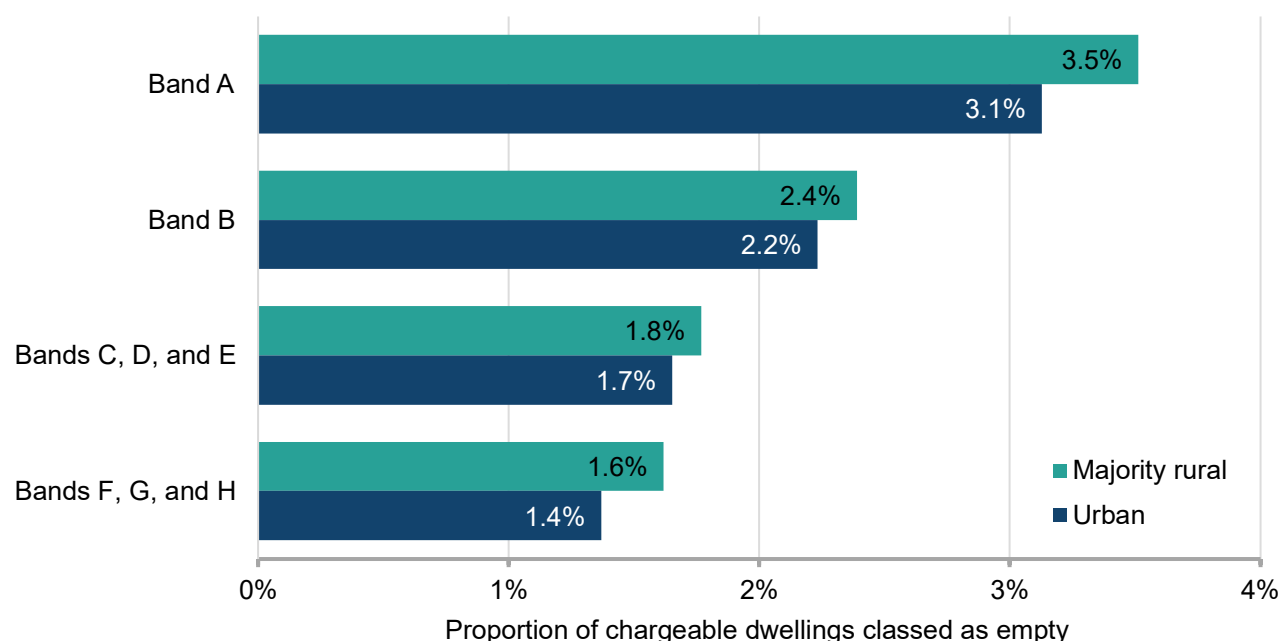


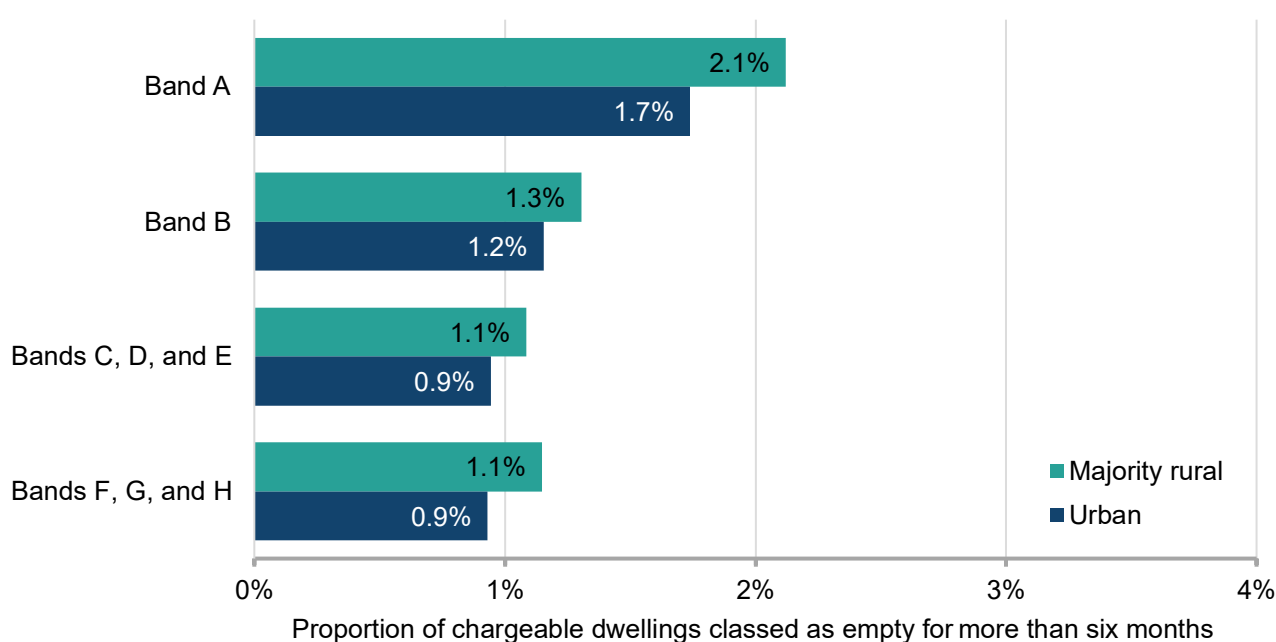
Figure G-1 represents statistics for all empty dwellings. In England, nearly 60% of empty homes had been unoccupied for more than six months. Properties that remain empty long-term may have a greater impact on local housing availability than dwellings that are vacant only temporarily, as they are less likely to reflect routine turnover within the housing market. The bar chart in Figure G-2 highlights the proportion of dwellings that had been classed as empty for more than six months in

2025, by grouped council tax band and 2021 rural-urban classification. The chart compares majority rural authorities with urban authorities outside London; proportions for all types of authority can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#). In both majority rural and urban authorities, the proportion of long-term empty homes was highest for Band A dwellings.

In majority rural authorities, 2.1% of Band A properties had been empty for more than six months; this is 0.4 percentage points higher than in urban authorities outside London (1.7%). 1.3% of Band B properties in majority rural authorities had been empty for more than six months; this was similar to the proportion in urban authorities (1.2%). For all other grouped council tax bands, 1.1% of properties in majority rural authorities had been empty long-term, compared with 0.9% of properties in urban authorities.

Figure G-2: Bar chart showing the proportion of long-term empty homes in majority rural and urban authorities outside of London, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped council tax bands, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

‘Long-term’ empty homes represent those which had been unoccupied for more than six months. The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. ‘Urban’ excludes London. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet GB of the [supplementary data tables](#).



Subnational analysis of empty homes by council tax band

Whilst Figure G-1 shows the proportion of dwellings classed as empty by council tax band by rural-urban classification, there will be variation in the prevalence of empty homes within those types of authority. Table G-8 specifies the majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of empty dwellings in 2025, by council tax band. The table excludes one authority (the ‘Isles of Scilly’) due to its relatively small dwelling stock, as explained in Note G-6. A complete table of data for all local authorities in England can be found within Worksheets GC and GD in the [supplementary data tables](#).

Table G-8: Majority rural local authorities with the highest proportion of chargeable dwellings that were classed as empty, by council tax band, in England, 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5, Note G-6)

The number of empty homes has been rounded to the nearest 10 dwellings. Proportions have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%.

Council tax band	Local authority	Number of empty homes	Proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty
Band A	South Cambridgeshire	220	8.9%
Band B	Uttlesford	200	5.1%
Bands C, D, and E	Cotswold	740	2.9%
Bands F, G, and H	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	140	3.5%

‘South Cambridgeshire’ – in the East of England – had the highest proportion of empty Band A properties of all majority rural local authorities (8.9%). This was one of four majority rural local authorities where more than 5% of Band A dwellings were classed as empty. ‘South Cambridgeshire’ also had the fourth-highest proportion of empty Band B dwellings, and fifth-highest proportion of empty dwellings in Bands C, D, and E; this suggests that higher proportions of empty homes are prevalent across council tax bands within this authority.

‘Uttlesford’ – also in the East of England – had the highest proportion of empty Band B properties of all majority rural authorities (5.1%). ‘Uttlesford’ also had the third-highest proportion of empty Band A dwellings.

The ‘Cotswold’ authority – in the South West – had the highest proportion of empty dwellings in Bands C, D, and E (2.9%). There were no majority rural authorities where more than 5% of properties in Bands C, D, and E were empty. However, there were four local authorities where more than 2.5% were empty.

‘King’s Lynn and West Norfolk’ – in the East of England – had the highest proportion of empty dwellings in Bands F, G, and H (3.5%), although this was only equivalent to 140 properties in absolute terms. There were no majority rural authorities where more than 5% of properties in Bands F, G, and H were empty. However, there were four local authorities where more than 2.5% were empty. The ‘Cotswold’ authority was the only one of these four with more than 200 empty properties in Bands F, G, and H.

