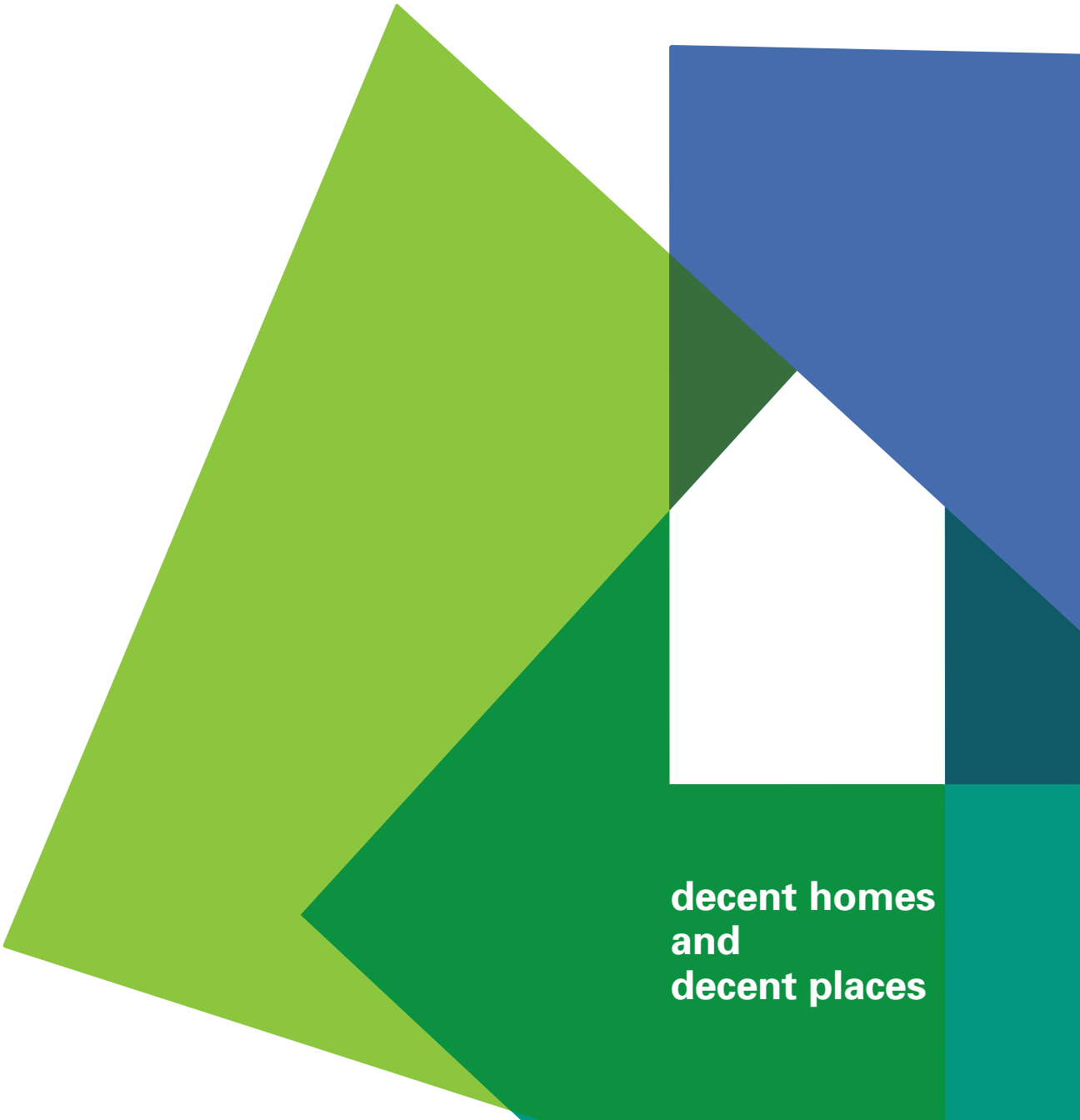
Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities

English House Condition Survey 2003

Annual Report



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Contents

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- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) which manages the EHCS on behalf of ODPM. It undertakes the household interviews and has responsibilities for sampling, weighting and data validation. ONS also runs the Market Value Survey.

- ONS works in partnership with Miller Mitchell Burley Lane (MMBL), which undertakes the visual inspection of the properties. MMBL employs a large field force of professional surveyors who work in close co-operation with the ONS interviewers to maximise response rates and deliver high-quality data.

- The Building Research Establishment (BRE), which is the development partner of the Office for the EHCS. It helps develop the physical survey questionnaire and surveyor training materials, and delivers surveyor training sessions. The BRE is also involved in validating and analysing the data, developing and running models to create the key measures and analytical variables for the survey, and reporting the findings.

- The Valuation Office Agency (VOA), which provides market valuations for each of the EHCS properties and information on the local area and housing market.

- The interviewers and surveyors who collect information from households and carry out the visual inspection.

- The households which take part in the survey.

- The ODPM staff who manage and work on the survey.

Introduction

Decent homes and decent places

Decent homes and decent places for people to live in are key to delivering sustainable communities. In 2003, the Government set out its programme of action for Sustainable Communities, including the aim to bring all social housing up to a decent standard by 2010, to increase the proportion of vulnerable households in the private sector living in decent homes and to improve the local environments in which people live.

Focus of this report

This report provides a more detailed account of the condition of homes and places in England in 2003, including progress made since 1996 and 2001 (the years of previous surveys). It builds on the key findings published in March 2005, English House Condition Survey: Key Findings for 2003.

As well as updating the profile of the housing stock, the report covers a number of key policy areas including:

- Decent homes
- Housing conditions of vulnerable households living in the private sector
- Extent of disrepair in England's housing stock
- Energy efficiency
- Quality of the local environment
- Physical security of homes
- Living conditions of disadvantaged groups

Throughout the report, people's living conditions are presented by the type of area they live in – urban, suburban and rural, deprived areas, different levels of local housing market demand and broad regional areas of the country. The report begins with a set of summary statistics which draw together the key findings. This is followed by an overview chapter that provides a summary of the main 2003 findings relating to each of the key policy areas. Each of the remaining chapters focuses on a key issue relevant to living conditions.

The results are based on fieldwork undertaken between April 2002 and March 2004. They are presented in terms of a mid-point survey position of April 2003 which is taken as an 'average' position for the fieldwork period covered.

For the first time, we are able to present results more frequently than five yearly, as the EHCS became a continuous survey in 2002. The 2003 findings are the first set of annual results since the 2001 EHCS report (the last five year survey). In future we will publish an annual summary of findings along with an update of the standard tables which accompany this report.

Periodically more detailed reports will be published on specific topics of interest or on progress in the main indicators of living conditions.

Since the publication of the 2001 report some slight refinements have been made to 1996 and 2001 results (which were included in the 2003 Key Findings report published in March). These revisions are minor and do not alter conclusions about general trends and patterns reported in the 2001 report. Further details are available in the EHCS Technical Report, also accompanying this report, which provides a detailed commentary on the survey methodology.

The technical report is available at: www.odpm.gov.uk

Standard tables which provide 2003 survey results are available at www.odpm.gov.uk. These are organised around the main policy themes addressed in this report. The data, in SPSS format, and associated documentation is also available from email: ehcs@odpm.gsi.gov.uk.

Summary Statistics

A: Stock Profile, 2003

numbers of dwellings ('000s)

	owner occupied	private rented	local authority	RSL	total
dwelling age					
pre-1919	3,253	1,000	98	193	4,544
1919 to 1944	3,110	321	407	142	3,981
1945 to 1964	2,842	245	1,019	333	4,439
1965 to 1980	3,301	273	771	406	4,752
post 1980	2,695	366	162	546	3,769
dwelling type					
small terraced house	1,710	389	318	244	2,659
medium/large terraced house	2,596	346	365	267	3,574
semi-detached house	4,888	349	499	244	5,981
detached house	3,296	128	14	7	3,444
bungalow	1,539	92	225	158	2,014
converted flat	267	352	28	77	723
purpose built flat, low rise	839	518	821	576	2,754
purpose built flat, high rise	66	32	188	48	335
dwelling size					
under 50m^2	1,067	556	629	538	2,790
50– up to 70m^2	3,568	741	979	586	5,874
70– up to 90m^2	4,743	519	698	384	6,343
90– up to 110m^2	2,417	195	109	79	2,800
over 110m^2	3,406	194	43	33	3,677
Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) districts					
NRF districts	5,476	969	1,539	756	8,740
other districts	9,725	1,236	918	865	12,744
market conditions – level of demand					
'limited' to 'negligible'	1,111	193	665	274	2,244
'moderate'	7,782	1,062	1,213	823	10,879
'high'	6,308	950	579	524	8,361
broad regional areas					
south east regions	4,470	857	721	519	6,567
northern regions	4,361	530	877	510	6,278
rest of England	6,370	818	859	592	8,639
nature of area					
city or other urban centre	3,003	940	876	507	5,325
suburban	8,622	846	1,360	877	11,705
rural	3,576	419	221	237	4,453
occupancy					
vacant	338	279	132	87	836
occupied	14,863	1,926	2,325	1,534	20,648
all dwellings	**15,201**	**2,205**	**2,457**	**1,621**	**21,484**

B: Facilities, Services and Accessibility, 2003

numbers of dwellings ('000s)

	owner occupied	private rented	local authority	RSL	total
accessibility					
flush thresholds	2,467	445	705	625	4,242
level access	10,559	1,310	1,637	1,126	14,632
bathroom/WC at entrance level	5,566	909	1,235	841	8,551
wider doorsets and circulation	2,229	270	376	381	3,256
all four accessibility features	311	62	153	191	716
facilities and services					
central heating	13,634	1,573	2,082	1,314	18,604
storage heaters	795	347	191	254	1,587
smoke detectors*	11,796	1,340	1,735	1,316	16,187
second wc	6,474	454	405	320	7,652
garage	8,554	426	169	112	9,262
secure windows and doors	8,775	879	1,109	913	11,676
double glazing (partial or full)	13,115	1,347	1,655	1,273	17,390
all dwellings	**15,201**	**2,205**	**2,457**	**1,621**	**21,484**

*** Note: Smoke detectors are based on households not dwellings**

C: Condition of Homes, 2003

i) All dwellings

	% in this group that							
	are non-decent homes	fail thermal comfort only	those failing fitness, repair or moderni-sations	average floor area (m^2)	average SAP rating	average (mean) repair costs (£/m^2)	average property value	all dwellings in the group ('000s)
tenure								
owner occupied	27.7	16.5	11.2	92	50	38	£160,970	15,201
private rented	47.5	23.3	24.2	71	47	66	£131,217	2,205
local authority	39.6	22.3	17.2	65	55	43	£80,638	2,457
RSL	28.8	19.2	9.5	61	61	31	£92,334	1,621
dwelling age								
pre-1919	43.6	16.9	26.6	93	42	65	£164,220	4,544
1919 to 1944	35.5	16.5	19.0	86	47	57	£154,036	3,981
1945 to 1964	32.6	21.1	11.5	81	50	41	£122,303	4,439
1965 to 1980	29.1	22.8	6.2	81	54	28	£129,894	4,752
post 1980	12.5	11.6	0.9	82	66	11	£149,798	3,769
dwelling type								
small terraced house	35.2	19.3	15.8	58	54	50	£94,137	2,659
medium/large terraced house	31.6	15.5	16.0	92	52	46	£134,218	3,574
semi-detached house	29.1	16.5	12.6	87	49	44	£134,442	5,981
detached house	17.7	11.2	6.4	131	50	24	£248,848	3,444
bungalow	21.7	14.1	7.6	73	46	48	£136,547	2,014
converted flat	48.0	16.1	31.9	60	42	79	£132,536	723
purpose built flat, low rise	47.8	33.9	13.9	55	61	28	£100,105	2,754
purpose built flat, high rise	54.0	31.6	22.5	64	49	29	£138,411	335
Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) districts								
NRF districts	28.7	17.9	10.9	78	52	45	£118,489	8,740
other districts	34.7	18.4	16.3	89	51	38	£160,737	12,744
market conditions – areas with:								
'limited to negligible' demand	35.2	20.9	14.3	75	51	45	£85,060	2,244
'moderate' demand	31.2	17.8	13.4	80	52	43	£114,921	10,879
'high' demand	29.7	17.5	12.3	92	52	37	£195,338	8,361
broad regional areas								
south east regions	31.8	17.4	14.4	84	52	42	£208,534	6,567
northern regions	31.2	18.6	12.5	82	52	41	£88,432	6,278
rest of England	30.6	18.2	12.4	86	50	40	£134,206	8,639
nature of area								
city or other urban centre	39.3	18.7	20.6	75	51	51	£133,473	5,325
suburban	27.6	17.1	10.5	82	53	36	£134,539	11,705
rural	30.8	20.0	10.8	103	47	40	£179,288	4,453
occupancy								
vacant	30.2	18.0	12.2	71	48	88	£105,139	836
occupied	53.9	20.2	33.7	85	52	39	£145,105	20,648
all dwellings	**31.2**	**18.1**	**13.1**	**85**	**51**	**41**	**£143,550**	**21,484**

ii) Private sector vulnerable households

	% in this group that:			
	live in non-decent homes	live in homes that fail thermal comfort only	live in homes that fail fitness, repair or modernisations	all households in the group ('000s)
tenure				
owner occupiers	32.4	17.8	14.5	2,228
private tenants	54.7	25.0	29.7	612
Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) districts				
NRF districts	40.9	19.8	21.1	1,309
other districts	34.0	19.0	15.0	1,530
all private sector vulnerable households	**37.2**	**19.4**	**17.8**	**2,839**

iii) Average costs to make decent

	all non-decent homes	those failing thermal comfort only	those failing fitness, repair or modernisations
tenure			
owner occupied	£7,560	£1,975	£15,820
private rented	£9,115	£1,912	£16,050
private sector	**£7,870**	**£1,964**	**£15,875**
local authority	£4,243	£1,176	£8,219
RSL	£3,353	£915	£8,291
social sector	**£3,954**	**£1,081**	**£8,238**
all dwellings	**£7,028**	**£1,769**	**£14,304**

D: Quality of the Local Environment, 2003

	type of problem				
	poor quality environment	'upkeep'	'traffic'	'utilisation'	all households in the group ('000s)
Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) districts					
NRF districts	21.2	14.5	9.5	3.7	8,346
other districts	12.3	7.2	6.5	1.1	12,378
market conditions – level of demand					
'limited' to 'negligible'	20.1	15.3	6.7	5.8	2,086
'moderate'	16.9	10.9	8.0	2.3	10,513
'high'	13.5	7.9	7.6	1.1	8,125
broad regional areas					
south east regions	18.3	10.2	10.9	1.4	6,370
northern regions	15.6	11.3	5.9	3.3	6,009
rest of England	14.2	9.2	6.5	1.9	8,345
nature of area					
city or other urban centre	29.7	20.1	15.4	4.8	5,034
suburban	12.9	8.3	5.5	1.6	11,370
rural	7.7	3.4	4.6	0.7	4,321
decent homes					
non-decent	20.8	14.1	9.7	3.2	6,272
decent	13.7	8.4	6.8	1.8	14,452
all households	**15.9**	**10.1**	**7.7**	**2.2**	**20,724**

E: Living Conditions of Disadvantaged Groups, 2003

	% living in non-decent homes	% live in poor quality environments	% living in energy inefficient homes	% living in serious disrepair	% living in homes that are not fully secure	all households in the group ('000s)
ethnic minorities	34.6	25.4	4.3	12.9	45.3	1,626
low income	39.1	20.1	12.5	14.3	51.6	4,119
workless	36.1	21.3	10.1	12.7	51.6	2,778
children 0-15	26.4	16.5	6.2	9.1	45.5	6,184
lone parents	31.0	21.3	8.0	11.4	55.1	1,515
long term illness or disability	32.9	16.2	9.3	11.1	46.1	6,136
older people 60+	32.9	13.4	11.0	9.8	44.5	7,098
elderly 75+	35.9	13.0	12.6	11.5	48.0	2,600
social: all	34.2	21.0	7.5	8.1	50.3	3,888
private: vulnerable	37.2	17.8	12.6	15.9	50.1	2,839
private: all other	27.8	14.1	8.7	9.4	42.9	13,997
all households	**30.3**	**15.9**	**9.0**	**10.0**	**45.7**	**20,724**

F: Change over time, 1996 – 2003

i) Non-decent homes by tenure

	owner occupied	private rented	all private	local authority	RSL	all social	all dwellings
number (000s)							
1996	5,535	1,246	**6,781**	1,869	448	**2,318**	**9,099**
2001	4,316	1,101	**5,416**	1,174	472	**1,647**	**7,063**
2003	4,207	1,048	**5,255**	972	467	**1,439**	**6,694**
% within tenure							
1996	39.7	62.4	**42.6**	53.9	47.6	**52.6**	**44.7**
2001	29.2	50.7	**31.9**	41.8	33.2	**38.9**	**33.3**
2003	27.7	47.5	**30.2**	39.6	28.8	**35.3**	**31.2**

ii) Non-decent homes in 88 districts supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund

	private	social	all dwellings in NRF districts
number (000s)			
1996	2,790	1,362	**4,152**
2001	2,383	988	**3,370**
2003	2,182	849	**3,031**
% within tenure			
1996	47.8	54.2	**49.8**
2001	36.9	41.1	**38.0**
2003	33.9	37.0	**34.7**

iii) Private sector vulnerable households living in non-decent homes

	owner occupied	private rented	all private
number (000s)			
1996	929	504	**1,433**
2001	784	366	**1,151**
2003	722	335	**1,056**
% within tenure			
1996	51.4	72.0	**57.1**
2001	37.9	58.8	**42.7**
2003	32.4	54.7	**37.2**

iv) Energy efficiency (average SAP rating)

	owner occupied	private rented	all private	local authority	RSL	all social	all dwellings
1996	45.5	39.0	**44.7**	46.4	53.9	**48.1**	**45.4**
2001	49.6	44.1	**48.9**	52.0	60.5	**54.9**	**50.1**
2003	50.4	47.4	**50.0**	55.0	61.2	**57.5**	**51.4**

v) Facilities and services

	central heating	storage heaters	smoke detectors*	partial or full double glazing	second wc	garage	secure windows and doors
number (000s)							
1996	16,196	1,643	13,089	12,082	6,357	8,791	6,181
2001	18,123	1,626	15,250	15,991	7,415	8,877	11,256
2003	18,604	1,587	16,187	17,390	7,652	9,262	11,676
% of dwellings							
1996	79.6	8.1	66.6	59.4	31.3	43.2	30.4
2001	85.5	7.7	74.1	75.4	35.0	41.9	53.1
2003	86.6	7.4	78.1	80.9	35.6	43.1	54.3

*** Note: Smoke detectors are based on households not dwellings**

vi) Accessibility

	flush thresholds	level access	bathroom/ WC at entrance level	wider doorsets and circulation	all four features
number (000s)					
1996	4,155	14,893	7,541	3,334	**693**
2001	4,049	14,926	8,626	3,333	**717**
2003	4,242	14,632	8,551	3,256	**716**
% of dwellings					
1996	20.4	73.2	37.1	16.4	**3.4**
2001	19.1	70.4	40.7	15.7	**3.4**
2003	19.7	68.1	39.8	15.2	**3.3**

Overview of Findings

1. Decent homes and decent places for people to live in are key to delivering sustainable communities. This overview provides a summary of living conditions in England in 2003, in terms of housing and the immediate environment in which people live, highlighting progress made since 1996 and 2001. It assesses the links between people's living conditions and social disadvantage, area deprivation, urban and rural settings, market conditions and broad regions of the country and identifies where concentrations of poor living conditions are most likely to occur.

2. Detailed definitions of terms used in this overview can be found in the attached glossary.

Housing stock

3. In 2003 there are around 21.5 million dwellings in England (of which around 4% are vacant at the time of the survey). Homes are predominantly privately owned with 71% being owner occupied and 10% owned by private landlords. The remaining 19% are owned and managed by social landlords – 11% by local authorities and 8% by Registered Social Landlords.

4. Over a fifth of homes – 4.5 million homes (21%) – were built before 1919 while just under a fifth – 3.8 million (18%) have been built since 1980. The majority of oldest stock is privately owned – 94% of pre-1919 homes are privately owned and 45% of all privately let homes were built pre-1919. Nearly a fifth of homes are flats – 3.8 million homes (18%), of which 46% are let by social landlords.

Decent homes

5. The number of homes failing to meet the Government standard for decent housing continued to fall between 2001 and 2003 – from 7.1 million to 6.7 million (from 33% to 31% of the housing stock). There are now 5.3 million non-decent homes in the private sector and 1.4 million in the social sector (making up 30% and 35% of their stock respectively), Table 1.

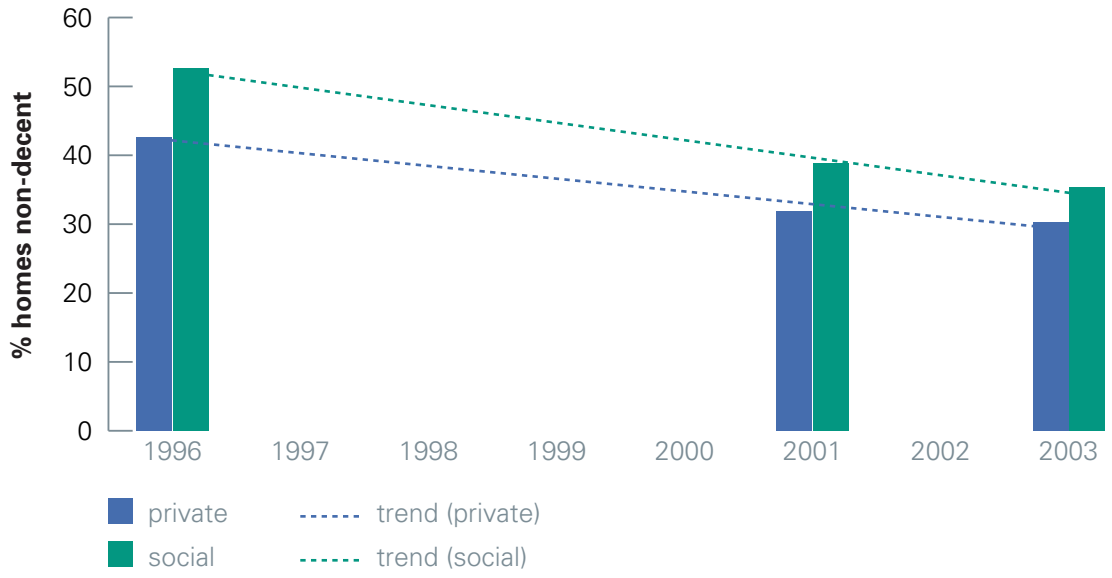
Table 1: Non-decent homes by tenure, 2003

	decent		non-decent		all dwellings	
	no.s (000s)	row %	no.s (000s)	row %	no.s (000s):	row %
owner occupied	10,993	72.3	4,207	27.7	15,201	100.0
private rented	1,157	52.5	1,048	47.5	2,205	100.0
all private	12,151	69.8	5,255	30.2	17,406	100.0
LA	1,485	60.4	972	39.6	2,457	100.0
RSL	1,154	71.2	467	28.8	1,621	100.0
all social	2,639	64.7	1,439	35.3	4,078	100.0
all tenures	**14,790**	**68.8**	**6,694**	**31.2**	**21,484**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings

6. Numbers of non-decent homes have fallen substantially in both the private and the social sectors since 1996, with faster improvement in the social sector. The proportion of non-decent homes has reduced from 43% to 30% in the private sector, and from 53% to 35% in the social sector, since 1996, Figure 1.

Figure 1: Non-decent homes by sector, 1996, 2001 and 2003



Base: all dwellings

7. The most common reason for failing the decent homes standard is inadequate thermal comfort. Some 4.9 million homes (73% of non-decent dwellings) lack effective insulation or efficient heating required to meet the thermal comfort criterion. However there has been a steady improvement since 2001 when 5.5 million homes (78% of non-decent dwellings) failed on this criterion.

8. There has been little change in the number of homes failing on the other three criteria (repair, fitness and modern facilities and services) at 2.8 million, indicating that repairs and improvements in respect of these criteria have been sufficient only to balance the effects of ongoing deterioration. As a result these homes now form a slightly higher proportion of the non-decent stock (42%).

9. The average cost to make a home decent is £7,028, however there are large variations according to the types of work needed. Homes failing solely on thermal comfort need on average £1,769 spent while those in need of work to meet the other criteria require on average £14,304.

10. Non-decent homes in the private sector tend to be older properties (36% of non-decent homes in the private sector were built pre 1919). However the picture is very different in the social sector where the majority of non-decent social sector homes were built between 1945 and 1980. While this reflects the age composition of the social sector stock as a whole, it also reflects the high proportion of flats in this sector which tend to have higher levels of non-decency.

11. The pattern of progress in non-decent homes reflects more widely based improvements in housing conditions and energy efficiency since 1996. In terms of general disrepair, the proportion of homes with faults to the exterior fabric (e.g. to chimneys, roofs and windows) has fallen from 72% to 65% and with faults to the interior fabric (e.g. ceilings, walls and floors) has fallen from 49% to 39%. However, as with the repair, fitness and modernisation criteria of decent homes, there has been little change in the overall number of general repair faults since 2001.

12. The overall energy efficiency of the stock has also improved as assessed through the Government Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). The average rating has increased from an average 45.5 in 1996 to 51.4 in 2003 (one SAP rating point up from 2001). The proportion of very efficient stock with a SAP rating greater than 70 has progressively increased since 1996 from 5% to the current 12%, with a parallel reduction in homes with a SAP rating less than 30 from 15% to 9%.

Vulnerable households

Private housing sector

13. There are 2.8 million vulnerable households who own or are privately renting accommodation. Vulnerable households are defined as those in receipt of means tested or disability related benefits and they account for 17% of households in the private sector. Over 1 million of these households include either infants or elderly people who tend to be more at risk in terms of health outcomes of poor housing conditions.

14. Vulnerable households in the private sector are more likely to be living in non-decent homes – 37% of such households compared to 28% of other households who own or are renting privately, Table 2.

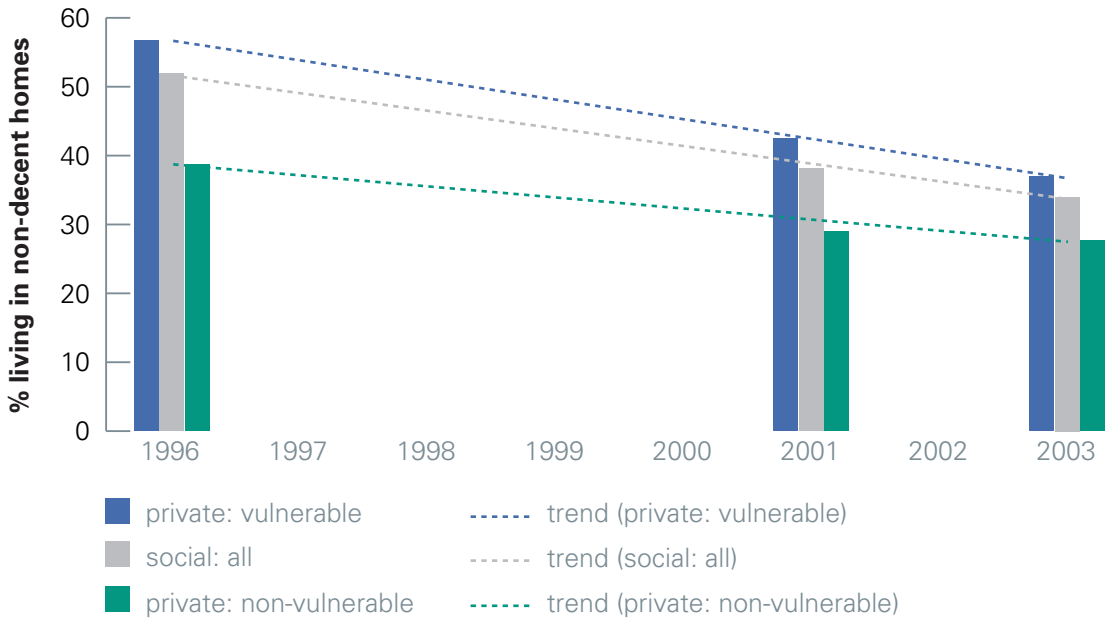
15. The conditions of the homes of vulnerable households in the private sector have been improving at a faster rate than for other households living in non-decent homes in the private sector. There has been a 20 percentage point reduction since 1996, from 57% to the current 37%. The gap between vulnerable households and other households living in non-decent homes has halved since 1996 from 18% to 9% in 2003, Figure 2.

Table 2: Vulnerable households in the private sector compared with other households in decent and non-decent homes by tenure, 2003

	vulnerable households			other households		
	decent	**non-decent**	**all households**	**decent**	**non-decent**	**all households**
number (000s):						
owner occupied	1,506	722	2,228	9,332	3,311	12,643
private rented	277	335	612	780	574	1,354
all private	**1,783**	**1,056**	**2,839**	**10,112**	**3,885**	**13,997**
percentage:						
owner occupied	67.6	32.4	100.0	73.8	26.2	100.0
private rented	45.3	54.7	100.0	57.6	42.4	100.0
all private	**62.8**	**37.2**	**100.0**	**72.2**	**27.8**	**100.0**

Base: all vulnerable and other households in the private sector

Figure 2: Private sector vulnerable and social sector households living in non-decent homes, 1996, 2001 and 2003



Base: all vulnerable and other households in the private sector

16. Improvements in this sector, as across the stock as a whole, can be largely attributed to improvements in thermal efficiency. In 2001, 33% of homes occupied by vulnerable households in the private sector were failing on grounds of thermal comfort compared to just 27% in 2003. The proportion of homes failing for other reasons has remained constant since 2001 at around 18%.

17. Vulnerable households living in non-decent private sector homes face greater costs to make their homes decent, an average of £8,618 compared to £7,340 for other households living in non-decent homes in the private sector. A key reason for this greater average cost is the greater likelihood of vulnerable households facing problems associated with the repair, modernisation or fitness of their home which tend to be more costly than improvements required to meet the thermal comfort criterion.

18. While 2.2 million vulnerable households (78% of all private sector vulnerable households) own their homes, they tend to have less equity than their non-vulnerable counterparts and those vulnerable households living in non-decent homes tend to have least. Around 200,000 (27%) of the vulnerable homeowners in non-decent homes have £50,000 or less equity in their homes. While 36% of vulnerable households who own their own homes and who are living in non-decent homes have over £120,000 worth of equity, this compares to 46% of non-vulnerable homeowners living in decent homes.

Social housing sector

19. As in 2001, the 2.9 million vulnerable households renting in the social sector are no more likely to live in non-decent homes than other tenants – 34% of both vulnerable and non-vulnerable households were living in non-decent homes in 2003.

20. Within the social sector, non-decency is not primarily related to household resources but tends to be concentrated among small pre-retirement households who are more likely to be allocated general purpose flats or any households who have been long term resident. The latter is because landlords often carry out remedial improvements and repairs to homes between lettings. Improvement in the housing conditions of vulnerable social tenants therefore reflects wider improvements to the social stock as a whole. The proportion of social tenants living in non-decent homes has reduced by 18 percentage points since 1996, from 52% to 34%.

21. Private sector vulnerable households and social tenants together (6.7 million) comprise almost a third of all households and form the two target groups of Government decent homes policy. For both groups the substantial improvement in the proportion living in decent homes has narrowed the disparity in their housing conditions compared with other households (non-vulnerable households in the private sector), Figure 2.

Liveability

22. Some 3.3 million households (16%) live with at least one of three types of liveability problems in the immediate environment of their homes, Table 3.

23. 'Upkeep and misuse of public and private buildings and space' is the most common type of problem, with 10% of households being affected. Almost 8% of households live in areas where there are problems related to 'traffic and other transport issues' and just 2% of households live in areas with 'utilisation' problems associated with abandonment and non-residential use of properties. Around 4% of households live in areas with two or more of these problems.

Table 3: Types of poor quality environments, 2003

	number (000s)	percentage of all households
type of liveability problem		
'upkeep' problems	2,101	10.1
'traffic' problems	1,596	7.7
'utilisation' problems	453	2.2
any type of poor quality environment	**3,291**	**15.9**

Base: all households

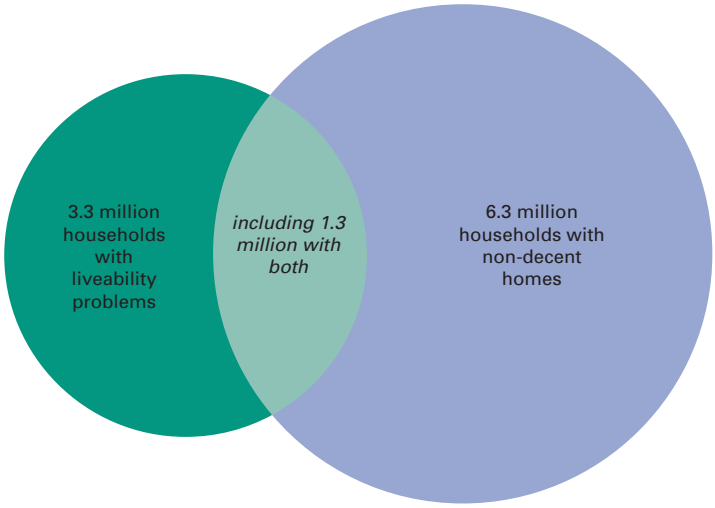
Note: Some households will have more than one type of problem in their immediate environment therefore the incidence for the three types of problem will sum to more than 3.3 million.

24. Not surprisingly, households in poor quality environments are much more likely to be dissatisfied with the area in which they live (18%) compared to those who live elsewhere (10%). Those affected by 'upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems are also more likely to indicate problems relating to general criminal behaviour, fear of burglary, drug dealing and troublesome teenagers where they live.

25. Households living on local authority-built estates are most likely to be affected by 'upkeep' problems (15% compared to the national average of 10%). 'Utilisation' problems are also most common in areas where local authority and RSL built tenures predominate.

26. Homes with problems in their immediate environment are also more likely than average to be non-decent. Some 1.3 million households live with this concentration of problems in their living conditions. Of these households 24% are social tenants and 19% are vulnerable private sector households, Figure 3. In addition the average costs to make their homes decent are 40% higher than for homes in areas with no problems, £8,739 compared to £6,283 respectively

Figure 3: Number of households living in poor quality environments and non-decent homes, 2003



Base: all households with liveability problems and all households in non-decent homes.

27. Around 50% of households living in poor quality environments live in secure homes (where the home has secure windows and doors). This is slightly less than for households living in other areas where 55% reside in secure homes. Overall, the levels of security have increased substantially since 1996 when less than a third of all homes were fully secure.

28. The quality of the environment is related to the types of housing found within an area. Households living in areas of terraced housing are more than four times as likely to live in poor quality environments compared to residents of areas characterised by detached housing. Although only a small number of households reside alongside commercial property, 45% of them live in poor quality environments.

29. Around a quarter of households living in flats have poor quality environments. Shared areas and facilities, particularly those in high rise blocks, are prone to upkeep problems such as vandalism, graffiti and litter.

30. Almost half (48%) of high rise flats have CCTV and a fifth (21%) have a concierge, which compares to 16% and 6% respectively for all flats with shared areas and facilities.

Disadvantage and living conditions

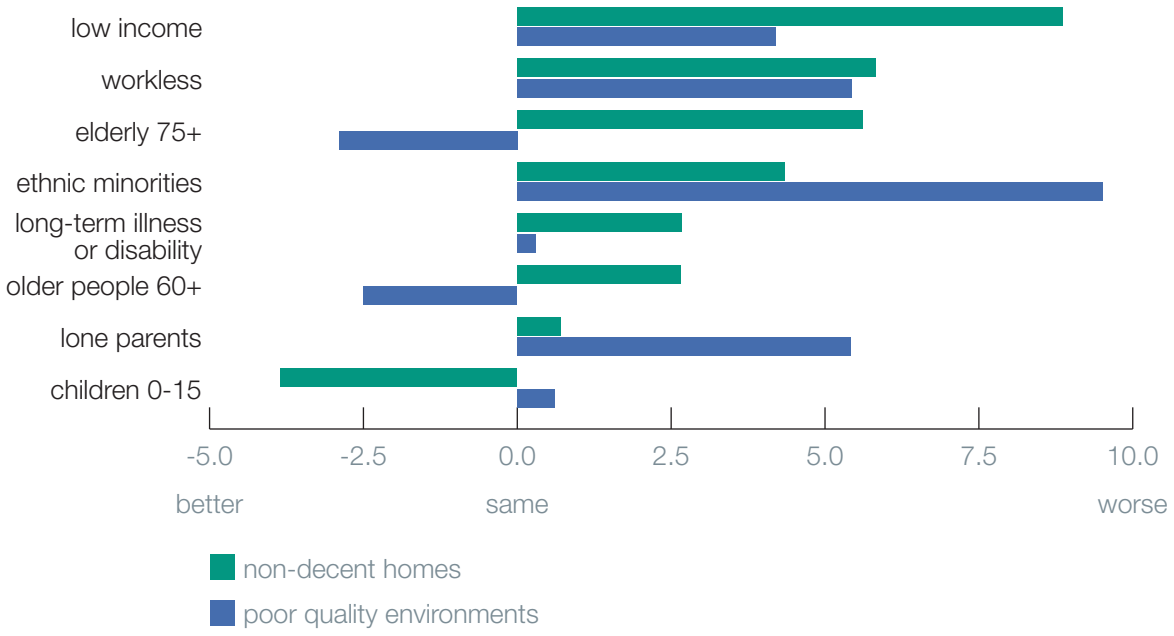
31. Poor living conditions are one aspect of the multi-faceted nature of social exclusion. Households who are disadvantaged, either because they have limited resources to improve their living conditions or because they are more at risk from poor conditions (for example due to their age or to long-term illness or disability), also tend to be more likely than average to experience poor living conditions.

32. However, the picture is complex. Different problems impact to different degrees on particular disadvantaged groups according to their relative concentrations, in particular housing sectors and locations with distinctive housing stock and local environments.

Disparities in living conditions

33. Household resources have a significant impact on the likelihood of living in poor conditions. Households who are in the lowest income quintile are the most likely to live in non-decent homes (39%), and are also more likely than average to live in poor quality environments, Figure 4. Workless households are similarly more likely than average to experience poor living conditions.

Figure 4: Household groups, non-decent homes and poor quality environments, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



Base: each household group.

Note: 0 represents the average position of all households living in non-decent homes (30%) and poor quality environments (16%).

34. Although there will be differences between specific ethnic groups, ethnic minority households generally are more likely than average to live in non-decent homes (35%), and have by far the greatest likelihood of any group of living in poor quality environments (25%). However, they are the least likely of all groups to live in energy inefficient homes, with rates less than half the national average.

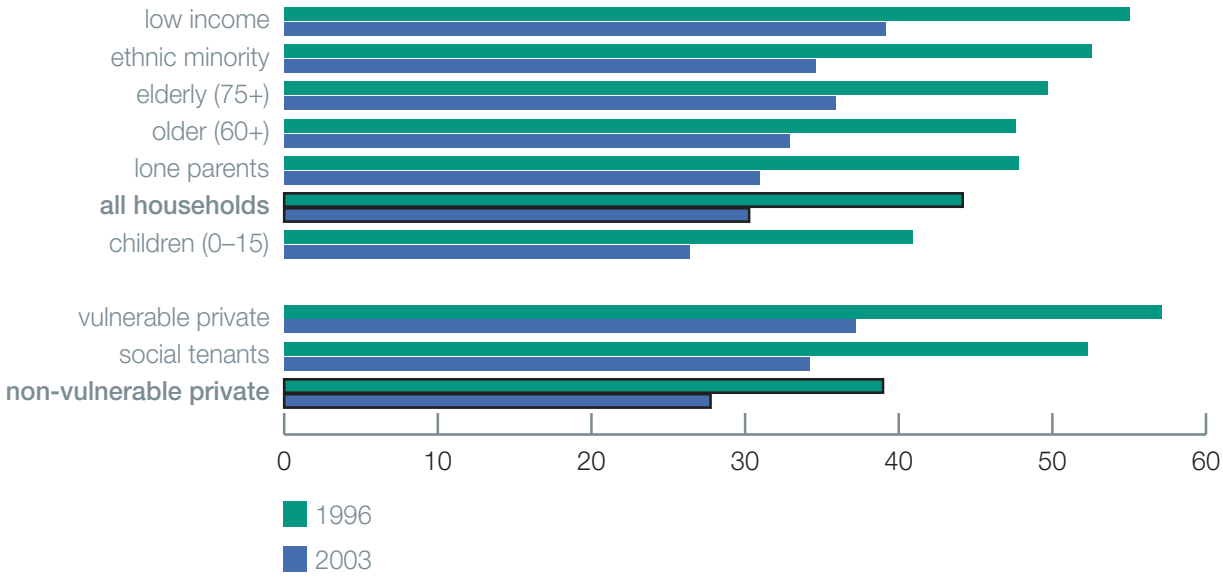
35. Older person households, and particularly those containing someone over the age of 75 years, have a greater likelihood of living in non-decent homes than the average for all households. Furthermore a high proportion of older person households live in energy inefficient homes, and in homes failing the thermal comfort criterion of the decent homes standard. However, older and elderly people are less likely than average to live in poor quality environments.

36. Overall, households with children are the least likely to experience non-decent homes (26%) and are not significantly more likely than average to reside in places with poor quality environments. However, particular groups of households with children, such as those on low income or lone parents, are more likely to experience poor living conditions. Lone parents are among those most likely to live in poor quality environments particularly those with problems related to upkeep.

Progress in narrowing disparities in decent homes

37. Despite these disparities in the likelihood of living in non-decent homes, all disadvantaged groups have experienced substantial progress at least at a rate equal to the national average reduction of 14 percentage points (or 2 percentage points each year) since 1996, Figure 5.

Figure 5: Change in percentage of households living in non-decent homes for disadvantaged groups and decent homes-targeted groups, 1996 and 2003



Base: each household group, 1996 and 2003

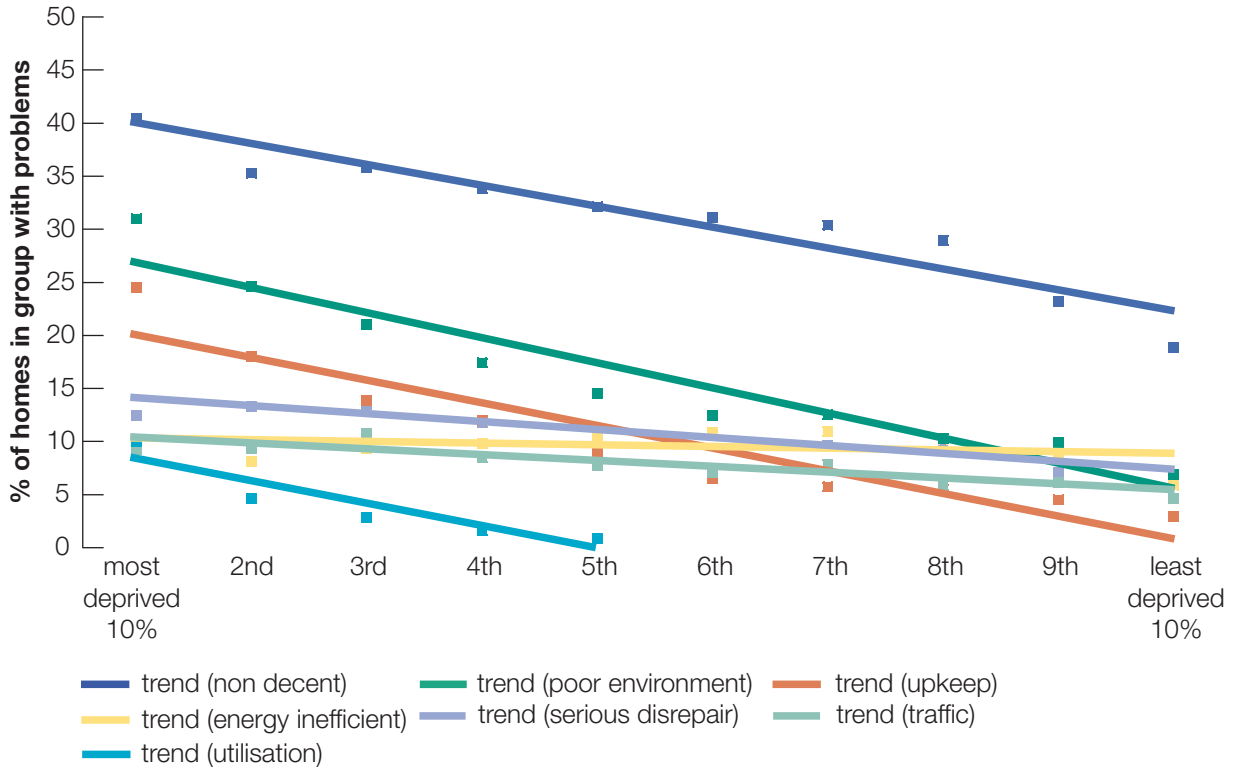
38. As might be expected, this rate of progress is not as great as that for private sector vulnerable households and social sector tenants – the two groups of households who together comprise almost one third of all households and who effectively form the target group of Government decent homes (and fuel poverty) policies.