Annual comparison of empty homes by council tax band

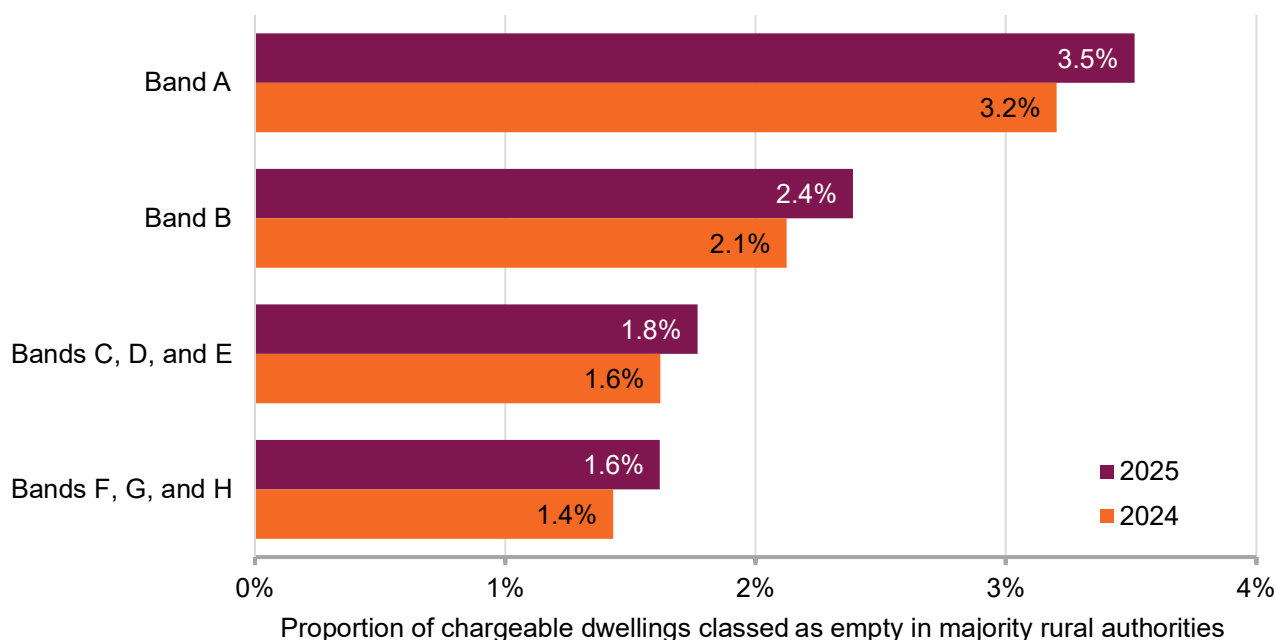
By comparing between the [Council Taxbase](#) data for the previous year, it is possible to see how the empty dwellings stock has changed over time. The bar chart in Figure G-3 shows that the proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities increased between 2024 and 2025 across all council tax bands. Data for other types of authority can be found within the [supplementary data tables](#).

Band A continued to have the highest proportion of dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities, with the proportion increasing slightly from 3.2% in 2024 to 3.5% in 2025. In absolute terms, the number of empty Band A homes increased from 14,900 to 16,400 dwellings. Similar

proportional increases were observed across all other bands and groups of bands, where rates each increased by 0.2 to 0.3 percentage points. The overall pattern by council tax band remained broadly unchanged, with the highest proportions of empty homes continuing to be observed in Band A.

Figure G-3: Bar chart showing the proportion of chargeable dwellings classed as empty in majority rural authorities, as defined within the 2021 rural-urban classification, by grouped council tax bands, England, 2024 and 2025 (Note G-1, Note G-5)

The legend is presented in the same order and orientation as the clusters of bars. Proportions labelled on the bars have been rounded to the nearest 0.1%. The underlying data for this chart can be found within Worksheet GG of the [supplementary data tables](#).



Empty homes - explanatory notes

- Note G-1**

The data source is the [Council Taxbase in England](#) datasets, which consist 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. Supporting information for this dataset, including definitions, can be found within the [Council Taxbase in England 2025: Technical notes](#).

- Note G-2**

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

- Note G-3**

Rurality and relative access are independent dimensions of the 2021 rural-urban classification. Relative access is based on the proportion of an authority's total population living within or beyond a 30-minute drive of a major town or city (defined as a built-up area with a population of at least 75,000), regardless of whether those residents live in rural or urban areas. As a result, a local authority classified as both 'majority rural' and 'majority further from a major town or city' is not necessarily one where most of the rural population live further from a major town or city. 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 G-4**

Council tax is usually charged on additionally owned or rented properties. The property's local council will decide whether it is classed as empty, and how much council tax to charge; they may charge a premium. For more information, see: [How Council Tax works: Second homes and empty properties](#).

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 been able to charge a premium of up to 100% for dwellings that have been empty for between 1 and 2 years.

Not all authorities charge a premium - in 2025, 291 out of 296 authorities applied a premium.

- **Note G-5**

Council Taxbase data are recorded as a snapshot in time. The total number of dwellings is based on the Valuation Office Agency (VOA)'s Council Tax List snapshot as of 10 September 2025. Further information relating to council tax discounts, exemptions and premiums is then derived from this snapshot on 6 October 2025 (the 1st Monday of October). Similarly, the total number of dwellings in 2024 is as at 15 September 2024, with further council tax information as at 7 October 2024.

- **Note G-6**

The Isles of Scilly has a substantially smaller dwelling stock than most local authorities in England. As a result, a relatively small number of empty homes can have a disproportionate effect on the reported rate. The Isles of Scilly has therefore been excluded from rankings of local authorities with the highest rates of empty homes.

- **Note G-7**

Council tax bands are based on the price the property would have sold for on the open market on 1 April 1991 in England. All properties are banded on the same basis, including properties bought under discount schemes, such as Right to Buy. The purchase price discounts applied to these properties are not taken into account when setting the band. Further information can be found via: [How domestic properties are assessed for Council Tax bands - GOV.UK](#).

In Table G-7, the [Nationwide house price calculator](#) has been used to estimate the equivalent value in current terms. They are estimated as of Q4 2025 (October to December) to match the snapshot of the Council Taxbase data. However, these are illustrative only; current property values do not determine council tax bands, and individual properties may fall into different bands than these estimates suggest.

- **Note G-8**

Proportions are rounded to the nearest 0.1%, and absolute numbers to the nearest 100, unless otherwise stated. Therefore, figures may not sum to totals due to rounding.

- **Note G-9**

This publication was developed using support from generative AI tools to assist with drafting. All analysis, interpretation and final wording were produced, checked and quality-assured by Defra statisticians in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

H. 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.

Defining homelessness and data sources

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 H-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 H-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.

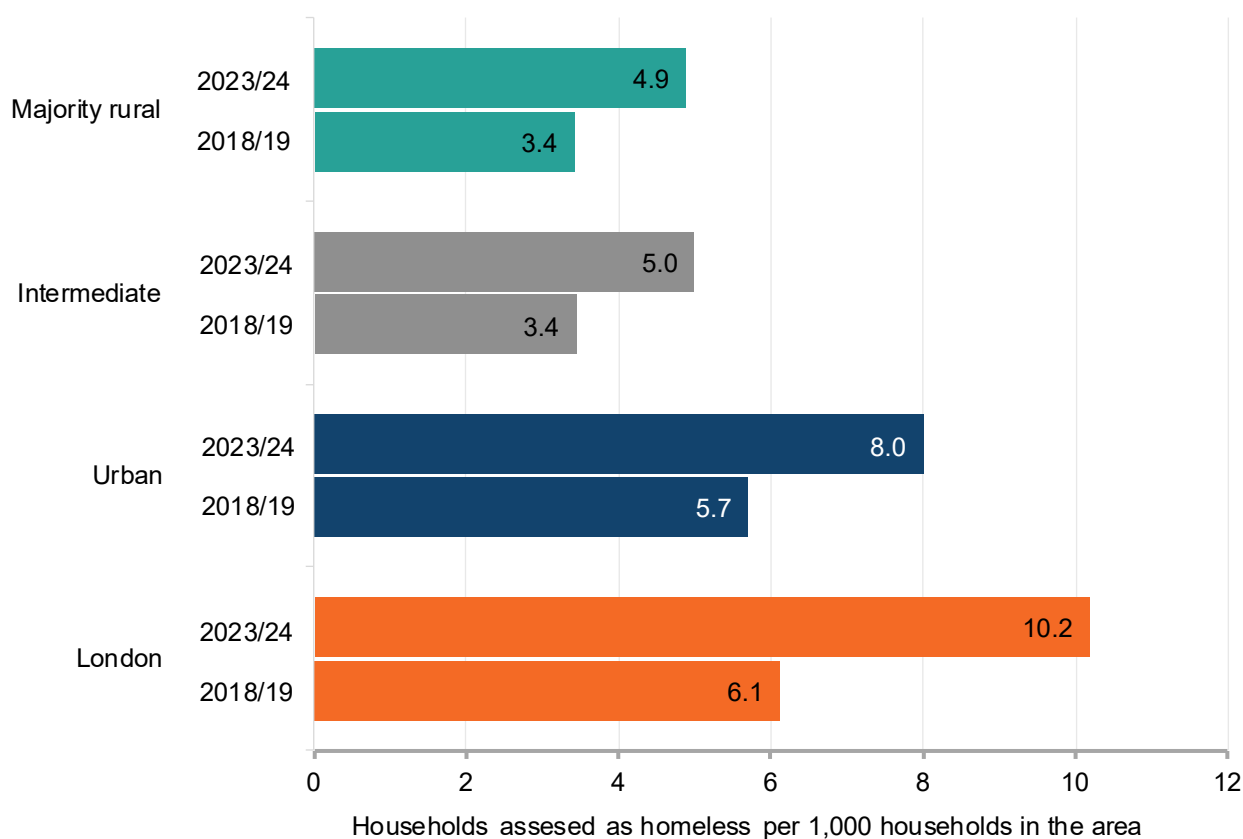
Statutory homelessness

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 H-2 for more information.