39. The percentage point reduction for these two groups of households is 20 (57% to 37%) and 18 (52% to 34%) respectively with a clear narrowing of the disparity between them and other households. The rate of progress of wider disadvantaged groups is influenced by the extent to which they themselves are populated by social tenants and private sector vulnerable households.

Deprived areas

40. Disadvantage and deprivation tend to be geographically concentrated and it is no surprise that poor living conditions tend to be much more likely in the most deprived areas, as ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004). In terms of housing conditions, non decency and serious disrepair are much more likely in the most deprived areas than elsewhere, although this is not the case for energy inefficient homes. Problems around the upkeep and utilisation of the area are also heavily concentrated in the more deprived areas with traffic problems also more likely, Figure 6.

Figure 6: Percentage of homes with poor living conditions by deprivation ranked local areas, 2003



Base: all dwellings

41. The relationships between problems and deprived local areas are reflected in the pattern found within those districts supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), Table 4.

Table 4: Living conditions by most deprived (NRF supported) districts, 2003

	NRF districts %	other districts %
non-decent homes[1]:	**34.7**	**28.7**
% of non-decent fail on:		
repair, fitness and modern facilties or services	46.9	37.9
thermal comfort	69.4	75.8
energy inefficient homes	8.2	10.7
homes in serious disrepair	12.3	9.5
total number of dwellings in areas (000s)	**8,740**	**12,744**
private sector vulnerable households[2]:	**21.2**	**14.4**
% non-decent homes	40.9	34.0
poor quality environments[3]:	**21.2**	**12.3**
% with problems of:		
'upkeep'	14.5	7.2
'traffic'	9.5	6.5
total number of households in areas (000s)	**8,346**	**12,378**

Base: (1) all dwellings in NRF districts and in other districts, percentages failing on criteria are presented as percentages of all non-decent

(2) all private sector households in NRF and other districts, percentages of non-decents are presented as percentage of private sector vulnerable households

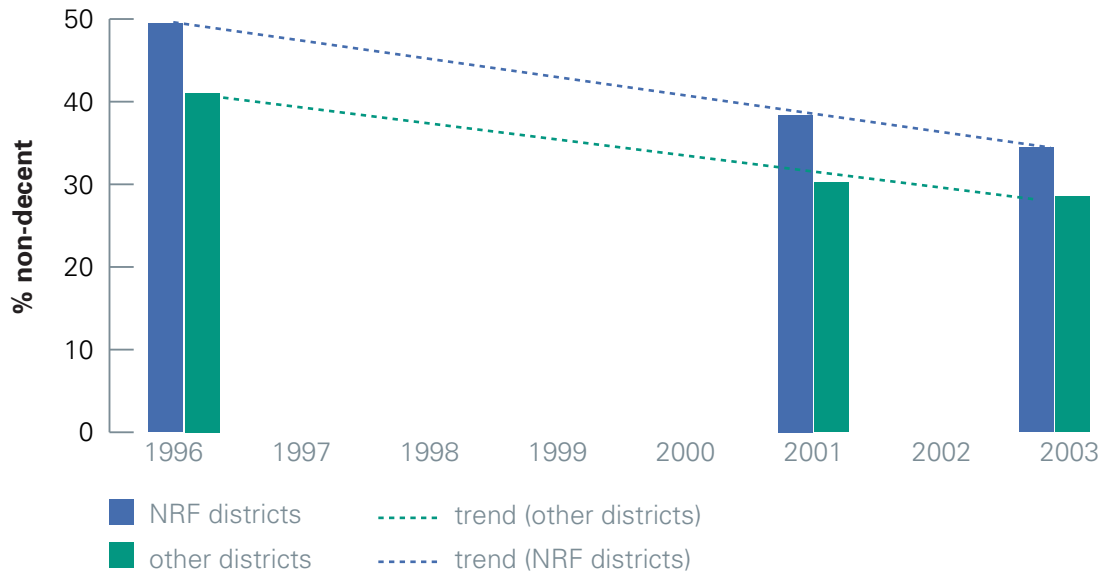
(3) all households in NRF and other districts

42. Homes in the most deprived districts are much more likely to be non-decent (35%) than those in other districts (28%). Non-decent homes in these districts are also on average more expensive to improve (around £7,300 compared to £6,800), primarily because they are much less likely to meet the repair, fitness or modern facilities and services criteria than elsewhere (45% compared to 37%). This is reflected in the greater likelihood of homes in the NRF districts being in serious disrepair (the 9% of the national housing stock with the greatest level of general disrepair).

43. Non-decent homes in the most deprived districts however are less likely to fail on the thermal comfort criterion (70% compared with 76% elsewhere). More generally homes in these districts are less likely to be energy inefficient (8% with a SAP rating of less than 30 compared with 10% elsewhere), primarily because a higher proportion of their housing stock comprises relatively efficient social housing (26% compared to 14% elsewhere) and flats (24% compared to 14% elsewhere).

44. There has been significant improvement in living conditions in the NRF districts since 1996 when almost 50% of homes were non-decent, Figure 7. In the social sector, the number of non-decent homes in these areas have reduced by 38% since 1996 (from 1.4 to 0.8 million) and by 22% in the private sector (from 2.8 to 2.2 million). Overall this is comparable with improvement made in other districts over the same period. Progress in the most deprived districts accounts for around two thirds of the overall reduction in social sector non-decent homes since 2001.

Figure 7: Percentage of non-decent homes in the most deprived (NRF) districts, 1996, 2001 and 2003



Base: all dwellings

45. As might be expected, private sector households in the most deprived districts are much more likely to be vulnerable (21% compared to 14% elsewhere), but these vulnerable households are also more likely to occupy non-decent homes (41% compared to only 34% elsewhere). Nevertheless, there has been substantial improvement since 1996 when 66% of vulnerable households lived in non-decent homes.

46. Households in the most deprived districts are also much more likely to experience liveability problems with 21% of households residing in poor quality environments compared with just 12% in other districts, Table 4. They are twice as likely to live with 'upkeep' problems (14% of all households in NRF districts) compared to those living elsewhere. The most deprived districts also account for around 70% of all households with 'utilisation' problems in their immediate environment.

47. Possibly in response to the greater likelihood of problems including vandalism and graffiti, flats with common parts for access are more likely to have block security measures present than those in other districts, particularly the installation of CCTV. However other homes in the most deprived districts have levels of security measures present that are comparable to other districts.

Market conditions

48. The level of demand for housing varies markedly from area to area. Around 2.1 million (10% of all) households are assessed to be living in localities where demand is 'limited to negligible'. Less than 10% of properties in these areas sell within two months.[1] This compares at the other end of the scale to around 8.1 million (40% of all) households living in areas of 'high' demand with high property values and where 95% of property on the market would be expected to sell in less than 2 months.

49. Poor living conditions can be considered to be both a contributory factor and an expression of 'limited to negligible' demand. Households living in areas where the demand for housing is 'limited to negligible' have a greater likelihood of living in non-decent homes and poor quality environments, Table 5.

Table 5: Poor living conditions by market conditions, 2003

	'limited to negligible' demand	'moderate' demand	'high' demand
	%	%	%
non-decent homes(1):	**35.2**	**31.2**	**29.7**
energy inefficient homes	12.5	8.9	8.7
homes in serious disrepair	11.7	11.5	9.1
total number of dwellings in areas (000s)	**2,224**	**10,783**	**8,287**
private sector vulnerable households(2):	**20.7**	**19.7**	**12.8**
% non-decent homes	42.4	37.9	33.8
poor quality environments(3):	**20.2**	**17.0**	**13.6**
% with problems of:			
'upkeep'	15.4	11.0	7.9
'traffic'	6.7	8.0	7.6
total number of households in areas (000s)	**2,086**	**10,513**	**8,125**

Base:

(1) all dwellings in limted to negligible, moderate and high demand areas.

(2) all private sector households in limited to negligible, moderate and high demand areas, percentages of all non-decent homes are presented as percentage of private sector vulnerable households within in area.

(3) all households in limited to negligible, moderate and high demand areas.

50. Homes in areas where housing market demand is 'limited to negligible' are more likely to be non-decent than other areas. This is also reflected in their greater likelihood, at least in comparison with areas of 'high' demand, to be in serious disrepair or energy inefficient.

[1] This is the time taken to receive an acceptable offer on a property.

51. Some 20% of private sector households are vulnerable in all but areas of 'high' demand for housing, where only around 13% of those residing within such areas are vulnerable. However vulnerable households living in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand are more likely to live in non-decent homes (around 42%) than those living in areas of 'moderate' (38%) or 'high' demand (34%).

52. Perhaps unsurprisingly poor quality environments are most prevalent in areas where housing demand is lower. However it is 'upkeep' (and 'utilisation') problems that are concentrated in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand. Households in these areas are twice as likely to have 'upkeep' problems compared to those in areas where housing demand is 'high' (15% and 8% respectively). In contrast there is no clear relationship between the area level of demand for housing and 'traffic' problems.

Broad Regional Areas

53. There is no significant difference in the overall incidence of non-decency in broad regional groups (i.e. they reflect the national average), Table 6.

54. The social stock in south east regions however is more likely to be non-decent than elsewhere (38% compared to the national average of 35%). Average costs to make homes decent are highest in south east regions reflecting the higher incidence of homes failing on the fitness, repair or modernisation criteria and higher than average building costs.

Table 6: Poor living conditions by region, 2003

	south east regions	northern regions	rest of england
	%	%	%
non-decent homes [1]:	**31.8**	**31.2**	**30.6**
% of non-decent fail on:			
repair, fitness and modern facilties or services	45.3	40.2	40.6
thermal comfort	69.3	74.5	74.5
energy inefficient homes	7.9	8.3	11.4
homes in serious disrepair	11.0	10.9	10.2
total number of dwellings in areas (000s)	**6,567**	**6,278**	**8,639**
private sector vulnerable households[2]:	**14.1**	**21.1**	**16.0**
% non-decent homes	38.4	36.6	37.0
poor quality environments[3]:	**19.6**	**18.9**	**16.4**
% with problems of:			
'upkeep'	10.2	11.3	9.2
'traffic'	10.9	5.9	6.5
total number of households in areas (000s)	**6,370**	**6,009**	**8,345**

Base:

[1] all dwellings in the south east, the north and the rest of England.

[2] all private sector households in the south east, the north or the rest of England, percentages of non-decents are presented as percentage of private sector vulnerable households within an area.

[3] all households in south east, the north and the rest of England.

55. Homes outside of the northern and the south east regions tend to have below average energy efficiency. Homes in these areas have a relatively high proportion of non-central heating and a lower than average proportion of cavity walls with insulation.

56. Private sector households are more likely to be vulnerable if they live in northern regions, where 21% are vulnerable compared to only 14% in south east regions and 16% elsewhere. However there is no significant difference in the incidence of non-decency among vulnerable households across these three broad regions.

57. Overall the south east regions have the highest incidence of poor quality environments, 18%, compared to 16% in northern regions and 15% in other regions. But in part this reflects the relative concentration of 'traffic' problems in that area of the country. Households in the south east regions are nearly twice as likely (11%) to have 'traffic' problems than households in northern regions (6%) and the rest of the country (7%).

58. However it is homes in the north that are more likely to have secure windows and doors than homes located elsewhere, (60% compared to 54% in the south east and 50% in the rest of England).

Urban and rural

59. Different types of problems are typically associated with distinct urban and rural settings. City and urban centres have relatively high concentrations of older housing stock and flats and tend to be characterised by issues related to high density living. Rural locations tend to be more polarised with both older housing in village centres and relative concentrations of larger and detached houses and new homes built since 1980. Problems for these areas often revolve around access to services. Suburban areas have relative concentrations of 1919-64 housing developments, with 34% of homes being semi detached. Overall 21% of the housing stock can be considered rural with remaining stock split between city/urban centres (25%) and suburban areas (54%).

60. Homes in city or other urban centres have the greatest likelihood of non-decency, with around 40% failing to meet the standard, Table 7. Non-decent homes in these areas are also more likely than average to fail to meet the required levels of fitness, repair, or modern facilities and services and have the highest average costs to make decent. Homes in suburban areas are the least likely to be non-decent at around 28%.

61. However homes in rural areas are most likely to be energy inefficient (17%) and their non-decent homes are most likely to fail the thermal comfort criterion of the standard, indicating inadequate insulation and heating provision. A major factor is access to mains gas supply which is generally more efficient than other fuel sources – 34% of rural housing is heated by electric, oil or solid fuel compared to 10% of homes elsewhere.

62. Disrepair is most prevalent in city or other urban centres, where 14% of homes are in serious disrepair, compared to 10% in rural areas and 9% in suburban areas. Similarly, homes in urban areas are much more likely to fail the decent homes standard on repair, fitness or modernisations than other areas.

63. Private sector households in urban locations are most likely to be vulnerable, 23%, compared to only 16% of households in suburban areas and just 13% in rural areas. Furthermore almost half of vulnerable households in the private sector living in urban areas occupy in non-decent homes.

Table 7: Poor living conditions by urban, suburban and rural location

	city or other urban centre	suburban	rural
	%	%	%
non-decent homes[1]:	**39.3**	**27.6**	**30.8**
% of non-decent fail on:			
repair, fitness and modern facilties or services	52.3	38.1	35.2
thermal comfort	67.4	73.1	80.7
energy inefficient homes	10.2	6.3	17.0
homes in serious disrepair	14.4	9.0	10.4
total number of dwellings in areas (000s)	**5,325**	**11,705**	**4,453**
private sector vulnerable households[2]:	**22.9**	**16.2**	**12.6**
% non-decent homes	49.2	31.1	34.9
poor quality environments[3]:	**29.7**	**12.9**	**7.7**
poor quality environment on:			
'upkeep'	20.1	8.3	3.4
'traffic'	15.4	5.5	4.6
total number of households in areas (000s)	**5,034**	**11,370**	**4,321**

Base:

[1] all dwellings in city/other urban centres, suburban and rural.

[2] all private sector households in city/other urban centres, suburban and rural, percentages of non-decents are presented as percentage of private sector vulnerable households within in area.

[3] all households in city/other urban centres, suburban and rural.

64. City and other urban centres have the highest incidence of poor quality environments (30%) compared to other types of areas. These areas are five times more likely than rural areas to have 'upkeep' problems. Also 'traffic' problems are most prevalent in urban centres (15%), although rural areas experience similar levels as suburban areas at around 5%.

65. Dwellings in suburban areas are more likely to have secure windows and doors (58% compared with 52% in rural areas and 49% in city and other urban centres). Suburban dwellings are also more likely to have burglar alarms, 29% compared with 24% in rural areas and 22% in city and other urban centres. Door entry, CCTV and communal burglar alarms are more likely to be found in those flats located in city and urban centres. Not surprisingly, given the concentration of 'upkeep' problems in urban areas, urban flats are also more likely to have higher levels of problems in both common parts and shared facilities than flats located elsewhere.

Chapter 1

Profile of the Stock

1.1 This chapter provides an overview of the housing stock in 2003 which provides a context for results presented in the following chapters. The chapter gives a broad picture of the age the type of housing in England and where this is located in terms of tenure, deprivation, broad regional areas, urban or rural and market conditions. The chapter goes on to examine the overall incidence of the key amenities and services of the home including mains gas and drainage, smoke detectors, secondary amenities, parking provision and accessibility features.

Summary

- Homes are predominantly privately owned, with 71% owner occupied and 10% privately rented. The remaining 19% are let by social landlords.
- Private sector homes tend to be older particularly in the private rented sector where 45% of homes were built before 1919.
- Flats account for 43% of social sector homes (compared to only 13% private sector homes). Detached and semi-detached houses are more common in the private sector (particularly the owner occupied stock) where they account for 42% of homes (compared to less than 20% of social sector homes).
- The profile of the housing stock varies significantly in different types of areas. One key section of the housing stock is that of the most deprived (NRF funded) districts which together account for 41% of homes. Households are more likely to rent from social or private landlords that elsewhere and their homes are more likely to comprise flats, be smaller than average, and (in the private sector) be older.
- For the housing stock as a whole, facilities and amenities have generally improved since 1996. The proportion of homes that are fully double glazed has increased to 55% (from 30% in 1996) and those with smoke detectors to 78% (from 67% in 1996). The proportion of homes with a second WC, bath or shower has also increased.
- While 87% of homes have a mains gas supply the proportion for flats is much lower, just 74% of low rise and 58% of high-rise flats.
- Some 7.2 million (33% of) homes do not have off-street parking facilities. For these homes 3.4 million have inadequate street parking and a further 300,000 no street parking facilities at all. Lack of adequate parking facilities is most common in city and other urban centres and dependency on street parking (adequate or otherwise) is strongest in the most deprived areas.

- Two thirds of homes have reasonable level access to their entrance for people using, for example, wheelchairs. However only 20% have flush thresholds and only 15% have wide doorsets and circulation space for wheel chairs. Some 40% have a WC/bathroom at entrance level.

The Stock in 2003

1.2 In 2003 there are around 21.5 million homes in England, Table 1.1. Some 4.5 million of these (21%) were built before 1919 with around 4 million (19%) built between 1919 and 1945. Some 17.7 million properties (82%) are houses, the majority of these (around 6 million) semi-detached. Of the 3.8 million flats, about 9% or 335,000 are in blocks of six or more storeys. Across the whole stock, the average usable floor area is 93m^2 although this varies from an average of around 55m^2 for purpose-built low rise flats to 231m^2 for detached houses. At the time of survey about 4% (836,000) homes were vacant.

Table 1.1: Stock Profile, 2003

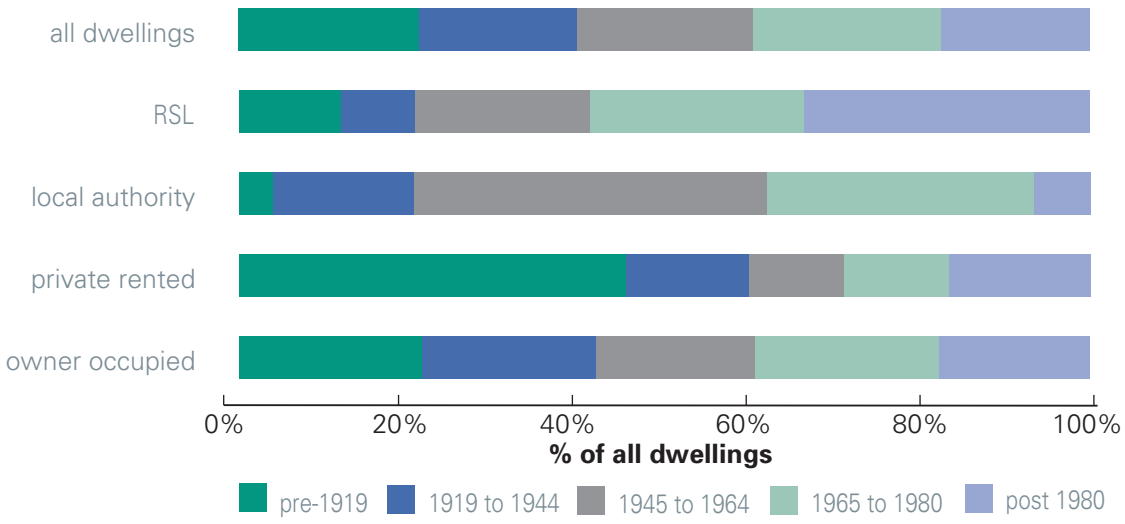
	number ('000s)	percentage
dwelling age		
pre 1919	4,544	21.1
1919 to 1944	3,981	18.5
1945 to 1964	4,439	20.7
1965 to 1980	4,752	22.1
post 1980	3,769	17.5
dwelling type		
small terraced house	2,659	12.4
medium/large terraced house	3,574	16.6
semi-detached house	5,981	27.8
detached house	3,444	16.0
bungalow	2,014	9.4
converted flat	723	3.4
purpose-built flat, low rise	2,754	12.8
purpose-built flat, high rise	335	1.6
dwelling size		
under 50m^2	2,790	13.0
50 - up to 70m^2	5,874	27.3
70 - up to 90m^2	6,343	29.5
90 - up to 110m^2	2,800	13.0
over 110m^2	3,677	17.1
all dwellings	**21,484**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings

Tenure

1.3 Homes are predominantly owner occupied – 71% of all – with another 10% let by private landlords. The remaining 19% are let by social landlords (11% by local authorities and 8% by Registered Social Landlords). Homes in the private sector tend to be older particularly in the private rented sector where 45% of homes were built before 1919, Figure 1.1.

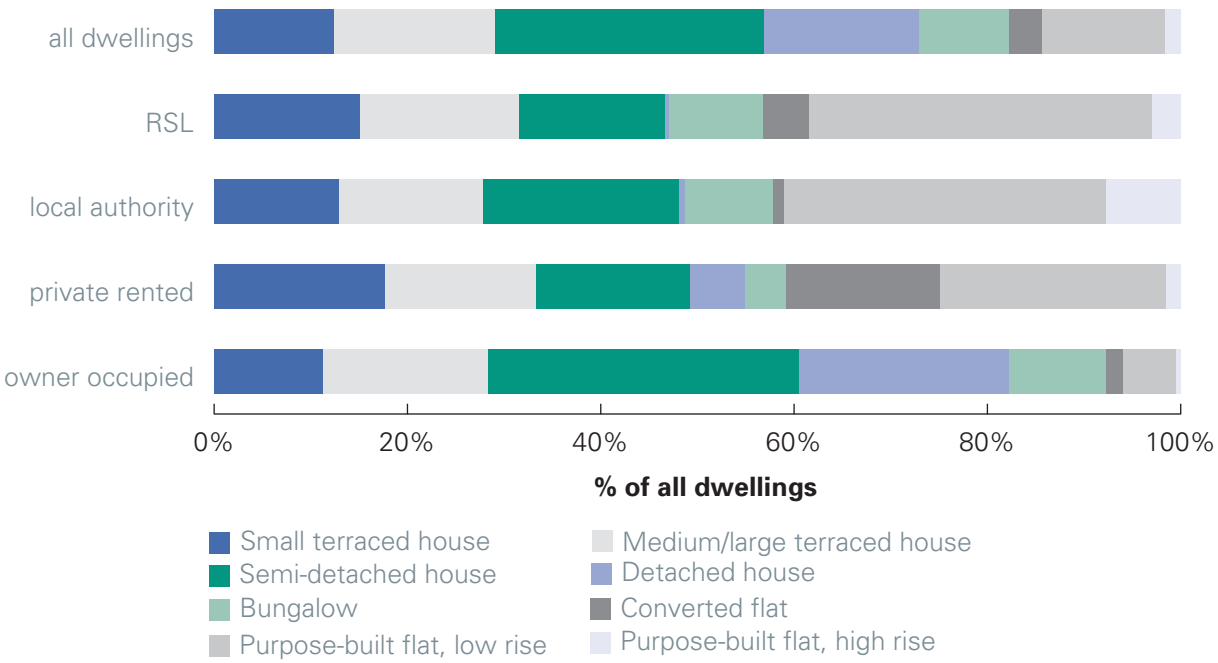
Figure 1.1: Dwelling age by tenure, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.4 Homes in the social sector are more likely to be flats. Some 43% of social rented homes are flats compared with just 13% of private sector homes. Semi-detached and detached homes are much more common in the private sector, especially in the owner occupied sector where 30% of all homes are semi-detached houses and 22% are detached houses, Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Dwelling type by tenure, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.5 Social rented homes also tend to be smaller with 29% having a floor area of less than 50m^2 compared with just 9% in the private sector. The RSL sector has the highest proportion of these very small homes (33% of homes with a total usable floor area of less than 50m^2).

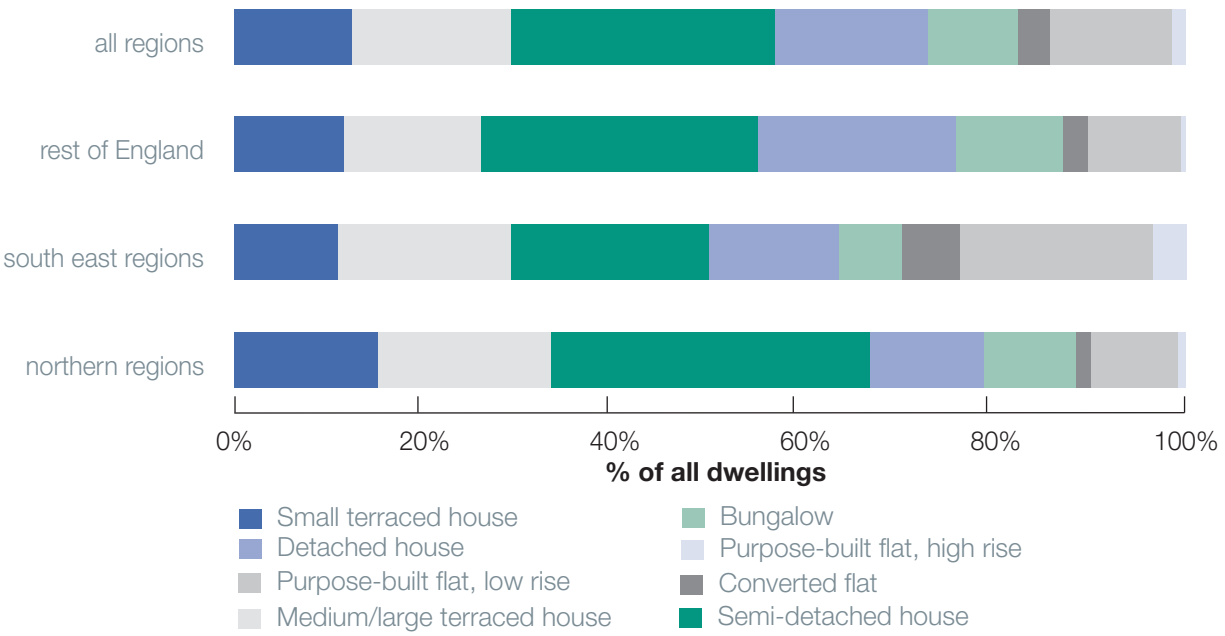
1.6 The majority of vacant homes are privately owned (74%), however the social sector has a slightly higher proportion of vacant homes than the private sector (5.4% compared with 3.5%).

Broad Regional Areas

1.7 The housing stock is not evenly spread through the three broad regional areas referred to in this report, with 31% located in regions in the south east, 29% in the northern regions and 40% in the rest of England. Regions in the south east have a much higher percentage of older homes than other regions with 23% of the stock here built before 1919.

1.8 South east regions also have high proportion of flats; homes in this region are twice as likely to be flats as elsewhere in England (30% compared with 12%), Figure 1.3. Furthermore, 68% of all high rise flats are located in the south east regions.

Figure 1.3: Dwelling type by broad regions, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.9 South east regions have the highest proportion of small homes with 16% of homes having a floor area less than 50m^2 compared with 12% in the other regions.

1.10 Homes in the north are more likely to be vacant than those in other areas (4.5% compared with 3.6%).

Type of area

1.11 Just over half of all homes (11.7 million or 55%) are located in suburban locations with 5.3 million in city or other urban centres and 4.5 million in rural areas. Of those 4.5 million homes located in largely rural areas, the majority (3 million) are located in rural residential areas with about 900,000 in village centres and 630,000 in more isolated rural locations. Homes in city or other urban centres tend to be much older with 42% built before 1919 compared with 25% in rural areas and just 11% in suburban locations. The highest proportion of newer homes built after 1980 is found in rural areas (21%).

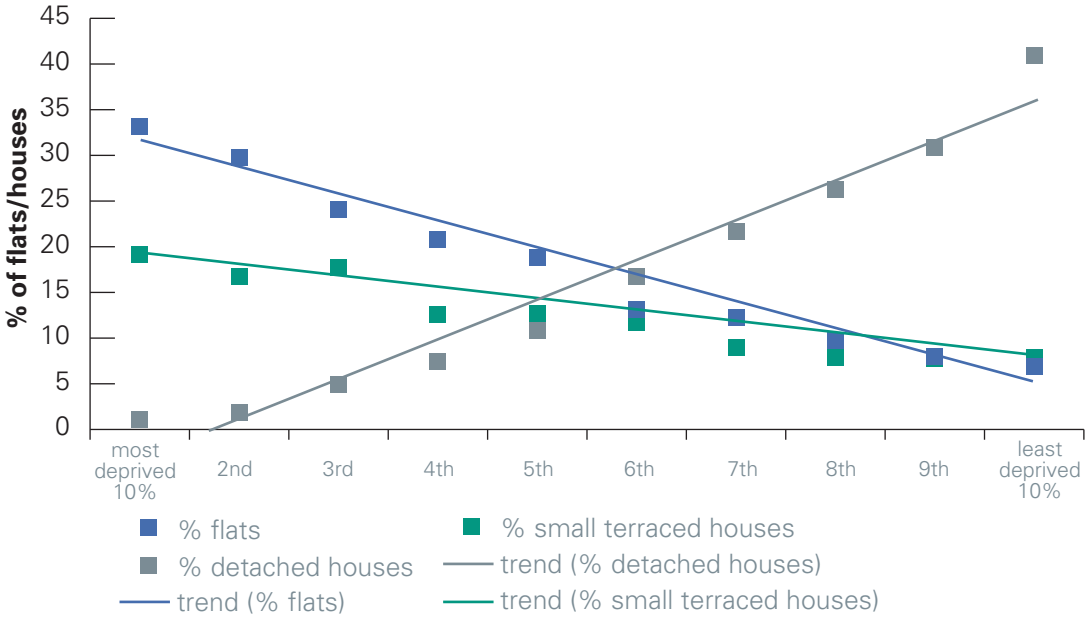
1.12 Some 35% of homes in city or other urban centres are flats; just over half of these in medium or high rise blocks (three or more storeys in height). Not surprisingly, bungalows and detached houses are much more common in rural and suburban areas than in city or other urban centres. Homes in city and urban areas are more likely to be very small with 20% under 50 m^2 usable floor area. These trends are largely due to the high proportion of flats in these areas. At the other end of the scale, almost a third (31%) of homes in rural areas have a usable floor area in excess of 110 m^2. Homes in city and other urban centres are twice as likely to be vacant than those in suburban or rural locations (6% compared with 3%).

Deprivation

1.13 The stock profile of more deprived local areas is very different from those of more affluent areas.

1.14 In the 10% most deprived areas just 12% of homes were built post 1980 compared with 29% in the 10% least deprived areas. There is also a clear association between concentrations of flats and small terraced houses and the level of deprivation, Figure 1.4. Homes in the 10% most deprived areas are over 4 times as likely to be flats as homes in the 10% least deprived areas. Even more striking, just 1% of homes in the most deprived areas are detached houses compared with 41% in the least deprived.

Figure 1.4: Proportion of flats, small terraced houses and detached houses in the most and least deprived areas, 2003



Base: all dwellings

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output Areas, ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2004) and grouped into ten equal numbers of areas

1.15 These marked differences are reflected in the size of homes found in the most and least deprived areas, especially for the proportion of larger homes (those over 110m^2 in area). These larger dwellings account for just 3% of homes in the 10% most deprived areas but 34% in the 10% least deprived areas.

1.16 Some 8.7 million homes (41%) are located in the 88 Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) districts. NRF districts have a higher proportion of homes built before 1919 (25% compared with 19%) and a lower proportion of post-1980 homes (13% compared with 21%). NRF areas also tend to have a higher proportion of flats, especially medium and high-rise which comprise 13% of homes in these areas compared with 6% in other areas. They are also characterised by a much lower proportion of detached houses than other areas (7% compared with 22%). Homes in NRF districts also tend to be smaller with 14% of homes under 50m^2 and 32% between 50m^2 and 75m^2. This compares with 12% and 24% respectively in other areas. Homes in NRF areas are more likely to be vacant than those located elsewhere (4.9% compared with 3.2%).

Market Conditions

1.17 Around 2.2 million homes (10% of the stock) are located in areas where there is 'limited to negligible' demand for housing, compared with 10.9 million homes in areas of moderate demand and 8.3 million homes in 'high' demand areas.

1.18 In areas of 'limited to negligible' demand there is a higher proportion of homes built between 1945 and 1964 than in other areas together with a lower percentage of both pre-1919 and post-1980 homes. In addition these areas tend to be characterised by a much lower proportion of detached houses (9% compared with 13% in moderate demand areas and 22% in high demand areas) and a higher proportion of purpose-built flats (21% compared with 13% in areas of moderate demand and 15% in areas of high demand).

Services and amenities

Table 1.2: Facilities and services by tenure, 2003

	double glazing		smoke detectors	second wc	garage	all dwellings
	partial	full				
number (000s):						
owner occupied	13,115	8,677	11,796	6,474	8,554	15,201
private rented	1,347	848	1,340	454	426	2,205
local Authority	1,655	1,279	1,735	405	169	2,457
RSL	1,273	1,111	1,316	320	112	1,621
total	**17,390**	**11,915**	**16,187**	**7,652**	**9,262**	**21,484**
percentage:						
owner occupied	86.3	57.1	79.3	42.6	56.3	100.0
private rented	61.1	38.4	68.2	20.6	19.3	100.0
local Authority	67.4	52.1	74.2	16.5	6.9	100.0
RSL	78.5	68.5	84.9	19.7	6.9	100.0
total	**80.9**	**55.5**	**78.1**	**35.6**	**43.1**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings except smoke detectors which are based on all households.

Double Glazing

1.19 Some 81% of homes have some double glazed windows and just over half (55%) have all windows double glazed, Table 1.2. This is a substantial increase from 30% with full double glazing in 1996. Although double glazing is most likely to be found in the owner occupied sector, partial glazing is common in this sector where almost 30% have some, but not all, windows double glazed. This is mainly because homes are larger and owners tend to adopt a more piecemeal approach to improvement than many landlords. Over two thirds (69%) of RSL homes have full double glazing compared to just 38% of private rented homes. Only one in four (25%) of converted flats have full double glazing. The majority of homes built post 1980 (77%) have full double glazing compared with less than a third (32%) of those built before 1919.

Mains services

1.20 Around 18.6 million (87%) homes have a mains gas supply but this proportion is much lower for flats with just 74% of low rise and 58% of high-rise flats having mains gas.[2] About 1 in 5 (19%) of homes built since 1980 do not have mains gas. Private sector homes are more likely to have a mains gas supply than those in the social sector (87% compared with 83%). The vast majority of homes (97%) have mains drainage. Virtually all (98%) of homes without mains drainage are privately owned and these represent about 4% of owner occupied and 5% of private rented homes.

1.21 There are regional variations in the proportion of homes with mains gas ranging from 82% in the rest of England through 88% in the south east regions to 92% in the Northern regions. Only two thirds (66%) of homes in rural areas have mains gas which reduces to 22% of homes in more isolated rural areas. Homes in NRF areas are more likely to have mains gas than those located elsewhere (92% compared with 83%). Homes located outside of the northern or south east regions are more likely to lack mains drainage (4% compared with 2%) and around 1 in 7 (14%) of homes in rural areas do not have mains drainage which rises to 60% for those in isolated rural locations. In the NRF districts less than 1% of homes lack mains drainage. There are no real variations in provision of mains services by local housing market conditions.

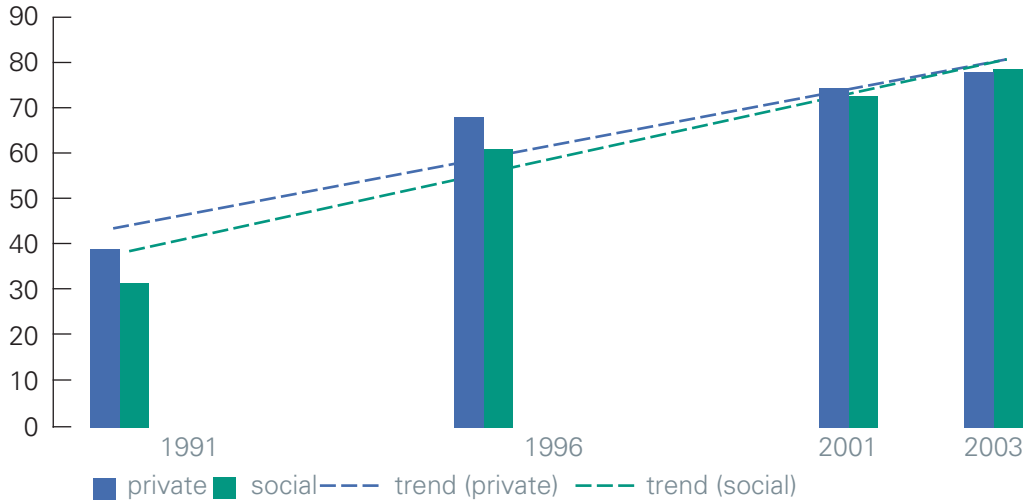
Smoke detectors

1.22 Some 16.2 million households (78%) have at least one smoke detector in their home. About a third of households (32%) have two smoke detectors and 10% have 3 or more. The majority of those with smoke detectors have battery-powered units (83%) but about 2.8 million households (17%) have mains powered smoke detectors. Households living in pre-1919 homes or in flats of any type are less likely to have smoke detectors than those in newer homes or in houses. Only 66% of those in high rise flats and 71% in pre-1919 homes have these detectors compared with 87% living in detached houses and 87% in post-1980 homes.

1.23 There has been a dramatic increase in the proportion of households with smoke detectors from just 37% in 1991 to 78% in 2003 reflecting rising public awareness. The increase in the social sector has been particularly marked from 32% in 1991 to 78% in 2003, Figure 1.5.

[2] This has important implications for the thermal comfort criterion of the decent homes standard (see chapter 2). Homes which cannot have gas central heating require higher levels of insulation to meet the decent homes standard.

Figure 1.5: Proportion of households with smoke detectors by sector, 1991-2003



Base: all households

1.24 RSL households are the most likely to have smoke detectors (85%) and private rented households are the least likely to have these (68%). Mains powered smoke detectors are much more common in the social rented sector where 37% of households with smoke detectors have mains powered units compared with just 13% of households with smoke detectors in the private sector.

1.25 Households in suburban and rural areas are much more likely to have smoke detectors than those in city and other urban centres (80% compared with 72%). Those living in the most deprived areas are less likely to have smoke detectors than those living in the least deprived. Households in NRF districts are also less likely to have smoke alarms than households in other areas (74% compared with 81%).

Basic amenities

1.26 Around 200,000 (1%) of homes lack one of the five basic amenities. This figure has remained almost constant since 1991 and now consists largely of dwellings waiting or undergoing refurbishment.

Secondary amenities

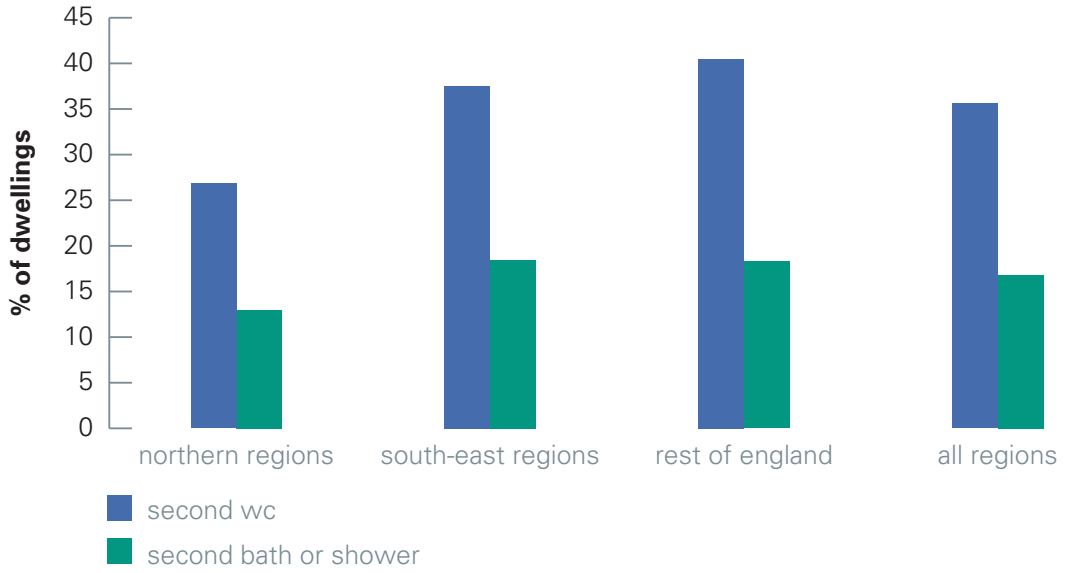
1.27 Just over a third of homes (36%) have more than one WC and 1 in 6 (17%) have more than one bath or shower. Detached houses are by far the most likely to have such secondary amenities – 84% have a second WC and 54% have a second bath or shower. At the other end of the scale, just 6% of purpose-built low rise flats have a second WC and 3% have a second bath or shower. Homes built since 1980 are almost twice as likely to have a second bath or shower than average (34% compared with 17%) and are also more likely than average to have a second WC (47% compared with 36%).

1.28 There has been a slight increase in the proportion of homes with a second WC from 31% in 1996 to 36% in 2003. Over the same period there has also been an increase in the proportion with a second bath or shower from 13% to 17%. Both of these increases have been more marked in the private sector.

1.29 Private sector homes, especially those that are owner occupied, are more likely to have a second WC or bath/shower than those in the social sector. For example, some 43% of owner occupied homes have a second WC compared with 21% of private rented, 20% of RSL and 17% of local authority.

1.30 Homes in the north are less likely to have secondary amenities than those in other regions with just 27% having a second WC and 13% with a second bath or shower, Figure 1.6. Homes in rural areas are more likely to have secondary amenities than those in other areas; mainly because rural areas contain a much higher proportion of larger and detached houses. Half (50%) of homes in these rural areas have a second WC and 28% have a second bath or shower.

Figure 1.6: Secondary amenities by region, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.31 Homes in NRF districts are less likely to have a second WC or second bath/shower than those located elsewhere. Just 27% of homes located in the most deprived areas have a second WC compared with 42% of homes in the least deprived.

1.32 Homes in areas of negligible or limited demand are much less likely to have secondary amenities than those located in higher demand areas. Just 16% of homes located in areas where property takes over 6 months to sell have a second WC and only 2% have a second bath or shower compared with 41% and 20% respectively for homes in areas where property takes less than 9 weeks to sell.