The bar chart in Figure H-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 H-6).

Figure H-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 H-7)

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



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

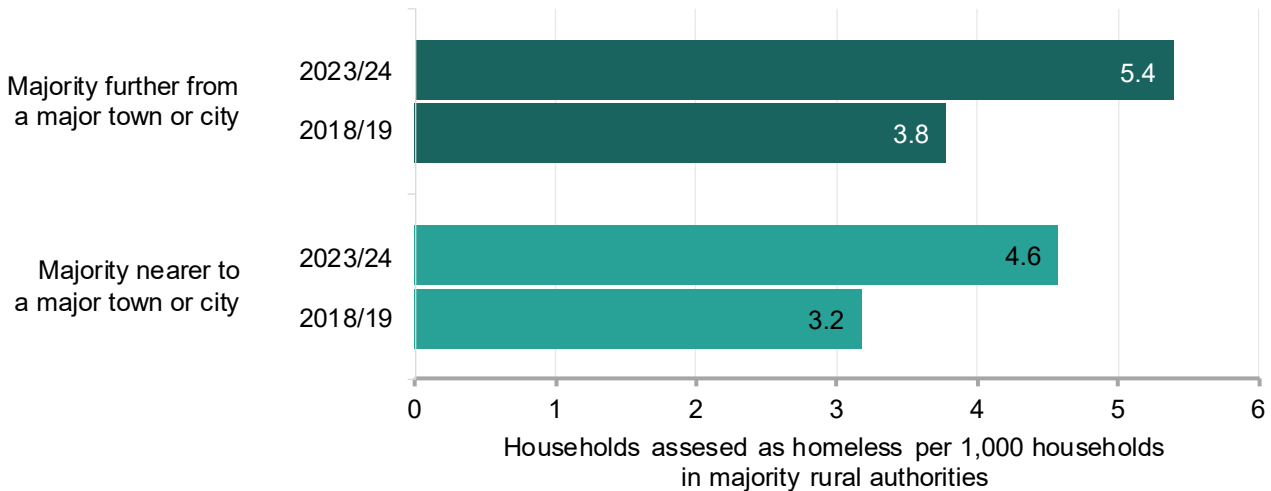
- In both year ending March 2019 and year ending March 2024, the homelessness rate was lowest in majority rural authorities and highest in London. The rate in majority rural authorities has been similar to that of intermediate (rural or urban) authorities, but much lower than that in urban authorities 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 H-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 H-5.

Figure H-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 H-5, Note H-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 H-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 H-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 H-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 H-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 H-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

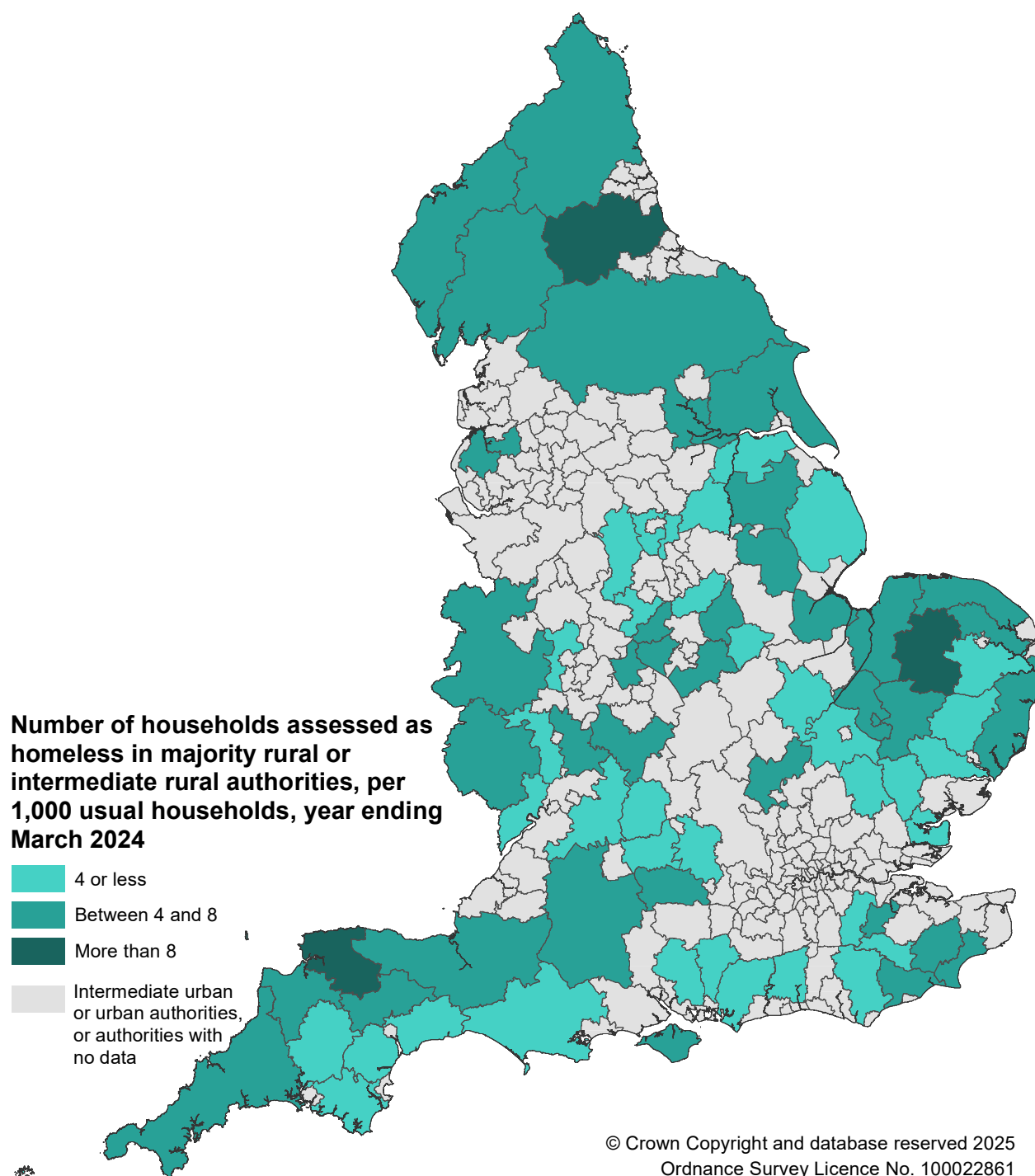
Many of the majority rural or intermediate rural authorities with low rates of statutory homelessness were in the East or South East of England; this is shown in the map in Figure H-3. Intermediate urban and urban authorities (including London) are not shown on the map, but a full table of local authority-level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

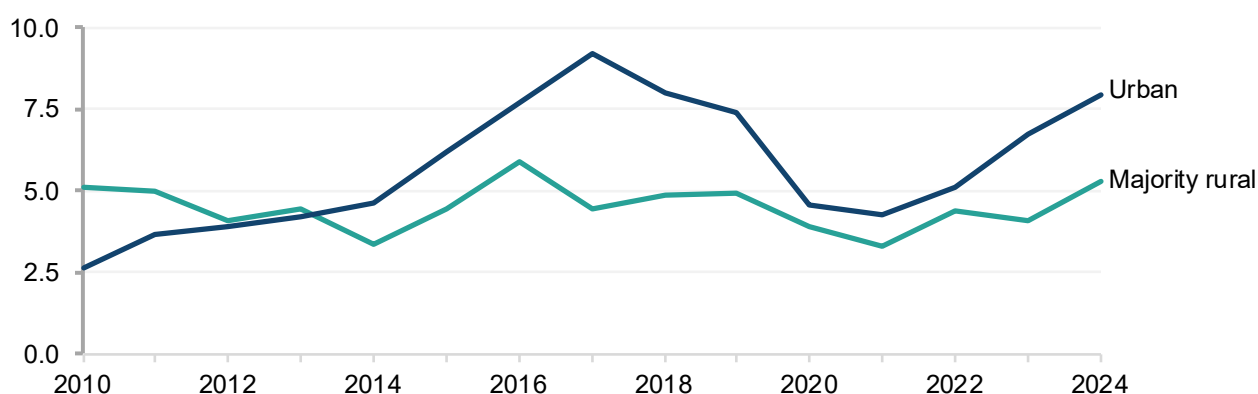
In 2024, there were 5.3 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in majority rural authorities. This compares to 7.9 people sleeping rough per 100,000 population in urban authorities outside of London. In London, the rate of rough sleeping was considerably higher at 14.7 people per 100,000 population.