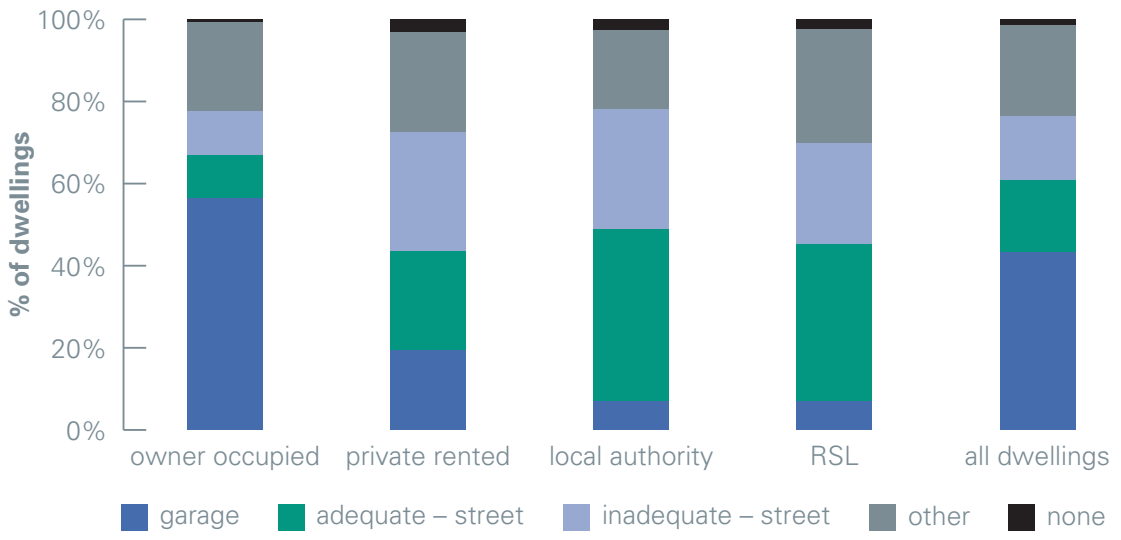
Parking provision

1.33 Some 9.3 million homes (43%) have a garage with just over half of these being detached garages. Another 7.2 million (33%) of homes have to rely on street parking which is inadequate for 3.4 million of these.[3] A further 300,000 homes have no parking facilities whatsoever. Not surprisingly, detached houses and all bungalows are more likely to have garages than other types of home (89% and 63% respectively have garages) and the smaller the dwelling, the more likely it is to have to rely on inadequate street parking. Some 27% of homes less than 50m^2 in area have to rely on this compared with just 5% of homes over 110m^2 in area. Terraced houses and flats of all types are more likely to have inadequate street parking (this ranges from 25% of medium/large terraced houses to 44% of purpose-built high-rise flats). Some 8% of high-rise flats and 4% of converted flats have no parking whatsoever. About a third (34%) of pre-1919 homes rely on inadequate street parking and only 20% of homes in this age bracket have a garage.

1.34 There have been very few changes in parking provision since 1996, although there has been a marked increase in car ownership.

1.35 Private sector homes are much more likely to have garages than those in the social rented sector (52% compared with 7%), Figure 1.7. However just 19% of private rented homes have a garage. All types of rented homes are more likely to have to rely on inadequate street parking than owner occupied homes.

Figure 1.7: Parking provision by tenure, 2003



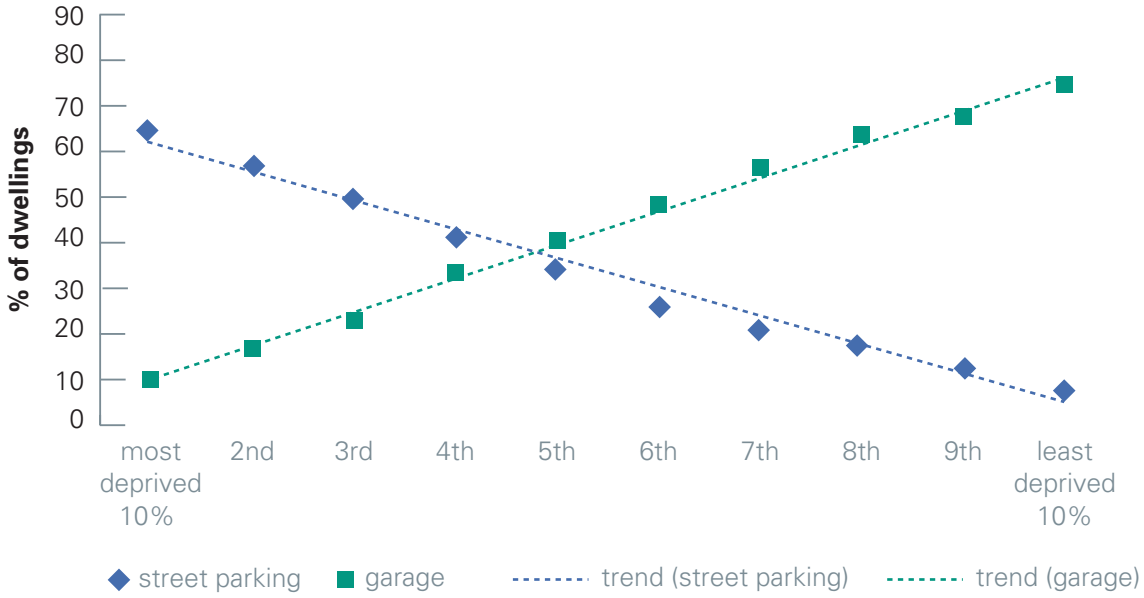
Base: all dwellings

[3] Street parking is 'inadequate' where it is difficult to park outside the home. See glossary for detailed definition.

1.36 Homes in the north and in the south east are less likely to have garages than those located in the rest of England (39% in the north and 38% in the south east compared to 50% elsewhere). Homes in the south east regions are more likely to have to rely on inadequate street parking (21% compared with 15% in the north and 12% in the rest of England). Not surprisingly, homes in rural areas are more likely to have garages (61%) although 16% of these homes have to rely on street parking. Although inadequate street parking is mainly a problem for homes in city and other urban centres (32%), around one in eight (12%) of homes located in suburban areas also have to rely on inadequate street parking.

1.37 Homes in NRF districts are less likely to have garages (31% compared with 52% in other areas) and more likely to have to rely on street parking (47% compared with 24%). Almost a quarter (22%) of homes in NRF districts rely on inadequate street parking. There is a strong relationship between the level of deprivation and parking provision with 64% of homes in the most deprived areas having to rely on street parking compared with just 7% in the least deprived areas. Conversely, just 10% of homes in the most deprived areas have access to a garage compared with 75% in the least deprived, Figure 1.8.

Figure 1.8: Proportion of homes relying on street parking and having a garage by deprivation, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.38 Homes located in areas where there is 'limited to negligible' demand are less likely to have a garage than those located elsewhere (28% in these areas have garages compared with 41% in areas of moderate demand and 50% in areas of 'high' demand). However, the proportion of homes relying on inadequate street parking does not appear to vary according to market conditions.

Accessibility

1.39 The degree of accessibility of homes for people with mobility problems is mixed. While two thirds (68%) of homes have reasonable level access to their entrance, only 20% have flush thresholds and only 15% have wide doorsets and circulation space for wheelchairs. Around 40% of homes have a bath or WC at entrance level. Only about 720,000 homes (3.3% of the stock) have all four of these accessibility features and 18% of homes have none at all.

Table 1.3: Accessibility features by tenure, 2003

	flush threshold	level access	bath/WC at entrance level	wider doorsets/ circulation	all four	all dwellings
numbers (000s):						
owner occupied	2,467	10,559	5,566	2,229	311	15,201
private rented	445	1,310	909	270	62	2,205
local Authority	705	1,637	1,235	376	153	2,457
RSL	625	1,126	841	381	191	1,621
total	**4,242**	**14,632**	**8,551**	**3,256**	**716**	**21,484**
percentage:						
owner occupied	16.2	69.5	36.6	14.7	2.0	100.0
private rented	20.2	59.4	41.2	12.2	2.8	100.0
local Authority	28.7	66.6	50.3	15.3	6.2	100.0
RSL	38.6	69.5	51.9	23.5	11.8	100.0
total	**19.7**	**68.1**	**39.8**	**15.2**	**3.3**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings

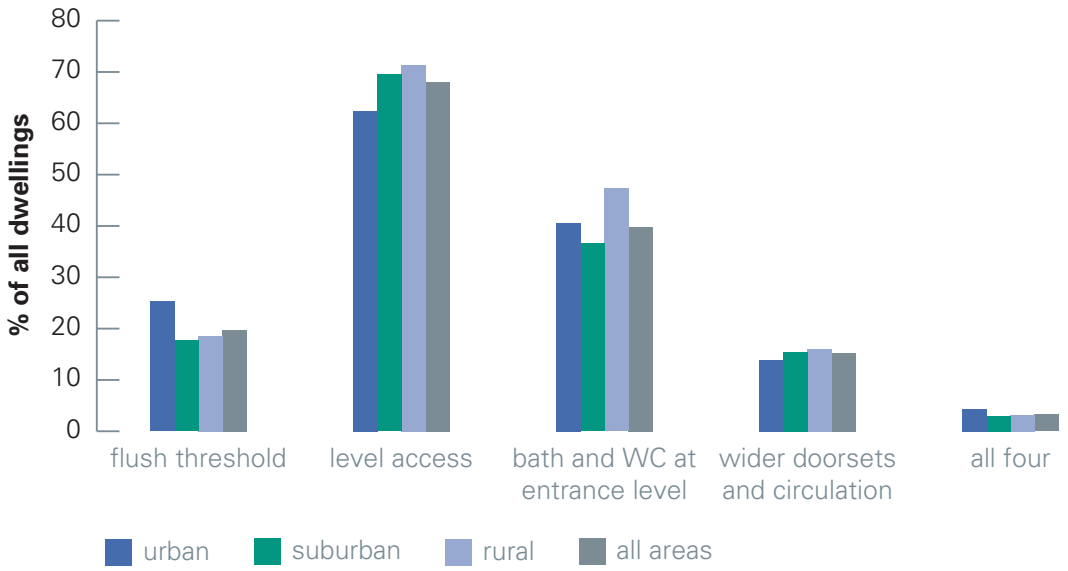
1.40 Purpose-built flats are much more likely than other dwelling types to have all four features (11% of low rise flats and 14% of high-rise flats have all 4) followed by bungalows (8%). Homes built before 1945 are less likely to have any or all of these features than newer homes. Some 24% of pre-1919 and 20% of 1919-1945 homes have none of the four features compared with 14% of homes built after 1980.

1.41 Social rented homes are more likely to have all four accessibility features than private sector homes (8% compared with 2%). In particular, social rented homes are more likely than private sector homes to have bathrooms and WCs at entrance level (51% compared with 37%) and flush thresholds (33% compared with 17%).

1.42 Homes in the north have the highest proportion of homes with none of the four features (23% compared with 16% in other regions). In particular, they are less likely to have a bath and WC at entrance level (33% compared with 45% in the south east regions and 41% in rest of England). Homes in city and urban centres have both the highest proportion with all features (4%) and the highest proportion with none of the four features (21%), Figure 1.9. This is a reflection of the fact that these areas contain a

relatively high proportion of some of the 'best' homes from an accessibility point of view (more modern social housing) together with a relatively high proportion of the 'worst' from an accessibility standpoint (small pre-1919 terraced houses and converted flats).

Figure 1.9: Accessibility features by type of area, 2003



Base: all dwellings

1.43 Homes in NRF districts are more likely to have none of the four main accessibility features than homes located elsewhere (21% compared with 16%). In particular, homes in NRF districts are less likely to have level access or a bath and WC at entrance level than those in other areas.

1.44 There is an association between level of deprivation and accessibility features; the most deprived areas have the highest proportion of homes with all four features and the highest proportion with none of the features. This is largely due to the very diverse nature of homes in these areas with high proportions of the 'best' and 'worst' homes from an accessibility point of view (similar to the reasons explained earlier related to city and urban centres).

Chapter 2

Decent Homes

2.1 One of the Government's housing objectives is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent home to promote social cohesion, well being and self-dependence. This chapter looks at the extent to which homes meet the 'decent homes' standard across and within different sections of the housing stock[4]. It examines how the situation has changed over time, the principal reasons for homes failing to meet the standard, and the costs of work necessary to deal with these problems. It also looks at the links between non-decency and deprivation, levels of housing demand, urban and rural locations and broad regional areas.

Summary

- Since 1996 the number of non-decent homes has reduced by a quarter, from 9.1 million (45%) to 6.7 million homes (31%) in 2003.
- While social sector homes continue to have greater rates of non-decency than private sector homes, progress has been greatest in the social sector and therefore the gap is narrowing.
- The most common reason for failing to meet the standard is the thermal comfort criterion, although this is where most progress has been made since 1996. Reductions in the numbers of homes failing on fitness, repair or modern facilities and services since 1996 have been more modest, with no significant improvement since 2001.
- The average cost to make a home decent is £7,028. However while the average cost to meet the thermal comfort criterion is £1,769, the average cost for homes failing on at least one of the other criteria is £14,304.
- Houses have seen much greater progress than flats in both the social and private sectors. As a result flats are now around twice as likely to be non-decent as houses.
- Although progress in the most deprived districts (supported by NRF) is similar to that seen nationally, homes in these areas are still more likely to be non-decent (35% compared to 29% in other districts). Furthermore, homes in deprived districts are more likely to be failing on either fitness, repair or modern facilities and services, which on average require greater expenditure to make decent.
- Around 40% of homes in cities or other urban centres are non-decent (compared to 28% of homes elsewhere). In addition, homes in these centres are more likely to fail on fitness, repair or modern facilities and services and therefore require on average greater expenditure to make decent.

[4] A detailed description of the requirements of the standard is set out in the Decent Homes Technical Report at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1152190 and summarised in the EHCS Technical Report. The four criteria are intended to jointly operate as a threshold to signal that appropriate action is required. But the improvements carried out will generally take a dwelling to a standard substantially above the threshold itself.

Numbers of decent and non-decent homes

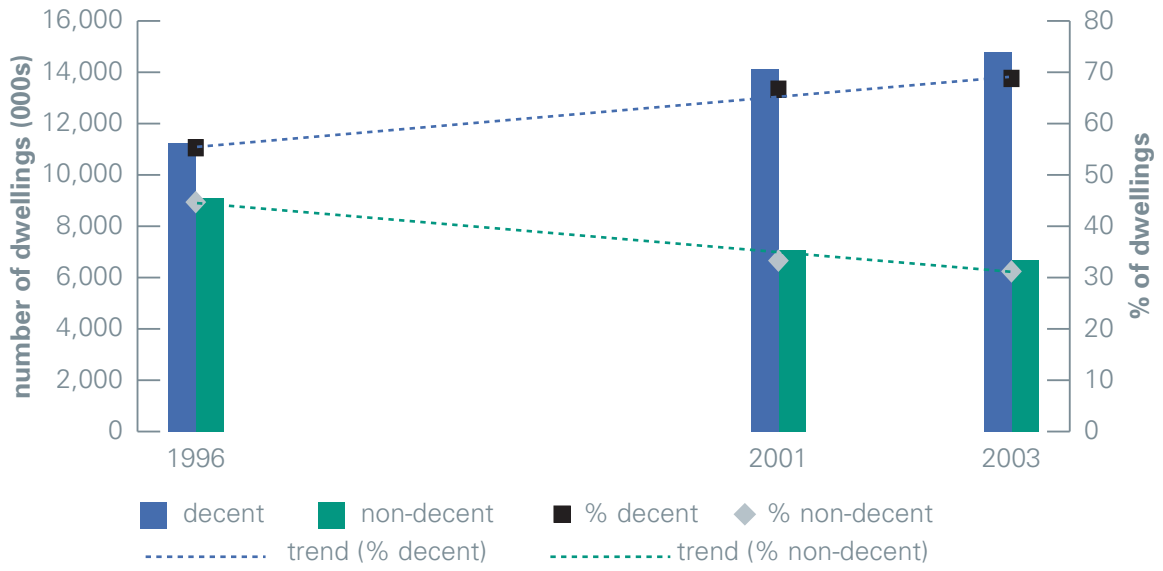
2.2 The number of non-decent homes has fallen to 6.7 million (31% of the housing stock) in 2003, down from 9.1 million (45%) in 1996. This also indicates steady progress since 2001 when 7.1 million (33% of) homes were non-decent, Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1.

Table 2.1: Non-decent homes by tenure, 1996, 2001 and 2003

	1996			2001			2003		
	decent	non-decent	all dwellings	decent	non-decent	all dwellings	decent	non-decent	all dwellings
number (000s):									
owner occupied	8,391	5,535	13,927	10,483	4,316	14,798	10,993	4,207	15,201
private rented	752	1,246	1,998	1,072	1,101	2,172	1,157	1,048	2,205
all private	**9,144**	**6,781**	**15,925**	**11,554**	**5,416**	**16,970**	**12,151**	**5,255**	**17,406**
LA	1,600	1,869	3,469	1,637	1,174	2,812	1,485	972	2,457
RSL	493	448	941	952	472	1,424	1,154	467	1,621
all social	**2,092**	**2,318**	**4,410**	**2,589**	**1,647**	**4,236**	**2,639**	**1,439**	**4,078**
all tenures	**11,236**	**9,099**	**20,335**	**14,143**	**7,063**	**21,207**	**14,790**	**6,694**	**21,484**
percentage:									
owner occupied	60.3	39.7	100.0	70.8	29.2	100.0	72.3	27.7	100.0
private rented	37.6	62.4	100.0	49.3	50.7	100.0	52.5	47.5	100.0
all private	**57.4**	**42.6**	**100.0**	**68.1**	**31.9**	**100.0**	**69.8**	**30.2**	**100.0**
LA	46.1	53.9	100.0	58.2	41.8	100.0	60.4	39.6	100.0
RSL	52.4	47.6	100.0	66.8	33.2	100.0	71.2	28.8	100.0
all social	**47.4**	**52.6**	**100.0**	**61.1**	**38.9**	**100.0**	**64.7**	**35.3**	**100.0**
all tenures	**55.3**	**44.7**	**100.0**	**66.7**	**33.3**	**100.0**	**68.8**	**31.2**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings

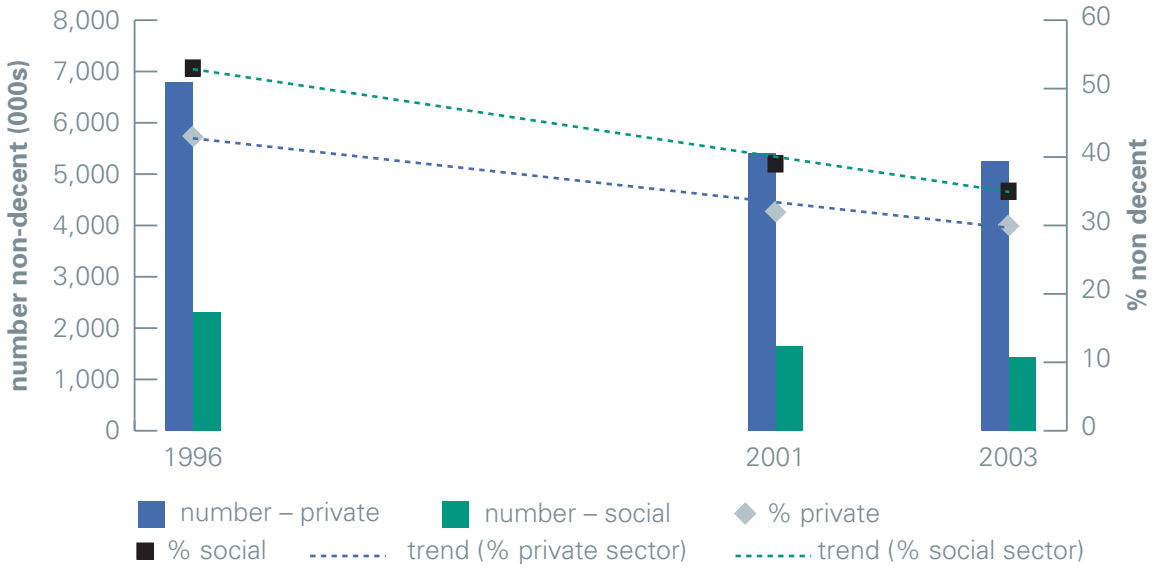
Figure 2.1: Number and percentage of decent and non-decent homes, 1996 – 2003



Base: all dwellings

2.3 Overall, the social sector continues to have a higher proportion of non-decent homes than the private sector but the gap between the social and private sectors is narrowing. Numbers of non-decent stock in both the private and social sectors declined significantly since 1996, but with a rather higher rate of improvement in the social sector, Figure 2.2. The proportion of non-decent homes has reduced from 43% to 30% in the private sector since 1996, and from 53% to 35% in the social sector.

Figure 2.2: Number and percentage of non-decent homes by housing sector, 1996 – 2003



Base: all dwellings

Reasons for and costs of non-decency

Thermal comfort

2.4 The most common reason for failing the decent homes standard is thermal comfort, which requires a home to have effective insulation and efficient heating. Some 4.9 million homes or 23% of the housing stock (73% of non-decent homes) fail this criterion, Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Number and percentage of homes non-decent by reason for non-decency, 2003

	private		social		all tenures	
	(000s)	%	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
fail thermal comfort	3,826	22.0	1,055	25.9	4,880	22.7
fail repair	1,565	9.0	285	7.0	1,851	8.6
fail fitness	808	4.6	196	4.8	1,005	4.7
fail modernisation	320	1.8	194	4.8	513	2.4
fail on fitness, repair or modernisation	**2,231**	**12.8**	**578**	**14.2**	**2,809**	**13.1**
all non-decent	**5,255**	**30.2**	**1,439**	**35.3**	**6,694**	**31.2**
all stock	**17,406**	**100.0**	**4,078**	**100.0**	**21,484**	**100.0**

Base: all dwellings

Note: some dwellings fail on more than one of these criteria.