Comparing these annual snapshots allows for a time series to be created that is not impacted by seasonality. The line chart in Figure H-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 H-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 H-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 H-1**

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

- **Note H-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 H-3**

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

- **Note H-4**

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

- **Note H-5**

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

- **Note H-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 H-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.

I. Home ownership

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.

Home ownership - 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.

Summary

Understanding house prices and affordability helps to identify barriers to home ownership in rural areas and the pressures facing rural communities.

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.

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. The latest house purchase and rent prices are also based on geometric means.

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

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note I-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 I-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 I-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 I-2)

‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note I-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 I-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 I-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 I-2, Note I-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 I-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 I-10.

Although Table I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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 I-11.

The maps in Figure I-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 I-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 I-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 I-1, Note I-2)



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

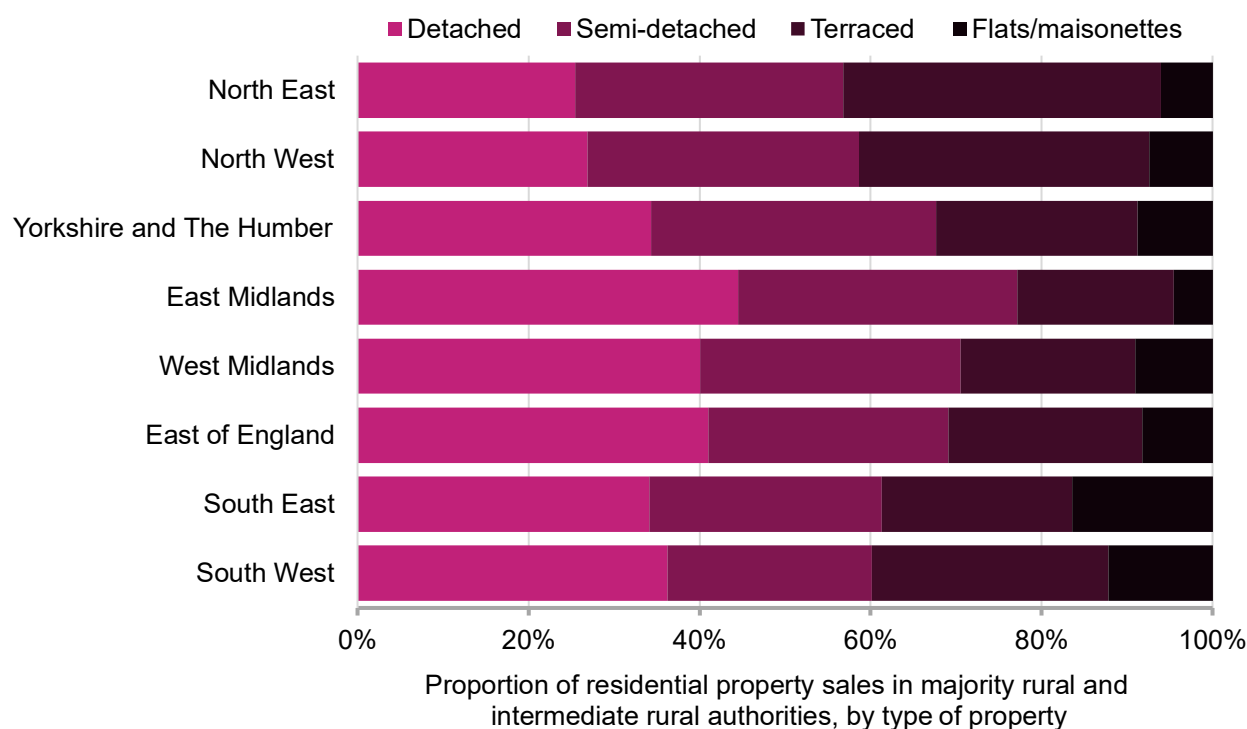
The bar chart in Figure I-2 highlights the distribution of residential property sales between property types for majority rural and intermediate rural authorities in England, by region. Whilst intermediate urban and urban authorities are not shown in the chart, their sales distributions can be found 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 I-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



Housing market - explanatory notes

• Note I-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 I-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 I-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.

- **Note I-4**

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

- **Note I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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 I-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.

J. Private rental market

The area of the country has a bigger impact on private rent affordability than rurality; homes are generally more affordable to rent in the North of England than the South, regardless of their settlement type.

Private rental market - key findings

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

Understanding private rents and their affordability helps to identify housing pressures facing households in rural areas,

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.

Within this publication, private rent affordability is based on the mean of rent prices to median workplace-based earnings for Local Authorities in England. The latest house rent prices are also based on geometric means.

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 J-5); 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 J-1 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 J-1: Average private monthly rent prices (£), by number of bedrooms and 2021 rural-urban classification of local authorities, June 2025 (Note J-1, Note J-2, Note J-3, Note J-4)
‘Average’ refers to the geometric mean (Note J-5). 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 J-2. 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 J-2: 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 J-5). 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 J-3 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 J-3: 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 J-5). 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 J-3 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 J-4 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 J-4: 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 J-5). 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 J-1 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 J-1: 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 J-1)



Private rental market - explanatory notes

- **Note J-1**

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 J-2**

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 J-3**

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

- **Note J-4**

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 J-5**

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.

K. 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 K-1):

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

The Housing Act 2004 (Note K-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:

- Physiological Requirements - Hygrothermal conditions and Pollutants (non-microbial);
- Psychological Requirements - Space, Security, Light, and Noise;
- Protection against Infection - Hygiene, Sanitation, and Water supply;
- 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 K-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 K-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”.

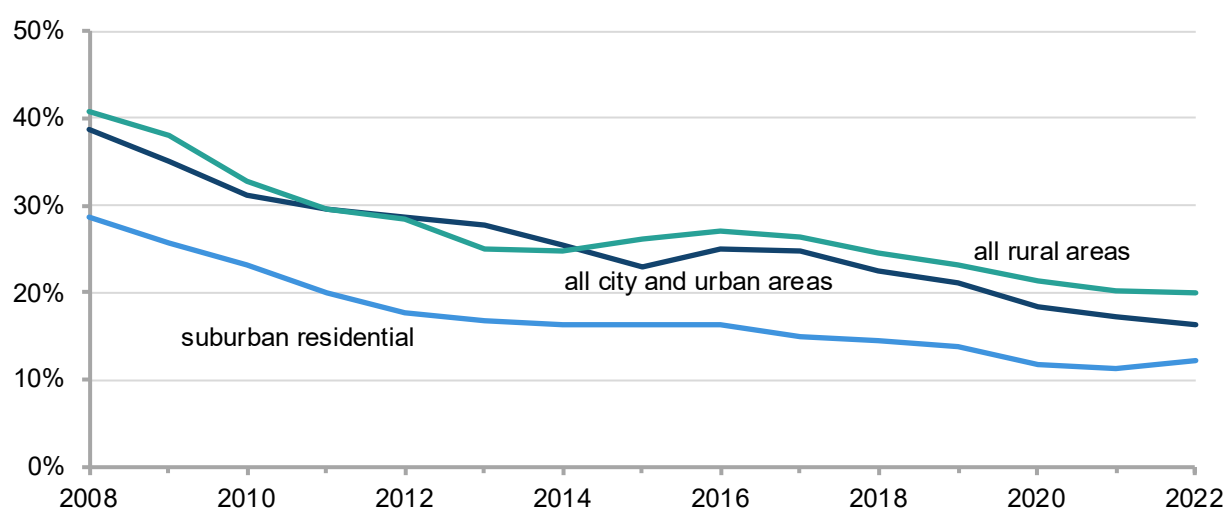
This EHS rural and urban classification system is strongly reliant on the perception of the surveyor conducting each dwelling survey. The Official Statistics Rural Urban classification has a precise definition linked to population (Appendix 2: Defining Rural areas for details on this definition) and 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 K-1 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes falling 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 K-1: Line chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2022 (Note K-1, Note K-4, Note K-5, Note K-8)