2.5 The most common reason for 4.9 million homes not meeting the thermal comfort criterion is inadequate loft or wall insulation (81% of such homes, with 74% of these failing because of inadequate insulation alone). Some 26% of homes failing on the thermal comfort criterion do so because they do not have efficient heating systems.

Repair, fitness and modernisation

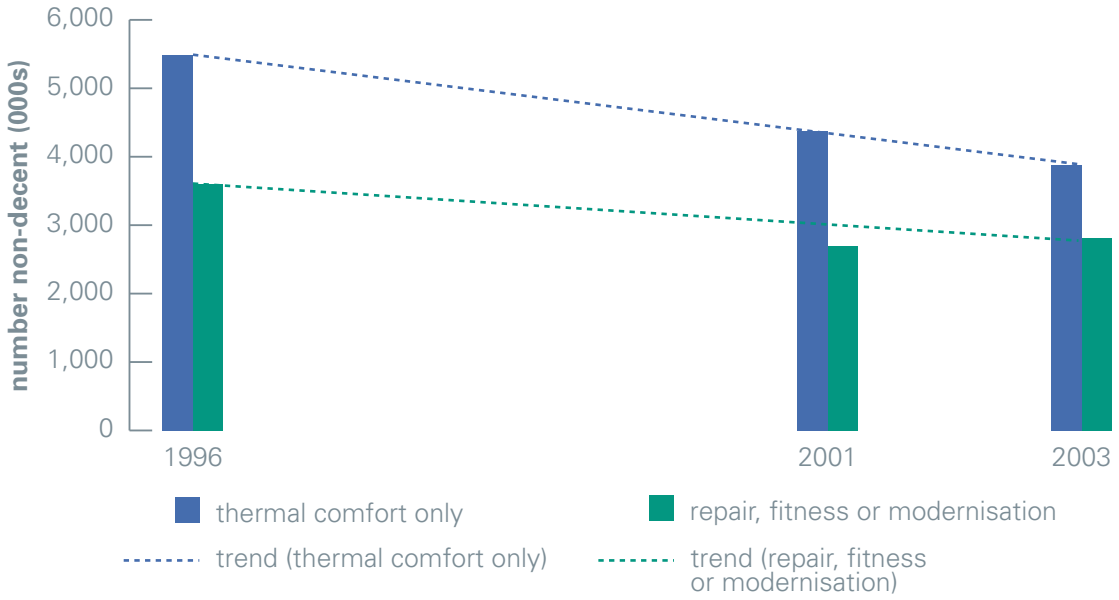
2.6 Of the remaining criteria, homes are most likely to fail on repair with a little under 1.9 million homes (9%) not meeting this criterion. The number of homes failing the statutory minimum (fitness) standard appears to have levelled off in recent years at around 1 million (between 4 to 5% of the housing stock) with no significant change from 2001. The most common reasons for failing the fitness standard are disrepair, facilities for the preparation and cooking of food, bathroom amenities and dampness. These were also the main reasons for unfitness in 1996 and 2001.

2.7 Over time, homes are susceptible to deterioration in their condition through ageing and inadequate maintenance, repair and replacement. This process can lead to homes failing the repair, fitness or modernisation criteria. In contrast, homes are not susceptible to deterioration on the thermal comfort criterion which is concerned with the standard of the heating system and insulation present. At any point in time therefore, the overall number of homes meeting or failing the repair, fitness or modernisation criteria reflects a balance of ongoing deterioration set against the level of housing renewal activity (including demolition and new construction).

Changes since 1996

2.8 The number of homes which fail solely on thermal comfort has declined steadily since 1996, falling by over 1.6 million or 29%, from 5.5 million (60% of all non-decent homes) to 3.9 million (58%) in 2003, Figure 2.3. The overall number of non-decent homes failing on repair, fitness or modern facilities and services has declined at a slower rate over this period, by around 22% (from 3.6 to 2.8 million). As a result these homes now form a slightly larger proportion of the non-decent stock. In 1996, 49% of these homes also fell below the thermal comfort threshold; this proportion had reduced to 35% in 2003.

Figure 2.3: Number of homes non-decent by reason for non-decency, 1996 to 2003



Base: all non-decent dwellings

Note: dwellings failing on 'repair, fitness or modernisation' may also fail on thermal comfort.

2.9 Within the overall pattern of reducing numbers of non-decent homes, in the private sector the proportion failing on thermal comfort only has remained relatively constant at around 60%, Table 2.3. In the social sector, this proportion has declined from 68% in 1996 to 60% in 2003.

Table 2.3: Number and percentage of homes non-decent by reason, 1996 – 2003

		thermal comfort only		fitness, repair or modern facilities and services		non-decent	
		(000s)	%	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
1996	private	3,917	57.8	2,864	42.2	6,781	100.0
	social	1,574	67.9	744	32.1	2,318	100.0
2001	private	3,303	61.0	2,114	39.0	5,416	100.0
	social	1,070	65.0	577	35.0	1,647	100.0
2003	private	3,024	57.5	2,231	42.5	5,255	100.0
	social	861	59.9	578	40.1	1,439	100.0

Base: all non-decent dwellings

2.10 The overall average cost to make a home decent is £7,028 in 2003, but there are large variations in cost depending on the type of work needed. Homes failing solely on thermal comfort need an average of £1,769 to be spent on them, whereas for those failing on at least one of the other criteria the average cost is £14,304.

2.11 Private sector homes have considerably higher average costs to make decent than social sector homes whatever criterion they fail on, Table 2.4.[5] This is partly a reflection of the composition of the housing stock in the two sectors (with proportionately more and larger houses in the private sector) and partly because of economies of scale which generally underpin the organisation of work by social landlords on their estates. Costs to make decent are quite closely related to size in both tenure sectors, with average costs in the social sector of £3,132 for the smallest properties, compared with £7,398 for the largest.

Table 2.4: Number of homes non-decent and average costs to make decent, by reason for non-decency and housing sector, 2003

	thermal comfort only		fitness, repair or modern facilities and services		all non-decent stock	
	number of dwellings (000s)	mean cost (£)	number of dwellings (000s)	mean cost (£)	number of dwellings (000s)	mean cost (£)
private	3,024	1,964	2,231	15,875	5,255	7,870
social	861	1,081	578	8,238	1,439	3,954
all tenures	**3,885**	**1,769**	**2,809**	**14,304**	**6,694**	**7,028**

Base: all dwellings

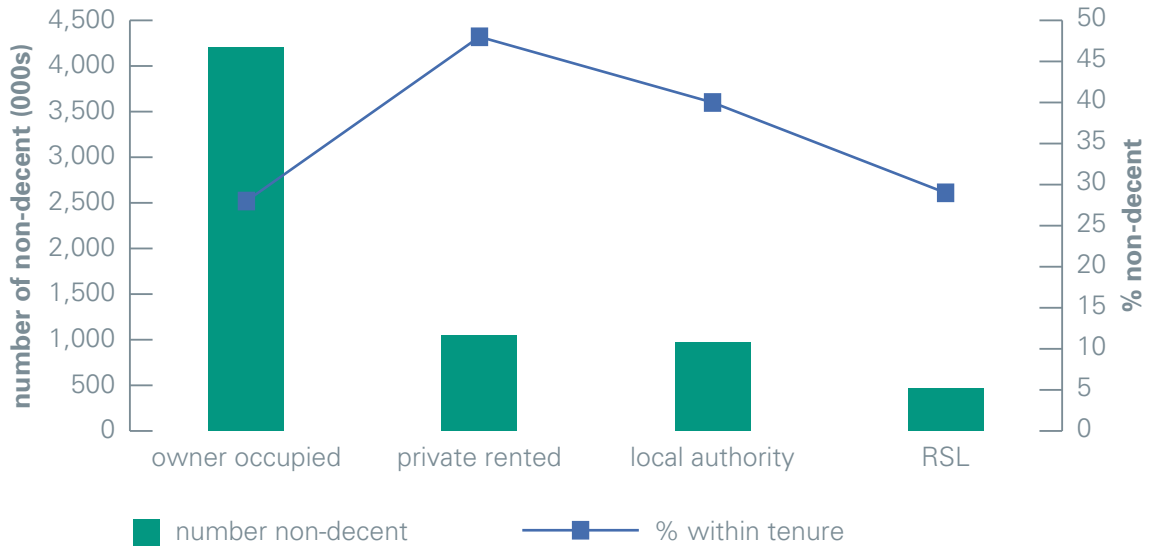
2.12 As might be expected, vacant stock is more likely than occupied stock to fall below the decent homes threshold, (54% compared to 30% of occupied stock) and is, on average, much more expensive to make decent than occupied stock. The average cost to make vacant property decent is £11,778 in the private sector and £6,169 in the social sector.

[5] With regard to the Government decent homes target to make all social housing decent by 2010, the immediate cost for bringing local authority stock up to standard is £4.2 billion. However this cost covers only the expenditure required to make existing non-decent homes decent now and does not take account of: a) work required to ensure current non-decent dwellings remain decent until 2010; b) dealing with additional dwellings likely to become non-decent between 2001 and 2010; and c) additional important environmental and security work and disabled adaptations that do not impact on the decent homes criteria as such. Other research using data from the EHCS and local authorities' own estimates suggests the total cost of this outstanding work is around £21 billion. The prime reason why costs are much higher to take these additional factors into account is that dwellings are most likely to become non-decent (or return to non-decency) due to repair, fitness or modernisation (for example from deterioration resulting from ageing and use) which is on average relatively expensive to deal with. The methodology for determining the costs to make decent is included in the accompanying EHCS Technical Report.

Tenure

2.13 Most non-decent homes are owner occupied (63% in 2003), but this is because the majority of the stock is owner occupied. Of the four main tenure groups, owner occupied homes are actually least likely to be non-decent (28%), Figure 2.4 and Table 2.1. Private rented homes are the most likely to be non-decent, with relatively high rates also in local authority stock.

Figure 2.4: Number and percentage of homes non-decent by tenure, 2003



Base: all dwellings

2.14 Around half of privately rented non-decent homes fail the repair, fitness or modernisations criteria of the standard, Table 2.5. This is much more than homes in other sector which have higher proportions of homes failing on thermal comfort alone. As a result privately rented non-decent homes are on average more expensive to make decent than homes in other tenures (£9,115). Conversely only a third of non-decent RSL homes fail on repair, fitness or modern facilities and services and have the lowest average costs to make decent (£3,353). The cost of making owner occupied homes decent is close to the average at £7,560 while the average cost in the LA sector is £4,243.

Table 2.5: Number of homes non-decent by reason for non decency and housing tenure, 2003

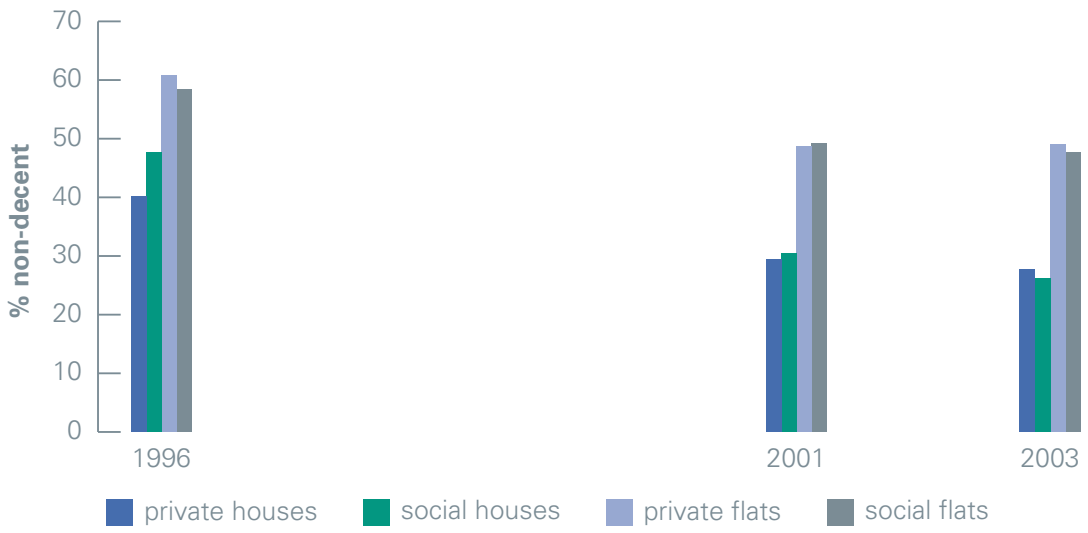
	thermal comfort only		repair, fitness or modern facilities and services		non-decent	
	(000s)	%	(000s)	%	(000s)	%
owner occupied	2,510	59.7	1,697	40.3	4,207	100.0
private rented	514	49.0	534	51.0	1,048	100.0
local authority	549	56.4	423	43.6	972	100.0
RSL	312	67.0	154	33.0	467	100.0

Base: all non-decent dwellings

Age and type of home

2.15 Houses in both the private and social sectors are much more likely than flats to meet the decent homes standard, Figure 2.5. While there has been improvement for houses and flats in both sectors, the rate of improvement for houses has been faster. This is largely due to improvements in thermal comfort, particularly insulation measures, where houses are showing faster improvement than flats.

Figure 2.5: Percentage of homes non-decent by dwelling type and housing sector, 1996 – 2003



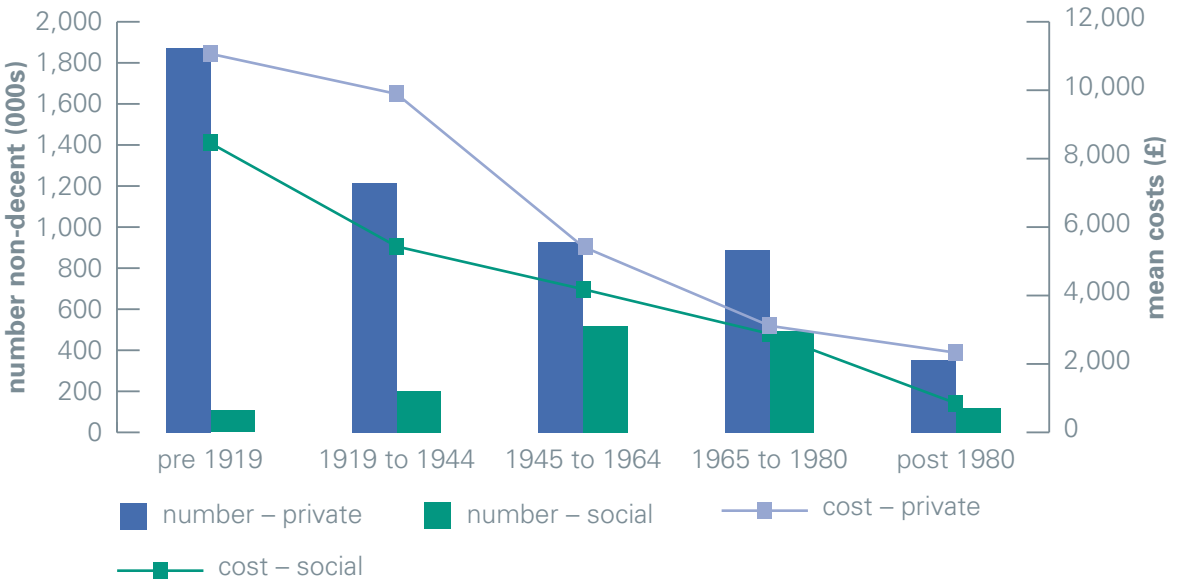
Base: all dwellings

2.16 Houses typically need more spent on them to make them decent than flats (£7,983 on average compared with £4,519 for flats). Of all flats, those in the private rented sector have the highest average costs, £7,169. Local authority houses and flats have quite similar costs (£4,493 compared to £4,046).

2.17 Unlike the private sector, where non-decent homes tend to be older (36% of non-decent homes in the private sector were built pre-1919), the majority of non-decent social sector homes were built 1945-80, Figure 6. While this reflects the age composition of the social sector stock as a whole, with 62% of its homes built 1945-80, this post war stock is a little more likely than average for the sector to be non-decent (40%).

2.18 Nevertheless older non-decent homes in both sectors require on average greater expenditure to make them decent, because they are more likely to be non-decent on the repair, fitness or modern facilities and services criteria and because they comprise proportionately less flats.

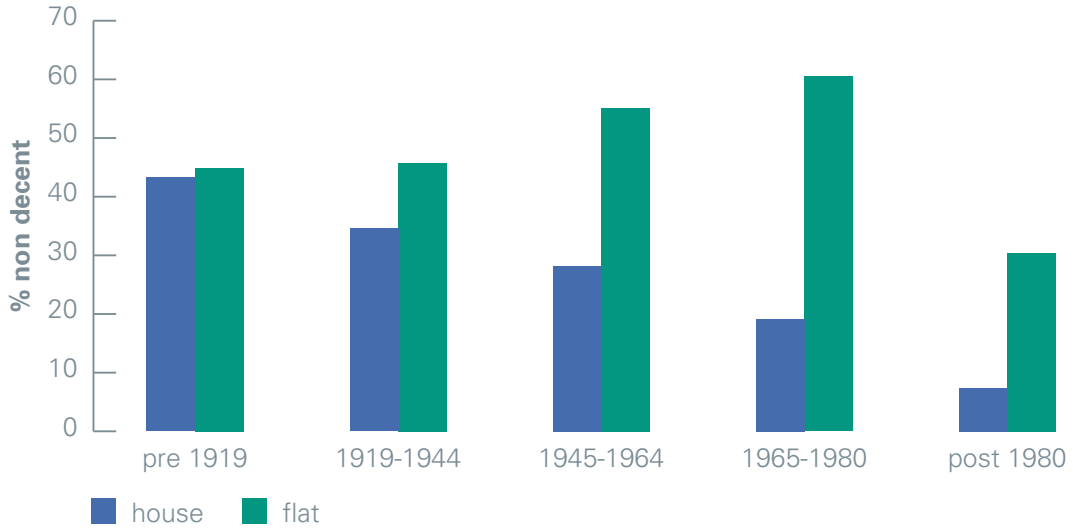
Figure 2.6: Numbers of homes non-decent by age and sector, with average costs to make decent, 2003



Base: all non-decent dwellings

2.19 For houses of all types, there is a clear relationship between the age of the property and non-decency, with the oldest houses most likely to fall below the threshold, Figure 2.7. This relationship does not hold for flats. While pre-1919 flats have similar levels of non-decency to similarly aged houses, flats built between 1945 and 1980 are the most likely to be non-decent, and their levels of non-decency have not shown the level of improvement over time seen in the rest of the stock.

Figure 2.7: Percentage of homes non-decent by age and type, 2003



Base: all dwellings

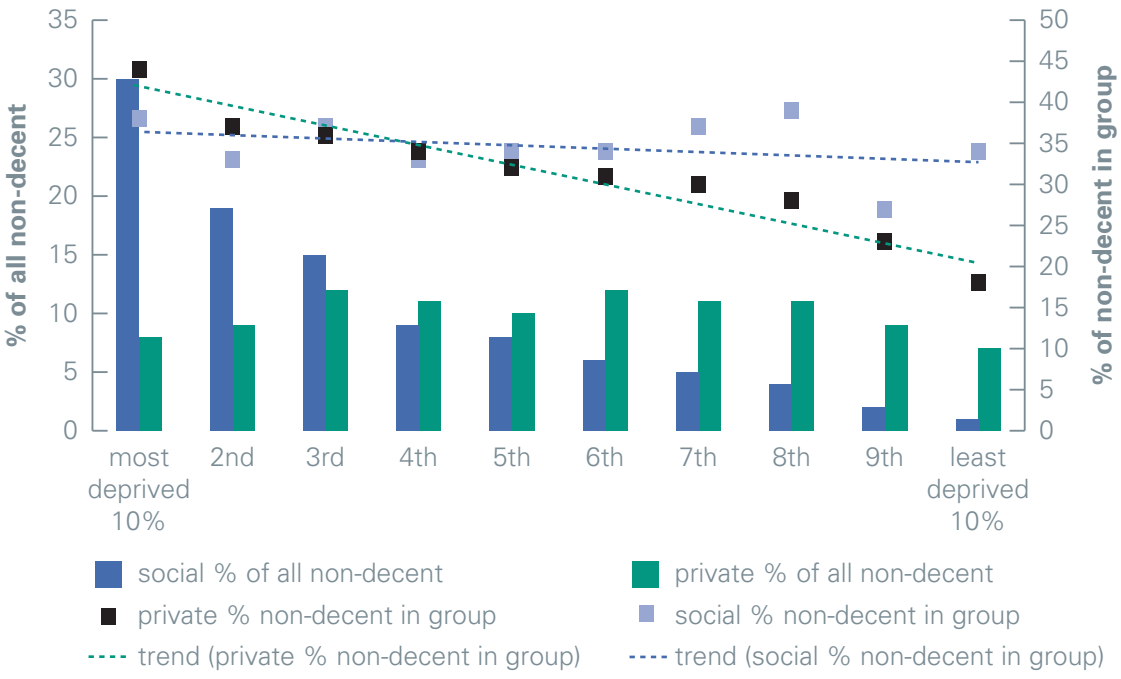
Deprivation

2.20 Private sector stock in the most deprived local areas[6] is more likely to be non-decent than that in less deprived areas, Figure 2.8. Some 44% of private sector homes are non-decent in the 10% most deprived local areas whereas in the least deprived only 18% of private sector homes are non-decent. However the 5.3 million non-decent homes in the private sector are fairly evenly distributed across all areas regardless of the level of deprivation.

2.21 In contrast, the social sector has similar rates of non-decency in nearly all types of areas, whereas most social sector non-decent homes are concentrated in the most deprived local areas. Nearly 75% of the non-decent social sector stock is located in the most deprived 40% of areas, compared with around 40% of the non-decent private sector stock.

[6] Deprived areas are defined using the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004 ranking of 2001 Census Super Output Areas (which comprise on average around 620 households). This enables the relationship between poor housing and deprivation to be assessed at the local level.