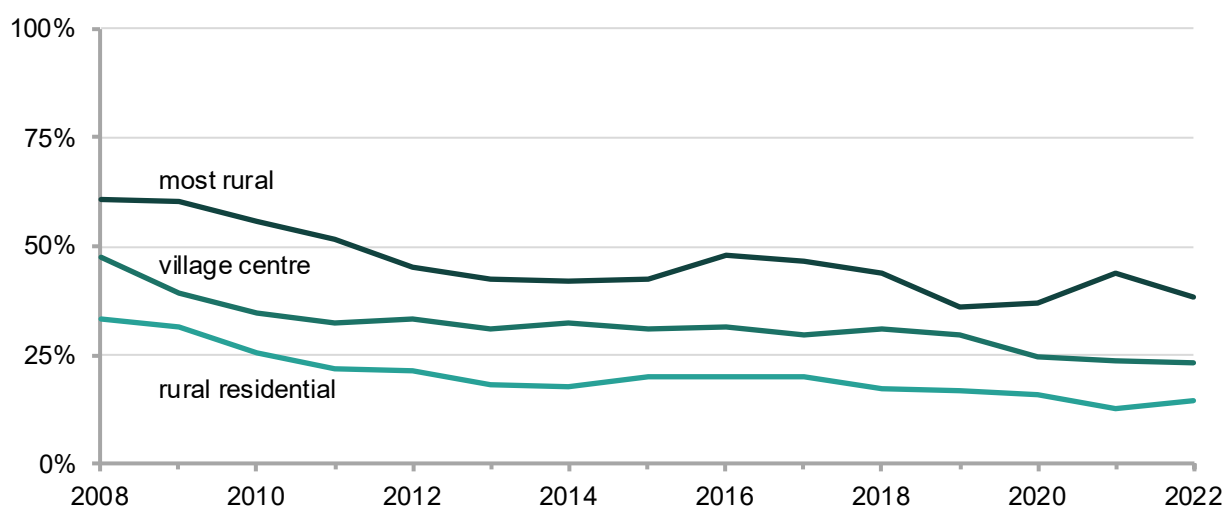
As Figure K-1 shows, this proportion has fallen from over 40% in 2008 and there have been year-on-year falls in the proportion of non-decent homes in rural areas every year since 2016. Between

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 K-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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-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 K-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.

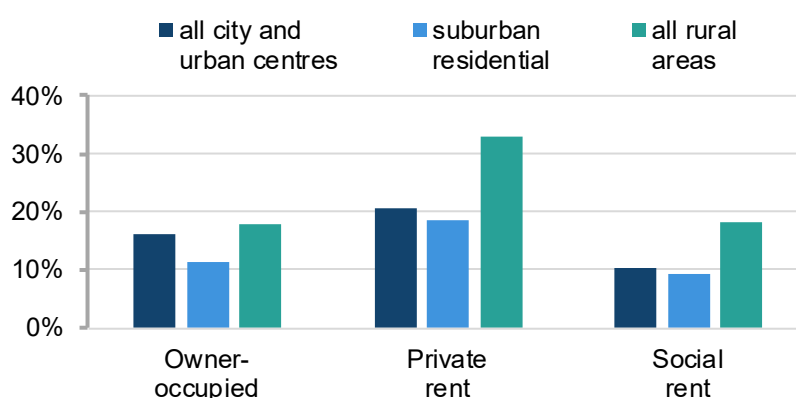
Within rural areas the proportion of Owner-occupied and Social rent homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard was similar (at 18%) and much lower than the 1 in 3 Private rent homes failing to meet the Standard in 2022.

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 K-3: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard by EHS classification area and tenure 2022 (Note K-4, Note K-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 K-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 K-2) under the HHSRS will fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard (Note K-3). Whilst the EHS does not capture every hazard (Note K-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 K-4).

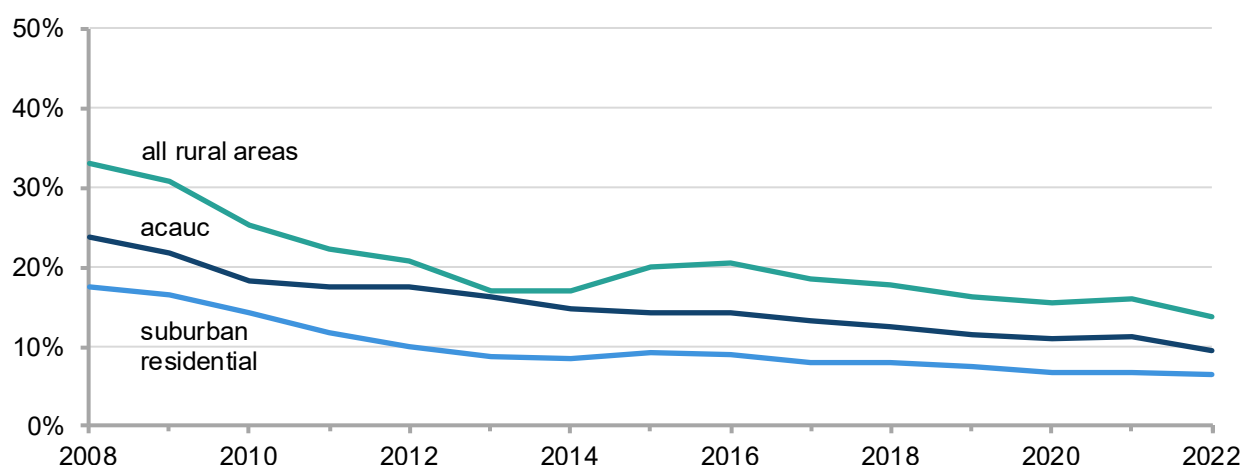
Figure K-4 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard has fallen in all broad area types under the EHS classification over the period 2008 to 2022. For rural areas the proportion of homes with at least one Category 1 hazard fell from 33% in 2008 to

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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-6, Note K-7, Note K-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 KB1b, Note K-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.

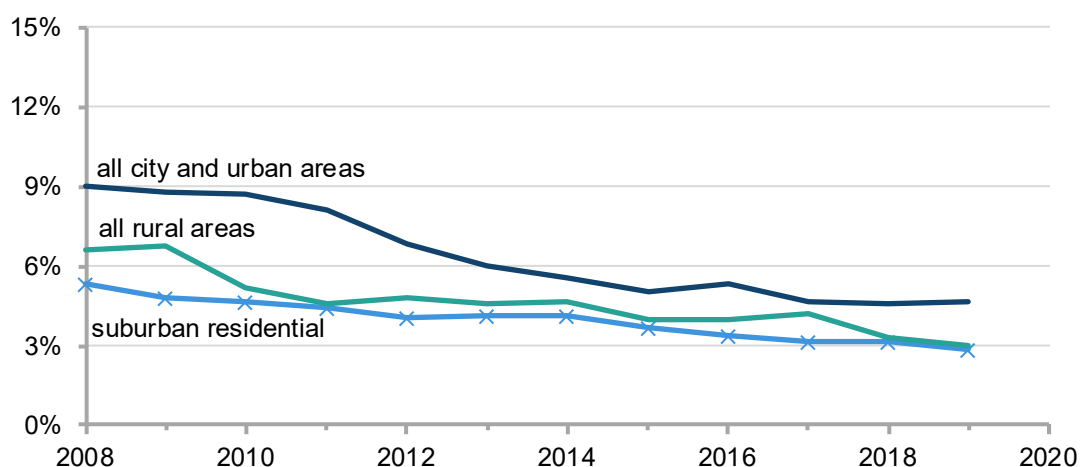
Homes in disrepair

A further factor in determining whether homes are Decent is if they are in a reasonable state of repair. Figure K-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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-6, Note K-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.

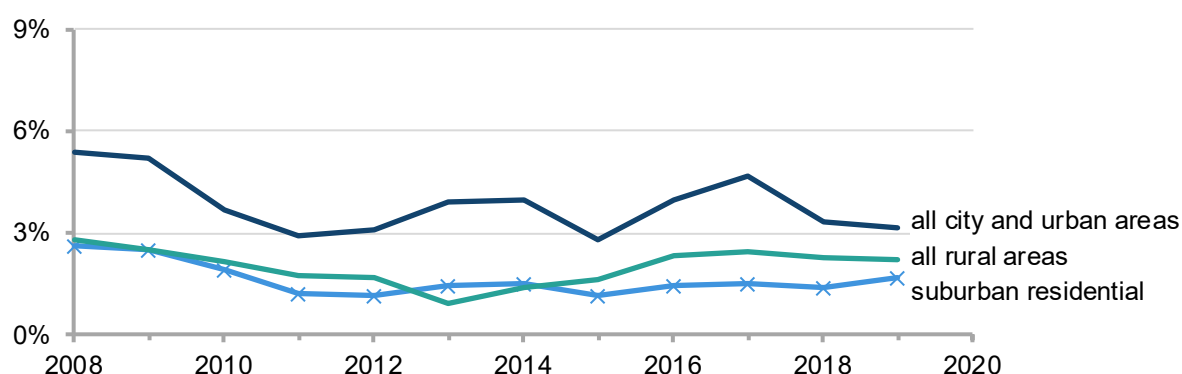


Homes without modern facilities

The third factor in the Decent Homes Standard is whether the homes have reasonably modern facilities. Figure K-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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-6, Note K-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