Figure 2.8: Non-decent homes by area deprivation and housing sector, 2003

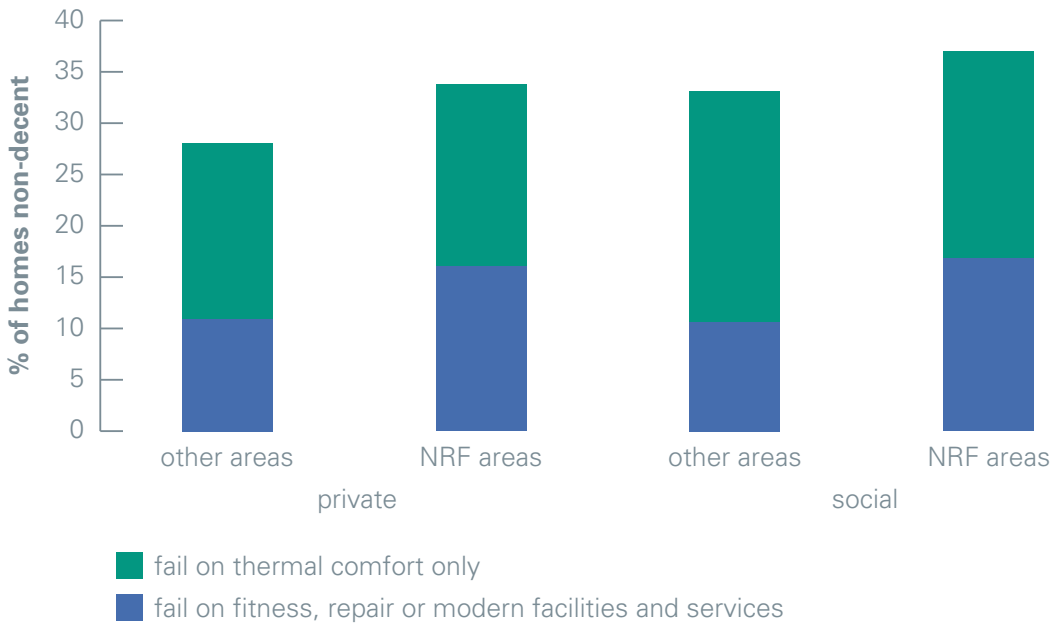


Base: all dwellings and all non-decent dwellings

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output Areas, ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2004) and grouped into ten equal numbers of areas.

2.22 Homes in the NRF districts are more likely to be non-decent than those in other districts overall (35% compared to 29%) and in both housing sectors, Figure 2.9. Furthermore, those non-decent homes in the NRF districts are more likely to be failing on fitness, repair or modern facilities and services.

Figure 2.9: Percentage of homes non-decent in the NRF most deprived districts by reason and by sector, 2003



Base: all dwellings

Note: the most deprived districts are the 88 supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

2.23 The number of non-decent homes in the most deprived districts has fallen since 1996 by 38% in the social sector (from 1.4 to 0.8 million) and by 22% in the private sector (from 2.8 to 2.2 million), Table 2.6. Overall this is comparable with the rate of improvement in other districts over the same period.

2.24 Progress in the NRF most deprived districts accounts for around two thirds of the overall reduction in the social sector non-decent homes since 2001.

Table 2.6: Non-decent homes in the NRF most deprived districts by housing sector, 1996, 2001 and 2003

	1996		2001		2003	
	decent	non-decent	decent	non-decent	decent	non-decent
number (000s):						
private sector						
NRF districts	3,042	2,790	4,075	2,383	4,262	2,182
other districts	6,102	3,991	7,479	3,034	7,888	3,073
social sector						
NRF districts	1,149	1,362	1,417	988	1,446	849
other districts	944	956	1,172	659	1,193	590
percentage:						
private sector						
NRF districts	52.2	47.8	63.1	36.9	66.1	33.9
other districts	60.5	39.5	71.1	28.9	72.0	28.0
social sector						
NRF districts	45.8	54.2	58.9	41.1	63.0	37.0
other districts	49.7	50.3	64.0	36.0	66.9	33.1

Base: all dwellings

2.25 In 2003, the average cost to make homes decent in the NRF most deprived districts is £7,312, compared with £6,794 for homes in other districts, Table 2.7. This overall higher estimated cost reflects a number of counteracting factors. On the one hand homes in the NRF areas are more likely to fail on fitness, repair or modern facilities and services, and fail on heating component of thermal comfort than elsewhere, all of which tend to be relatively more costly. On the other hand, there are proportionately more social sector homes and more flats, and the private sector stock is more likely to comprise smaller terraced houses, all of which tend to be less costly to make decent than other types of home.

Table 2.7: Cost to make decent in the NRF most deprived districts by reason for non-decency and housing sector, 2003

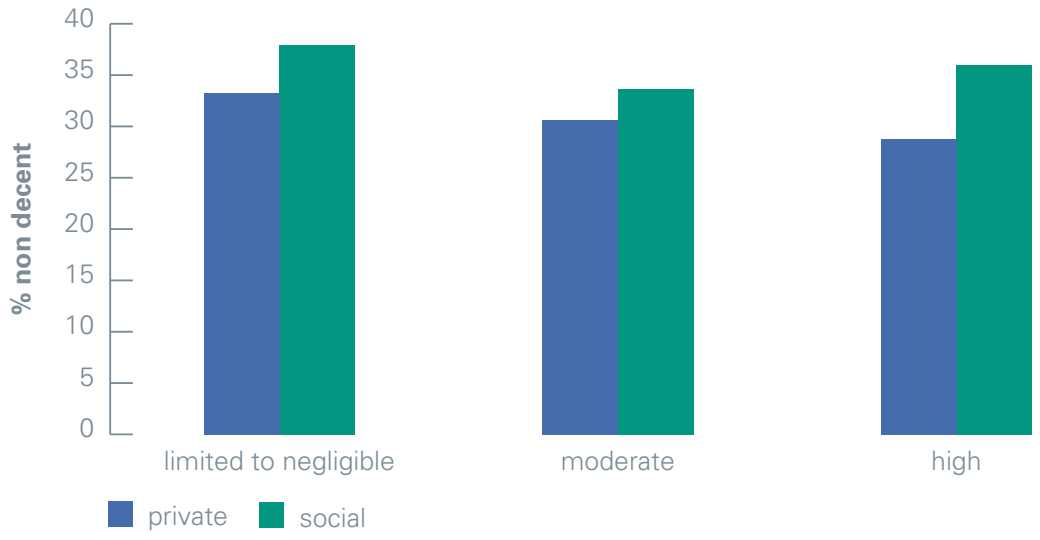
cause of non decency	private		social		all tenures	
	no ('000s)	£	no ('000s)	£	no ('000s)	£
thermal Comfort only						
NRF districts	1,149	**2,210**	462	**1,209**	1,611	**1,923**
other districts	1,875	**1,814**	400	**933**	2,275	**1,659**
fail on fitness, repair or modern facilities and services						
NRF districts	1,034	**15,383**	387	**8,168**	1,420	**13,414**
other districts	1,197	**16,299**	190	**8,382**	1,387	**15,217**
all non-decent homes						
NRF districts	2,182	**8,449**	849	**4,388**	3,031	**7,312**
other districts	3,073	**7,459**	590	**3,329**	3,662	**6,794**
all districts	5,255	**7,870**	1,439	**3,954**	6,694	**7,028**

Base: all non-decent dwellings

Market Conditions

2.26 While homes in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand for housing are a little more likely to be non-decent, there is no strong concentration of such stock in those areas. The effect of the level of demand is more discernible in the private sector where 33% of homes in 'limited to negligible' demand are non-decent compared to 29% in areas of 'high' demand for housing, Figure 2.10.

Figure 2.10: Percentage of homes non-decent by level of housing demand by housing sector, 2003



Base: all dwellings

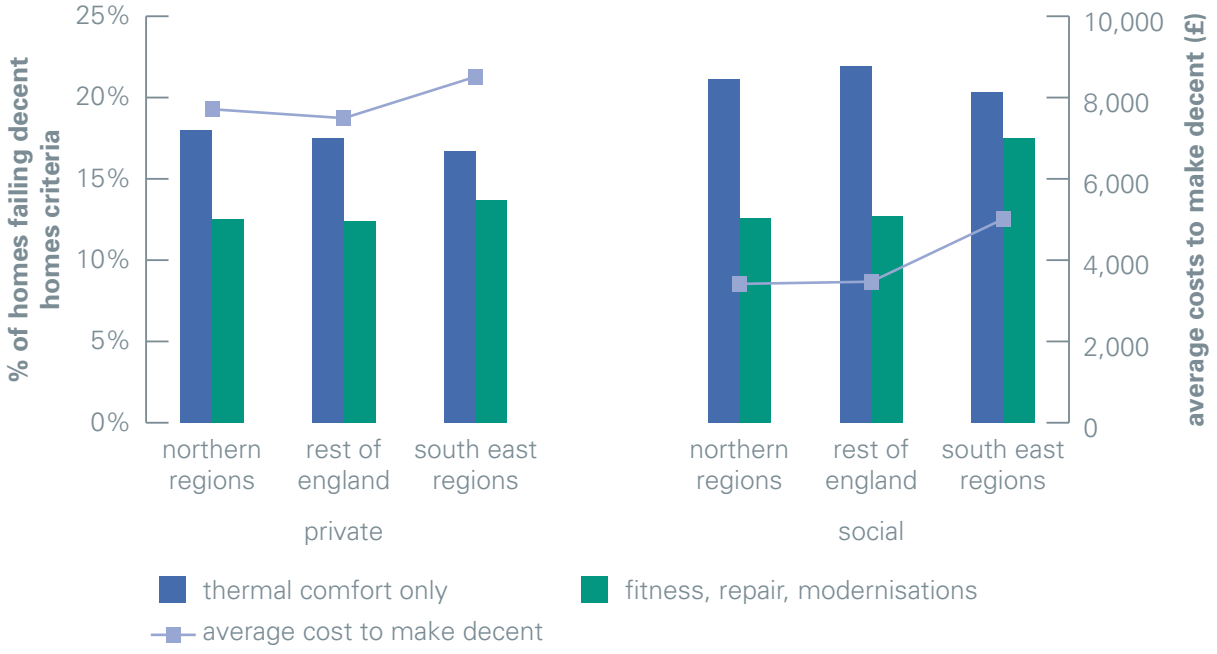
2.27 It is only in areas of more extreme low demand that there is a substantial link with housing conditions with around 50% of all homes being non-decent in places where the average private sector property takes longer than six months to sell – however such market conditions affect only 1 to 2% of the stock. In such areas the condition of the properties themselves may be a factor in helping to explain the level of demand.

Broad Regional Areas

2.28 There is no significant difference in the incidence of non-decency in broad regional groups for their stock as a whole (ie they reflect the national average). This is not to say that differences do not exist between individual regions[7]. The social stock in south east regions is however more likely to be non-decent than elsewhere (38% compared to the national average of 35%), Figure 2.11. This may be partly explained by the higher concentration of flats in the south east regions.

2.29 Average costs to make decent in the private sector are highest in south east regions reflecting the higher incidence of failure due to fitness, repair or modernisations and higher building costs. In the social sector a similar pattern occurs, with homes in the south east regions markedly more likely to require works to meet the fitness, repair or modernisations criteria.

Figure 2.11: Percentage of homes non-decent by reason for non-decency and housing sector and average costs to make decent by regional area, 2003



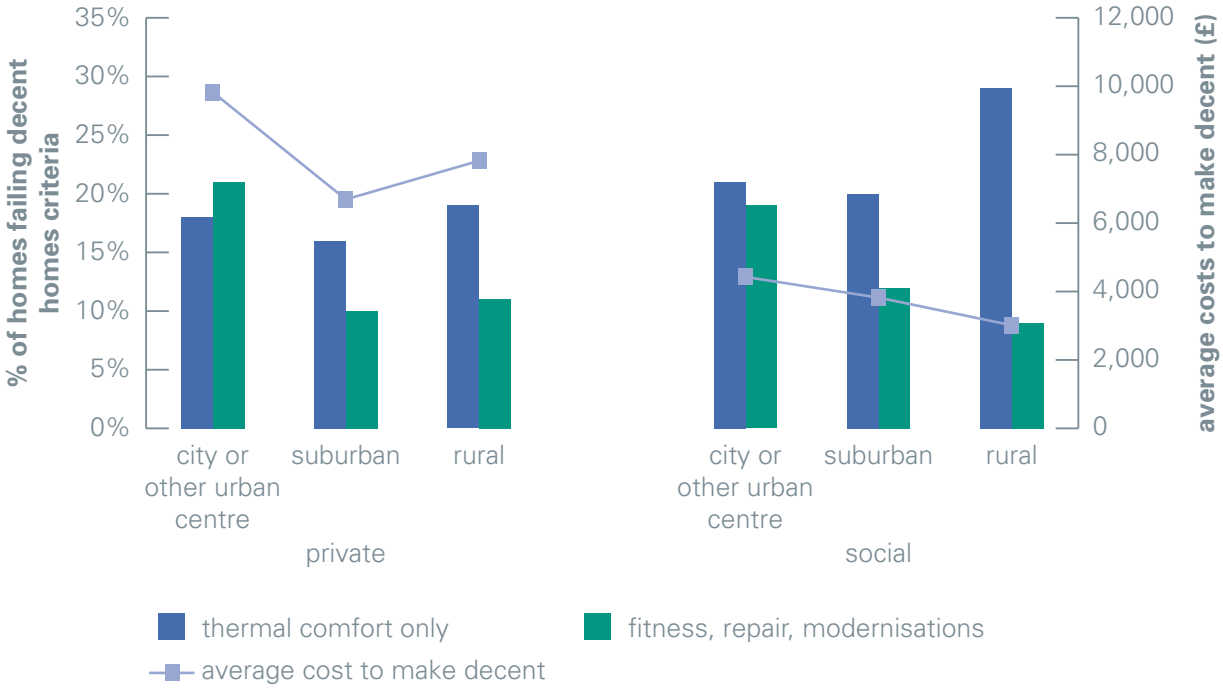
Base: all dwellings

[7] Findings for individual regions require data to be supported by modelling techniques, the results of which will be published following this report.

Urban and Rural Areas

2.30 Homes in cities or other urban centres have the greatest likelihood of non-decency, with similar rates in the private and social sector housing failing to meet the standard (around 40% for both). Non-decent homes in these areas are also more likely than average to fail to meet the required levels of fitness, repair, or modern facilities and services and have the highest average costs to make decent, Figure 2.12. Homes in suburban areas are the least likely to be non-decent for both the private and the social sectors (27% and 32% respectively).

Figure 2.12: Percentage of homes non-decent by reason for non-decency and housing sector and costs to make decent by urban, suburban or rural, 2003



Base: all dwellings

2.31 It is in the rural areas where the greatest differences between the sectors emerge. While only 30% of private homes are non-decent in these areas, 38% of social homes are. These social sector rural homes also have a large proportion of homes failing on thermal comfort only, 29% compared to an overall average of 21% for the social sector.

Chapter 3

Private sector vulnerable households

3.1 One of the Government's aims is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent home. The focus of this chapter is the private housing sector, where primary responsibility for housing conditions and standards rest with the owner but where limited resources may constrain choice of housing and the capacity to maintain and improve owned property. Government policy for this sector is to target support to households in greatest need, that is to progressively increase the proportion of 'vulnerable' households living in decent homes[8].

3.2 The chapter begins with an overview of the characteristics of vulnerable households in the private sector, then looks at: the condition (decency) of their homes and how this is changing; the types of homes they live in; where they live (regional areas, types of location, area level of deprivation and demand) and how these contextual factors relate to concentrations of non-decency among vulnerable households; and finally at the amount of equity vulnerable homeowners have as one means of addressing their housing conditions.

[8] Within the social sector access to housing is not directly constrained by household resources, with landlords generally operating allocation policies determined by needs and local priorities. Government policy for the social sector is aiming to improve the condition and standard of its stock as a whole.

Summary

- Of the 2.8 million vulnerable households in the private sector, 1.1 million (34%) live in non-decent homes. Around one third of these households rent.
- Although vulnerable households are more likely to be living in non-decent homes compared to other households in the private sector (34% compared to 28%), progress since 1996 has been greater for vulnerable households. The 'gap' between vulnerable and other households has halved, from 18% in 1996 to 9% in 2003.
- Vulnerable households are more likely than others in the private housing sector to live in non-decent homes which fail on either the fitness, repair or modern facilities and services criteria. In consequence required expenditure on their homes is greater than for non-vulnerable households (£8,618 compared to £7,340).
- Nevertheless some 70% of non-decent homes of vulnerable households fail on thermal comfort, and 52% on this criterion only – the latter on average requiring only £2,155 to be made decent.
- The reduction in the proportion of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes since 1996 has been driven mainly by improvements to thermal comfort, with no significant change in the proportion failing on other criteria since 2001.
- Private sector households in the most deprived (88 NRF supported) districts are not only more likely to be vulnerable (21% compared to 14% elsewhere), but are also more likely to live in non-decent homes if they live in the most deprived districts (41% compared to 34%). In addition their homes require more expenditure to make decent (£9,256 compared to £7,692).
- The 2.2 million (78% of) vulnerable households who own their homes tend to have less equity than non-vulnerable households and those who live in non-decent homes have the least. While 36% of vulnerable households in non-decent homes have over £120,000 of equity these households are concentrated in the south east, while in northern regions some 43% have less than £50,000 equity.

Vulnerable households

3.3 There are 2.8 million private sector vulnerable households in 2003, who account for 17% of households in this sector. Private sector vulnerable households are much more likely, than average for the sector, to be workless households, include one or more people who are long term ill or disabled, and to be among the poorest households. They are also much more likely to include elderly people or lone parent families, Table 3.1. Over 1 million (38%) vulnerable households in the sector include either infants or elderly people whose health is more likely to be adversely affected by poor housing conditions.

Table 3.1: Profile of private sector vulnerable households, 2003

	group as proportion of:	
	all private sector households (%)	vulnerable households in the private sector (%)
household groups:		
households with anyone long-term ill/disabled	25	59
low income households	13	39
workless households	11	36
lone parents	5	16
households with any children	29	36
households with any infants	12	16
households with anyone aged 60+	33	47
households with anyone aged 75+	11	22
tenure groups:		
own with mortgage	53	37
own outright	36	41
privately rent	12	22
number of households (000s)	**16,836**	**2,839**

Note: household groups comprise overlapping categories and do not sum to 100%. See glossary for definitions of household groups

3.4 Vulnerable households are also more likely than average within the private sector to own outright (41%), which is related to their older age profile, or to privately rent (22%).

Condition of homes

3.5 In 2003, just over 1 million vulnerable households in the private sector live in non-decent homes, Table 3.2. Around a third (335,000) of these households are private sector tenants while the remaining 0.7 million own their homes.

Table 3.2: Vulnerable households in non-decent homes by tenure, 1996-2003

	1996			2001			2003		
	decent	non-decent	all h'holds	decent	non-decent	all h'holds	decent	non-decent	all h'holds
number (000s):									
owner occupied	880	929	1,809	1,285	784	2,069	1,506	722	2,228
private rented	196	504	701	256	366	623	277	335	612
all private	**1,076**	**1,433**	**2,509**	**1,542**	**1,151**	**2,692**	**1,783**	**1,056**	**2,839**
all social	**1,487**	**1,648**	**3,135**	**1,815**	**1,098**	**2,913**	**1,874**	**978**	**2,851**
all tenures	**2,563**	**3,081**	**5,644**	**3,357**	**2,248**	**5,605**	**3,657**	**2,034**	**5,691**
percentage:									
owner occupied	48.6	51.4	100.0	62.1	37.9	100.0	67.6	32.4	100.0
private rented	28.0	72.0	100.0	41.2	58.8	100.0	45.3	54.7	100.0
all private	**42.9**	**57.1**	**100.0**	**57.3**	**42.7**	**100.0**	**62.8**	**37.2**	**100.0**
all social	**47.4**	**52.6**	**100.0**	**62.3**	**37.7**	**100.0**	**65.7**	**34.3**	**100.0**
all tenures	**45.4**	**54.6**	**100.0**	**59.9**	**40.1**	**100.0**	**64.3**	**35.7**	**100.0**

Base: all private sector vulnerable households

3.6 Vulnerable households living in the private sector are much more likely to be living in homes that are non-decent than non-vulnerable households, 37% of vulnerable households compared to 28% of other households, Figure 3.1. The disparity is greatest among private renters where vulnerable households are 13 percentage points more likely to be living in non-decent homes than other households (55% of vulnerable households compared with only 42% of other households).[9]

Figure 3.1: Percentage of private sector households living in non-decent homes, 2003

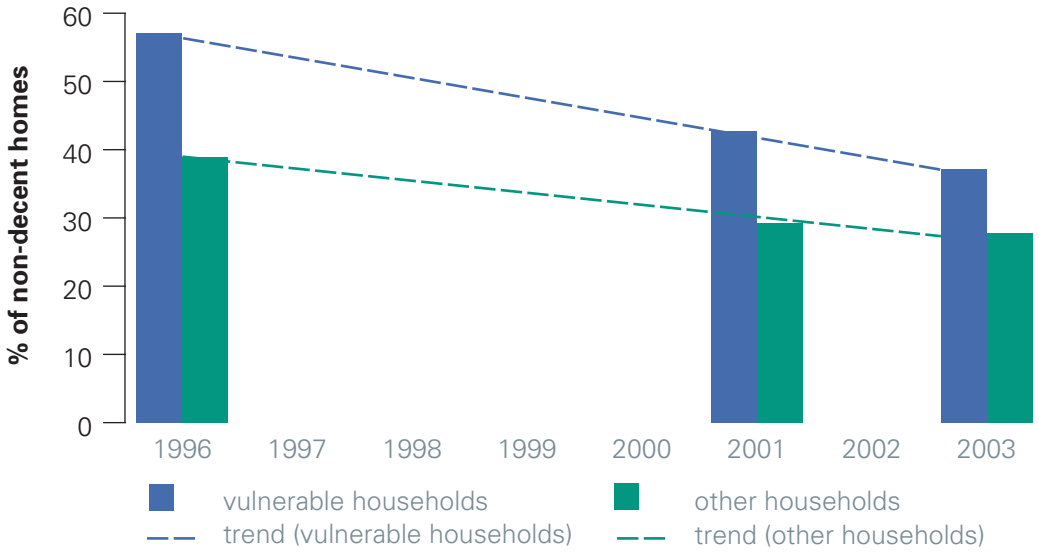
Base: all vulnerable and other households in the private sector

[9] There is no disparity in the social sector where the likelihood of living in a non-decent homes is the same for vulnerable and other households.