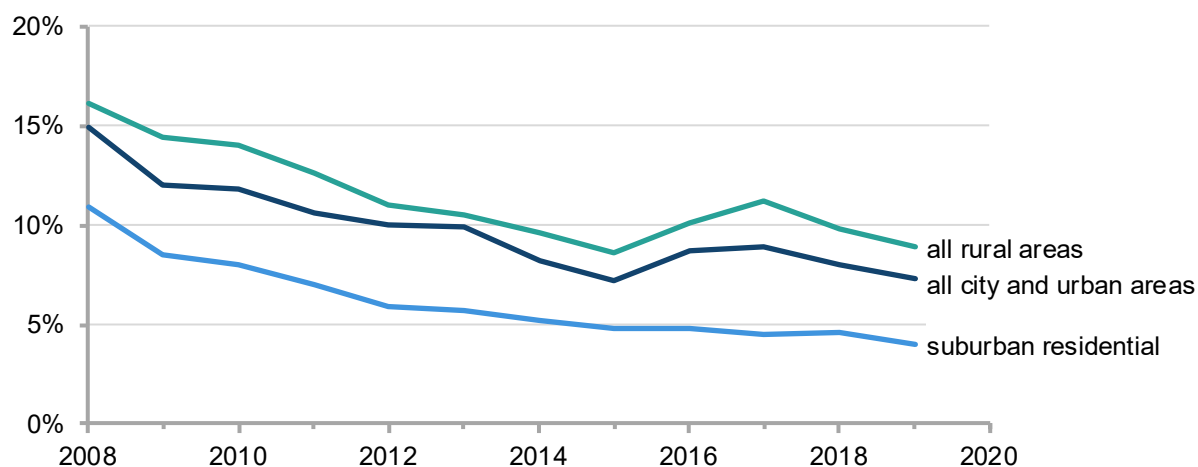
modern facilities fluctuated between 3 and 6%, which means that this proportion is 1 to 3 percentage points higher than in rural areas.

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. Chapter B Housing characteristics from the English housing survey showed that in 2020, there were proportionally more homes in rural areas that were either detached or pre-1919 than in urban areas. This chapter also showed that homes in rural areas have a much larger floor area than in urban areas. These characteristics have the potential to make homes less energy efficient (Note K-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 K-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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-6, Note K-8)



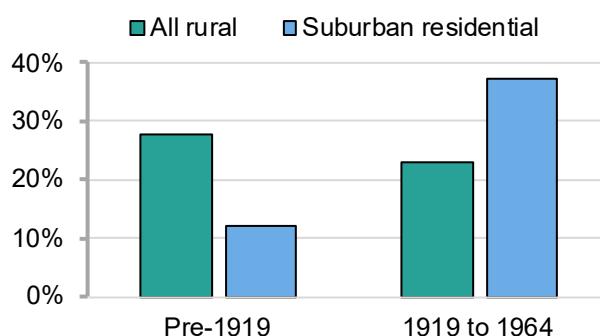
The trend for the proportion of homes in rural areas failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort (Figure K-7) has 3 components. The first is component is for the period 2008 to 2015. Over this period, the proportion of rural homes failing to provide sufficient thermal comfort fell year-on-year with 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 K-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 K-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 K-9) and therefore harder to keep adequately warm.

Figure K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-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 K-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 K-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”.

Chapter B Housing characteristics from the English housing survey 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 K-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

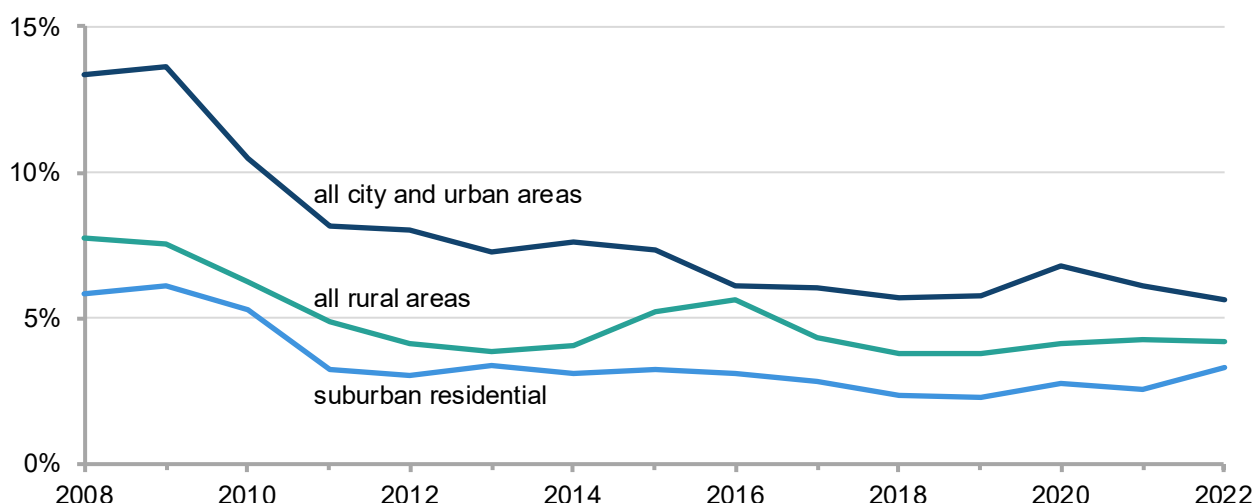
problem where any of the following exist: penetrating damp, rising damp, or extensive patches of mould growth on walls and ceilings and/or mildew on soft furnishings.

Figure K-9 is a line chart showing (a) how the proportion of homes with damp (Note K-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 K-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 K-9: Line chart showing the proportion of homes suffering from any type of damp by EHS classification areas, 2008 to 2022 (Note K-4, Note K-5, Note K-6, Note K-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 K-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 K-10: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes suffering from any type of damp by EHS classification area and tenure 2022

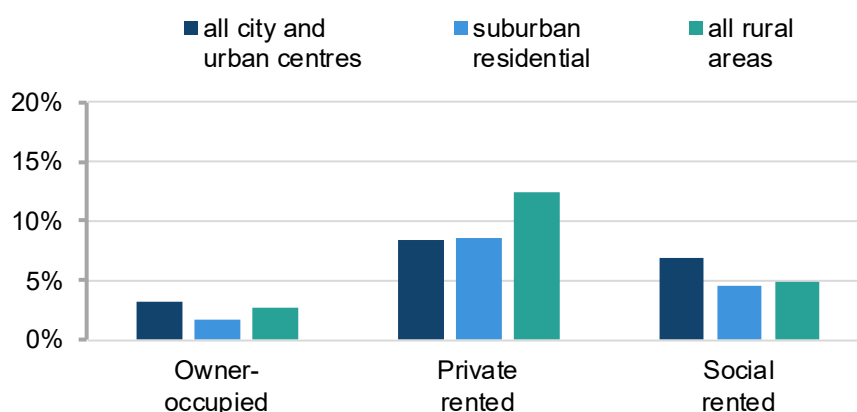
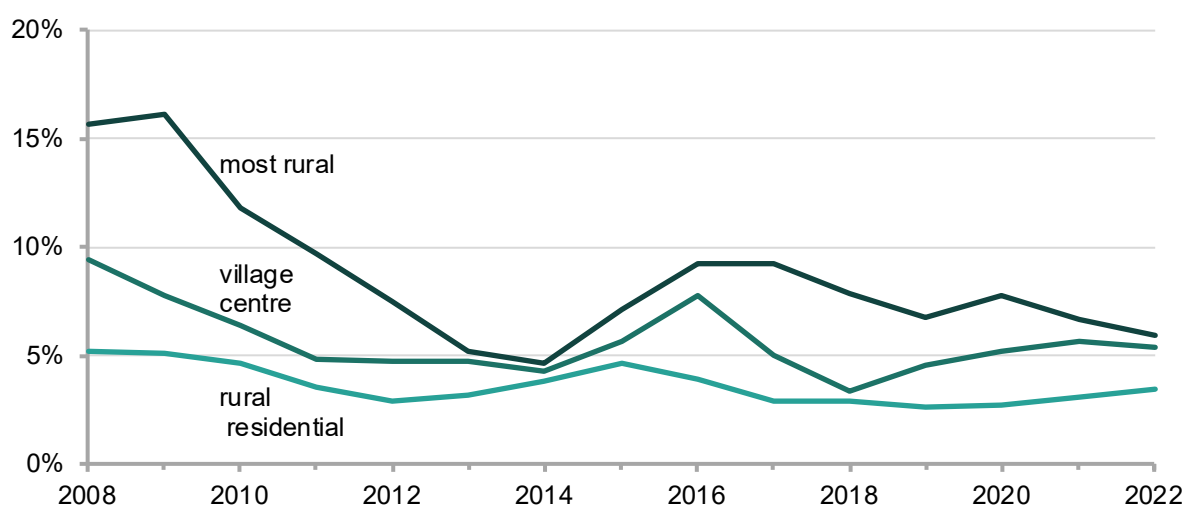


Figure K-11 is a line chart showing how the proportion of homes with damp (Note K-12) changed within rural areas (according to the EHS classification) and it shows that the more rural the area the higher the proportion of homes that have some form of damp (Note K-12). In the least rural areas, (known 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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-8).



When considering the difference types of damp (Note K-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 K-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 K-11 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 K-8). Whilst charts have not been shown for the different types of damp the time-series of data are available in sheet KC 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 K-12 is a bar chart that shows the proportion of occupied homes with a smoke alarm fitted (Note K-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 K-12: A bar chart showing the proportion of homes with a smoke alarm within by EHS classification area, 2011 and 2022 (Note K-4, Note K-5, Note K-13)

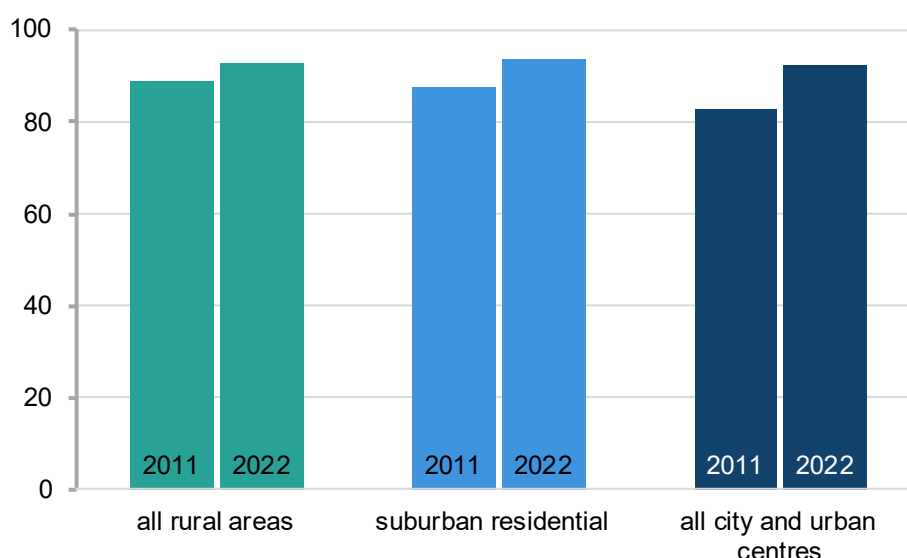


Figure K-13 is a bar chart that shows the proportion of occupied homes with a smoke alarm fitted (Note K-13) within rural areas on the EHS classification system in 2011 and 2022. This bar chart shows the more rural the area the lower the proportion of occupied homes that have a smoke alarm fitted in 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 K-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 K-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 K-4, Note K-5, Note K-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 K-1: The proportion of homes with various safety and security features by EHS classification area in 2019 (Note K-4, Note K-5, Note K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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 K-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.

L. 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.

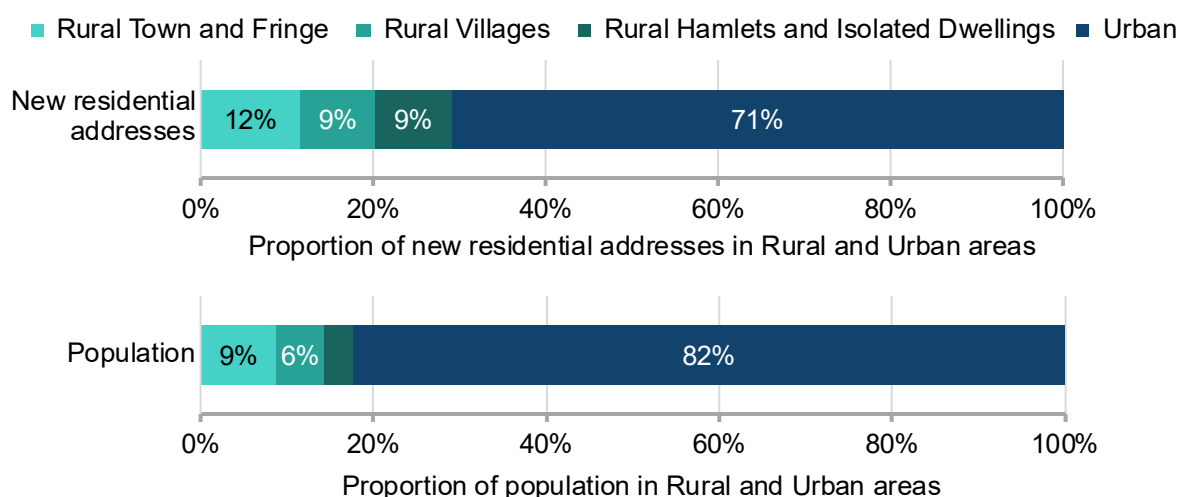
New residential addresses

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

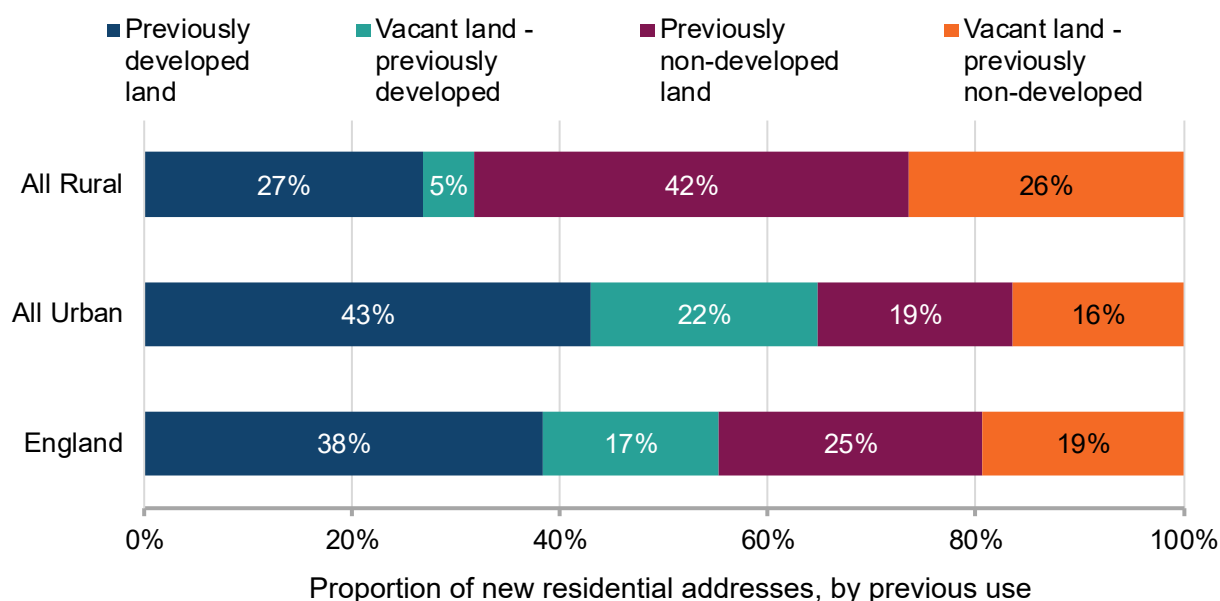
In England, 55% of new residential addresses were on previously developed land (38% on land that was previously developed and 17% on land that was vacant but which had been previously developed). 45% of new residential addresses were on previously non-developed land (25% on land that was previously non-developed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

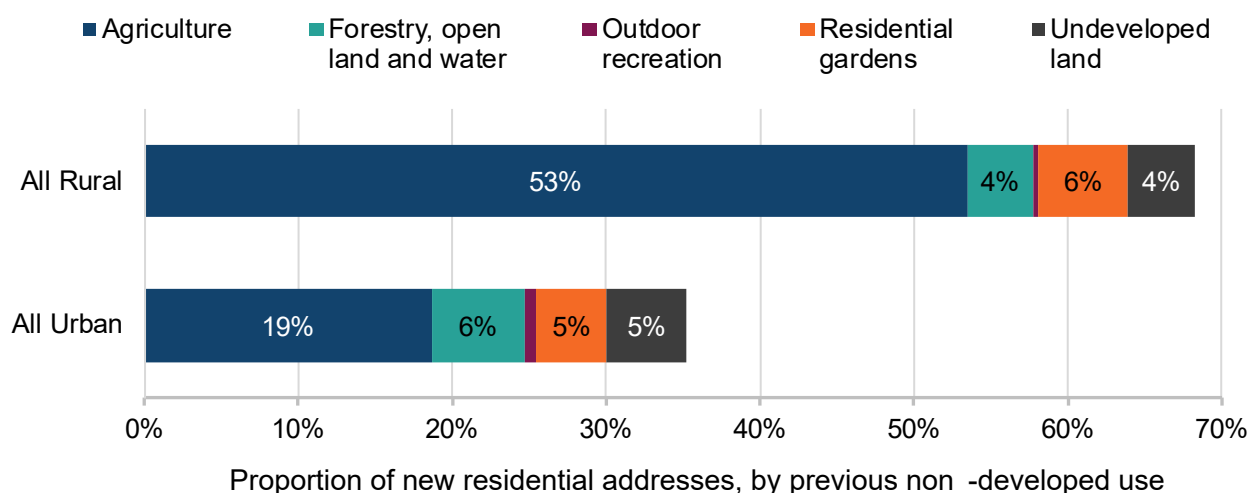
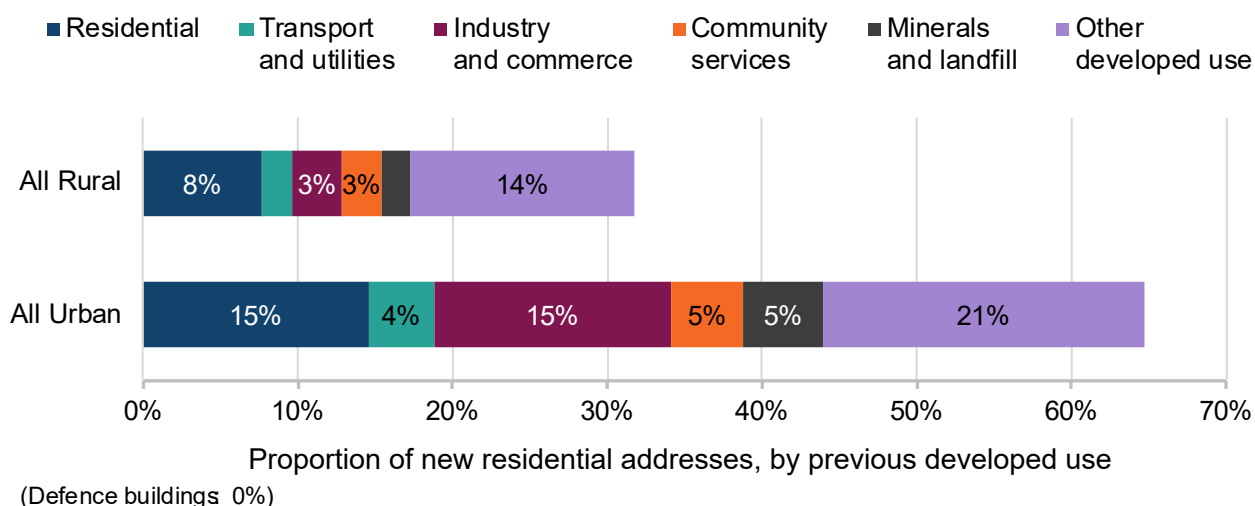


Previous land use

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

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

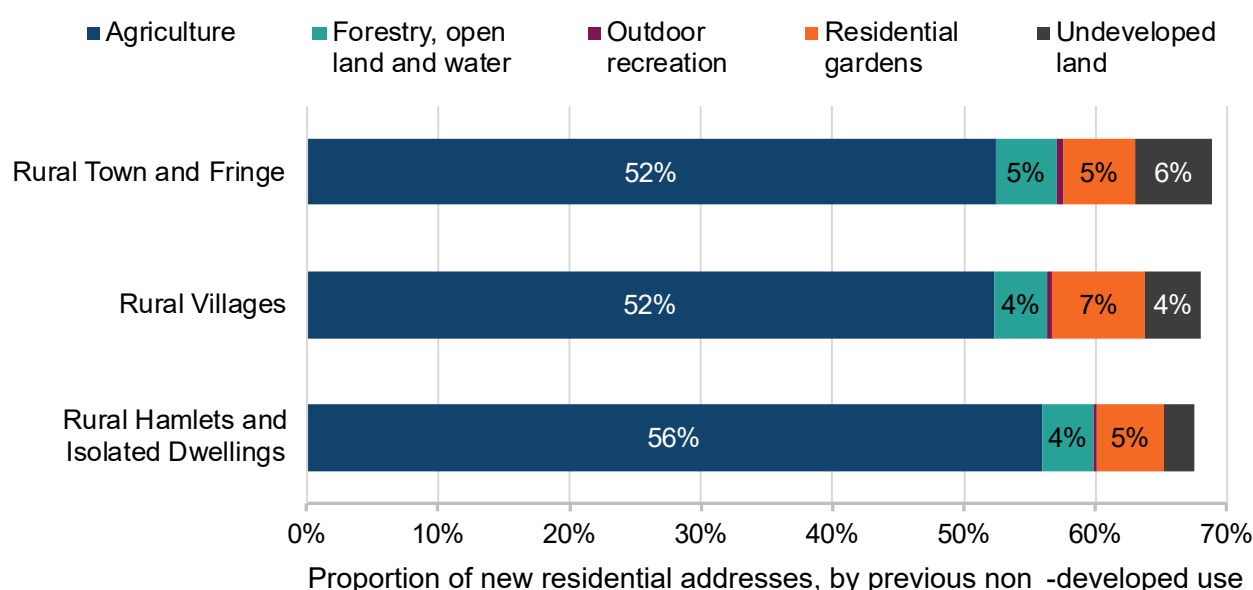
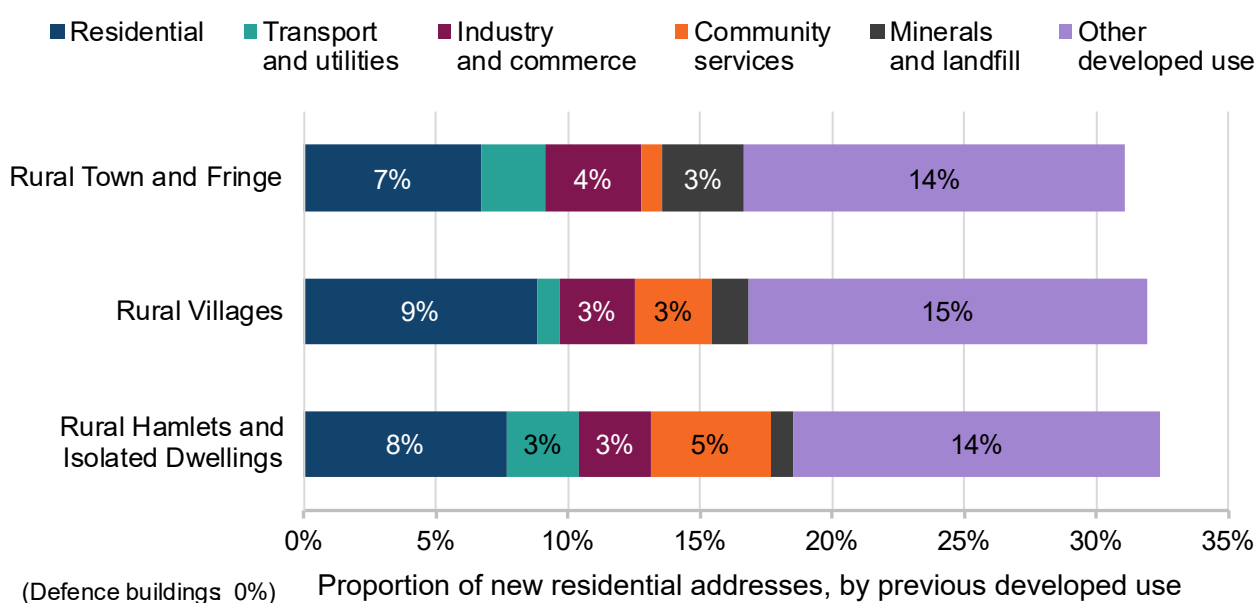
Of new residential addresses in 2021/21 the proportions on previously non-developed land uses (Figure L-3 – bottom stacked bar chart) were:

- **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 L-4.

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

Land use change for housing - explanatory notes

• Note L-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 L-2

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

• Note L-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 L-4

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

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

1. [Population](#)

- A. Population: Small area-based
- B. Population: Constituency-based
- C. Population: Local Authority-based
- D. Internal migration
- E. Census 2021: Population

2. [Housing](#)

- A. Housing stock characteristics from the Census
- B. Housing stock characteristics from the English Housing Survey
- C. Additions to the housing stock
- D. Additions to affordable housing
- E. Households on local authority housing registers
- F. Second homes
- G. Empty homes
- H. Homelessness
- I. Home ownership
- J. Private rental market
- K. Housing quality
- L. Land use change for housing

3. [Health and Wellbeing](#)

- A. Health outcomes
- B. Wellbeing
- C. NHS Dentistry
- D. NHS General Practice
- E. Childcare provision
- F. Loneliness
- G. Volunteering and charity

4. [Communities and Households](#)

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

5. [Connectivity and Accessibility](#)

- A. Broadband
- B. Mobile coverage
- C. Average travel patterns
- D. Access to vehicles and charging infrastructure
- E. Transport connectivity
- 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
- G. Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) take-up

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.