Change over time

3.7 Although vulnerable households are more likely to be living in non-decent homes, the conditions of their homes have been improving at a faster rate compared to those of their non-vulnerable counterparts, Figure 3.2. The gap between vulnerable households and other households living in non-decent private sector homes has halved since 1996, from 18% to 9%.

Figure 3.2: Non-decent homes in the private sector, 1996, 2001 and 2003



Base: Private sector households

3.8 Since 2001 the percentage of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes has fallen from 43% to 37%, however there has only been a relatively small reduction in the number of households of around 100,000. This effect is the result of a significant increase in the total number of vulnerable households in the private sector from 2.7 million to 2.8 million. This is in part due to changes in the benefit system with the introduction of the child tax credit and the working tax credit leading to an increase in the total number of benefit recipients and therefore vulnerable households.

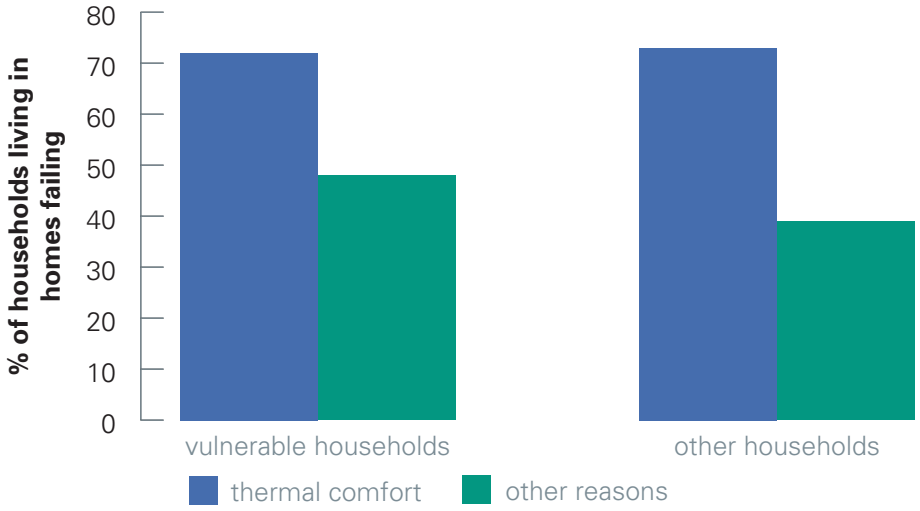
Reasons for failing decent homes standard

3.9 To be defined as decent a home must meet four criteria: fitness, repair, modern facilities and services and thermal comfort (see Chapter 2). If a home fails on one or more of the criteria it is defined as non-decent.

3.10 The majority of non-decent homes do not provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort and this is true for both vulnerable and non-vulnerable households with just over 70% of non-decent homes failing for this reason, Figure 3.3. However, vulnerable households are more likely to experience problems relating to more than one criterion and only 52% of non-decent homes occupied by vulnerable households fail on thermal comfort alone compared to 61% of other households.

3.11 Vulnerable households are more likely to be occupying accommodation that is failing to meet the required standards on the other criteria (fitness, repair, or modern facilities and services), 48% compared with 39% of other households, Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Reasons for failing decent homes in the private sector by vulnerability, 2003

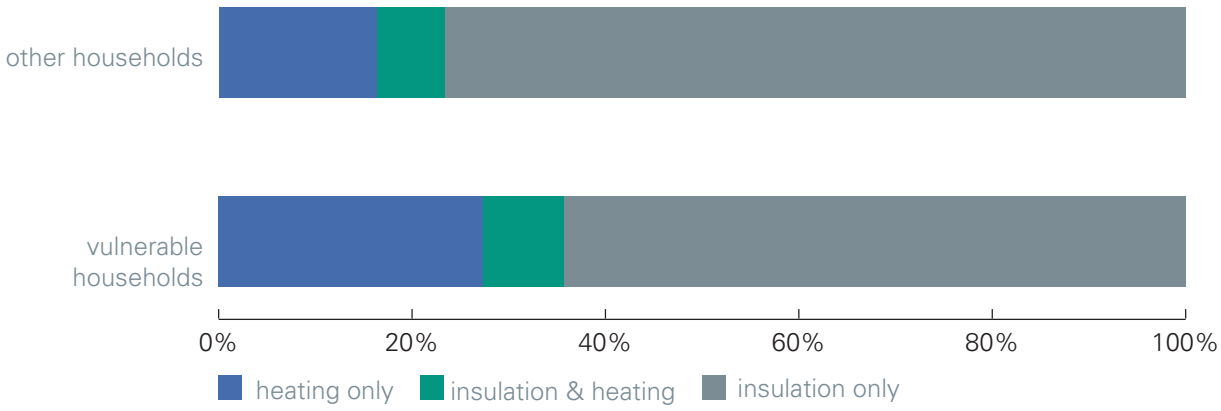


Base: Private sector households living in non-decent homes

Note: Some homes may fail on both categories therefore totals will add to more than 100%

3.12 The thermal comfort criterion of the decent home standard requires a home to have efficient heating and effective insulation. The overriding reason for failing on this criterion is the lack of adequate insulation in both vulnerable and non-vulnerable households, Figure 3.4. However, over one third (35%) of vulnerable households who fail this criterion fail on grounds of inadequate heating systems compared to less than a quarter (23%) of other households.

Figure 3.4: Reasons for private sector homes failing the thermal comfort criterion by vulnerability, 2003



Base: Private sector households living in homes failing thermal comfort criterion.

Costs to make decent

3.13 Vulnerable households living in non-decent homes on average face greater costs to make their homes decent, £8,618 compared to an average of £7,340 for other households in the private sector, Table 3.3.[10] A key factor is the greater likelihood of vulnerable households facing problems associated with the repair, modernisation or fitness of their home which tend to be more costly than improvements required to meet the thermal comfort criterion. For vulnerable households living in homes which require these types of work, the average cost to make decent is £15,647. These costs are very similar to those for other private sector households.

Table 3.3: Costs to make decent in the private housing sector, 2003

	vulnerable households	other households	all private sector households
non-decent homes	**£8,618**	**£7,340**	**£7,613**
homes failing thermal comfort	£2,155	£1,956	£1,994
homes failing on fitness, modernisations, repair	£15,647	£15,645	£15,645

Base: all private sector households

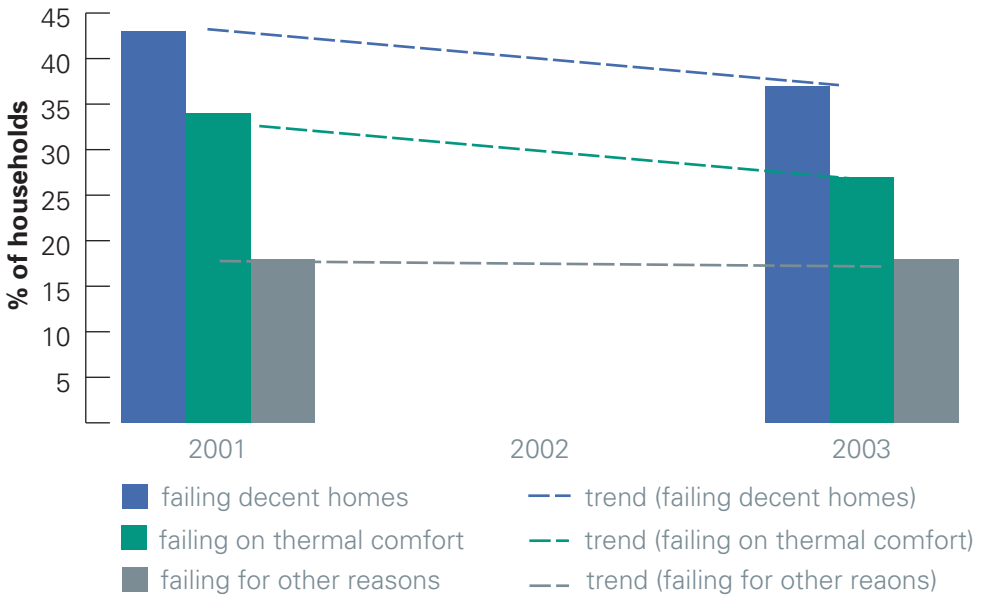
Improvement since 2001

3.14 The overall reduction in the number of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes can be largely attributed to improvements in thermal efficiency, Figure 3.5. In 2001 33% of homes were failing on grounds of thermal comfort compared to 27% in 2003. This is a reduction of 140,000 homes failing on thermal comfort, from 900,000 to around 760,000. This is likely to be the result of a combination of private investment as well as substantial public support through schemes such as Warm Front.

3.15 There appears to have been no change in the proportion of non-decent homes failing due to other reasons, which has remained constant at around 18% (or 500,000 homes). This does not mean that no work on modernisation, fitness or repair has taken place, rather that improvement took place at the same rate as deterioration in condition.

[10] This indicates a total outstanding cost of work to make private sector vulnerable households' homes decent at April 2003 of £9.1billion. In terms of necessary expenditure to address these problems however the picture is complex with ongoing deterioration and improvement activity (including some demolition where appropriate) across these homes and with changes to the vulnerability status of the occupants (as a consequence of moving home, changes in circumstances and mortality).

Figure 3.5: Reasons for private sector vulnerable households' homes being non-decent, 2001 and 2003



Base: Private sector vulnerable households

Note: Some homes may fail on thermal comfort and for other reasons.

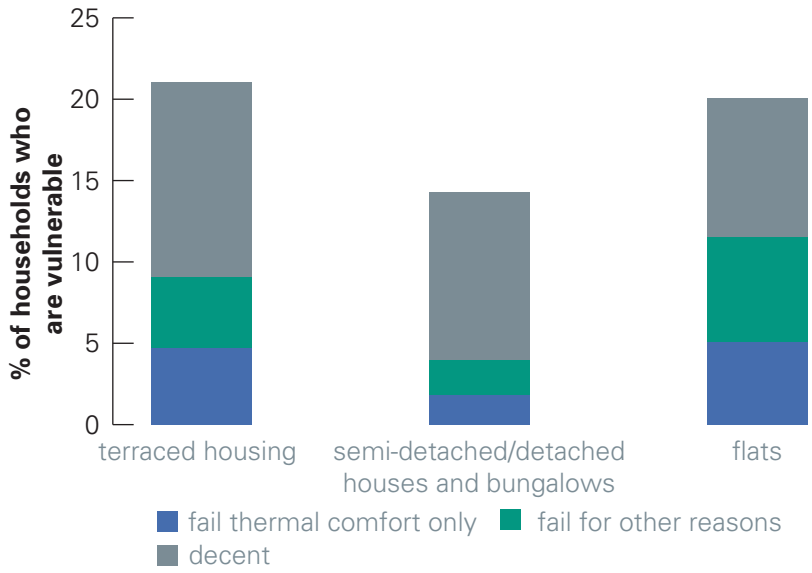
Housing characteristics

Type of home

3.16 Around 1.4 million vulnerable households in the private sector (50%) live in bungalows, semi-detached or detached homes whilst another 1 million live in terraced housing. The remaining 380,000 vulnerable households live in flats.

3.17 Terraced housing and flats have the highest concentrations of vulnerable households; around 20% of households occupying terraced houses or flats compared to only 15% of households living in other houses, Figure 3.6. In addition vulnerable households living in terraced housing or flats are more likely to be living in non-decent homes than those living in bungalows, semi-detached or detached housing. However, for non-decent homes, the likelihood of failing the fitness, repair or modernisation criteria does not vary significantly in different dwelling types.

Figure 3.6: Private sector vulnerable households by dwelling type, 2003



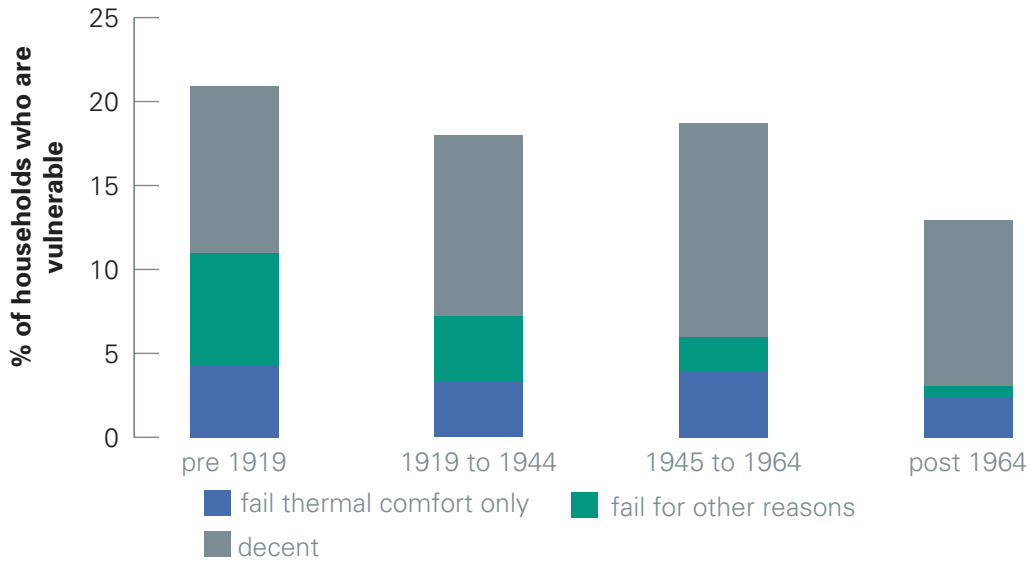
Base: all private sector households

Note: homes failing for other reasons may also fail on thermal comfort.

Age of home

3.18 It is households living in private homes built before 1964 that are most likely to be vulnerable, Figure 3.7. Around 19% of pre-1964 homes are occupied by vulnerable households compared to only 13% of homes built since 1964. However, the likelihood of vulnerable households' homes being non-decent is highest for the oldest properties, primarily because these homes are more likely to fail the repair, fitness or modernisation criteria. The incidence of poor thermal comfort is fairly evenly distributed across vulnerable households' homes built before 1964.

Figure 3.7: Percentage of private sector households by the age of dwelling, 2003



Base: all private sector households

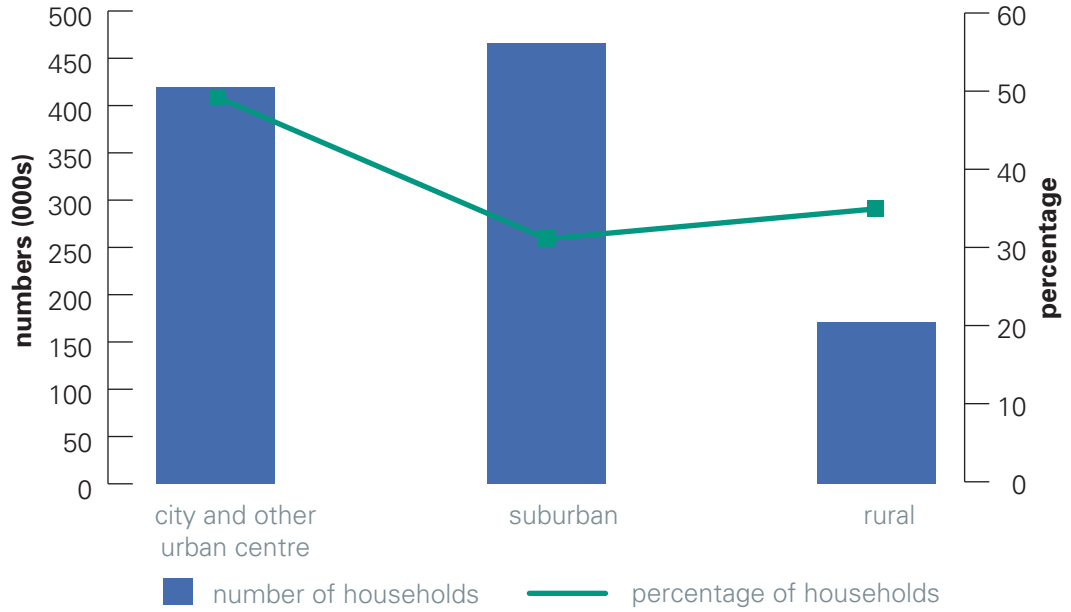
Note: homes failing for other reasons may also fail on thermal comfort.

Where vulnerable households live

Urban and rural

3.19 Of the 1.1million vulnerable households who live in non-decent homes 44% reside in suburban areas while almost 40% live in cities and other urban centres. The preponderance of suburban locations however simply reflects where the majority of the population live. Vulnerable households residing in suburban or rural areas are less likely to be living in non-decent homes (31% and 35% respectively), Figure 3.8. Vulnerable households are most likely to live in non-decent homes if they reside in city or other urban centres, 49%.

Figure 3.8: Number and percentage of vulnerable private sector households living in non-decent homes by urban, suburban or rural, 2003

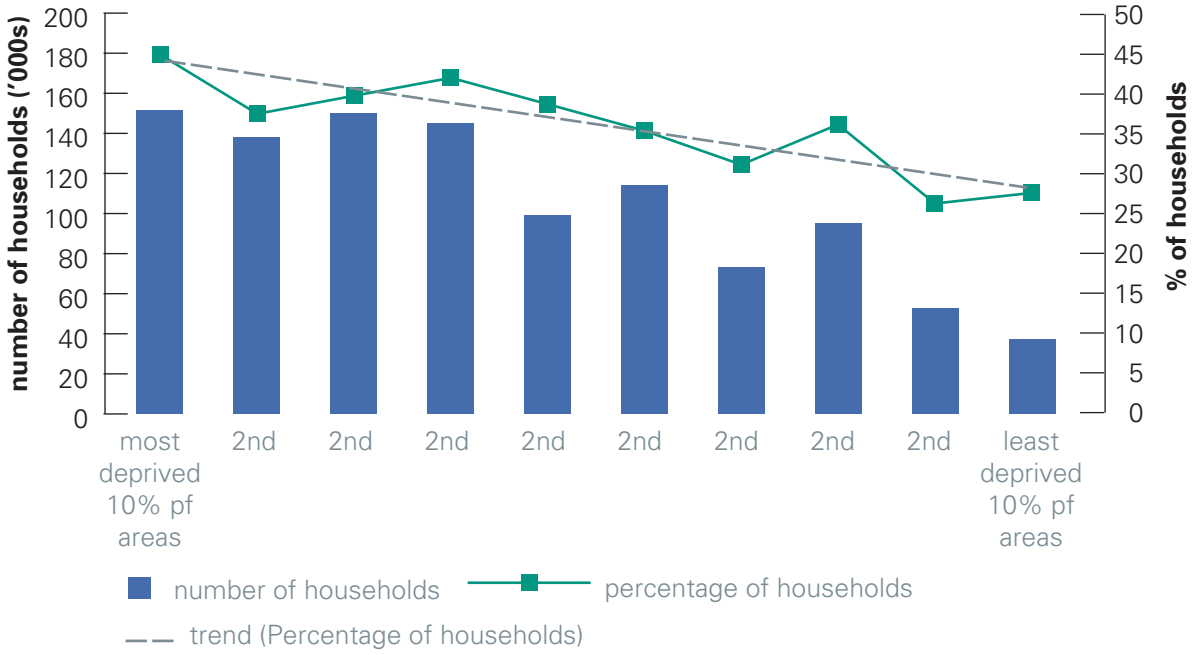


Base: Private sector vulnerable households

Deprivation

3.20 As might be expected, vulnerable households are much more likely to reside in the more deprived local areas, but they are also much more likely to live in non-decent homes if they do so, Figure 3.9. There are 4 times as many vulnerable households living in non-decent homes in the 10% most deprived areas compared to the 10% least deprived. Furthermore 45% of vulnerable households in the most deprived areas live in non-decent homes compared to less than 30% in the least deprived areas.

Figure 3.9: Percentage and number of private sector vulnerable households living in non-decent homes by ranked level of deprivation of area, 2003



Base: private sector vulnerable households

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output Areas, ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2004) and grouped into ten equal numbers of areas

3.21 There is a concentration of vulnerable households living in non-decent homes in the 88 Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) areas. Here vulnerable households represent 21% of all private sector households compared with other areas where vulnerable households represent 14% of all private sector households. In addition in the 88 NRF areas, the vulnerable private households are more likely to occupy non-decent homes (41% compared to only 34% elsewhere). Moreover, the non-decent homes of the vulnerable in the NRF areas are on average more expensive to improve (£9,256 compared to £7,962 in other areas), primarily because they are more likely to be non-decent on the repair, fitness or modernisation criteria.

3.22 Private sector households are more likely to be vulnerable if they live in northern regions, where 21% are so compared to only 14% in south east regions and 16% elsewhere, Figure 3.10. However there is no significant difference in the incidence of non-decency among these vulnerable households across these three broad regions.

Figure 3.10: Regional distribution of vulnerable and other households in the private sector

Base: Private sector households and vulnerable private sector households

Market conditions

3.23 While only 13% of private sector households in 'high' demand areas are vulnerable the figure is around 20% for those households in 'moderate' or 'low to negligible' demand areas, Figure 3.11. Furthermore, vulnerable households living in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand are more likely to live in non-decent homes (around 42%) than those living in areas of moderate (38%) or 'high' demand (34%).

Figure 3.11: Percentage of private sector households who are vulnerable and who live in non-decent homes by level of demand in the area, 2003

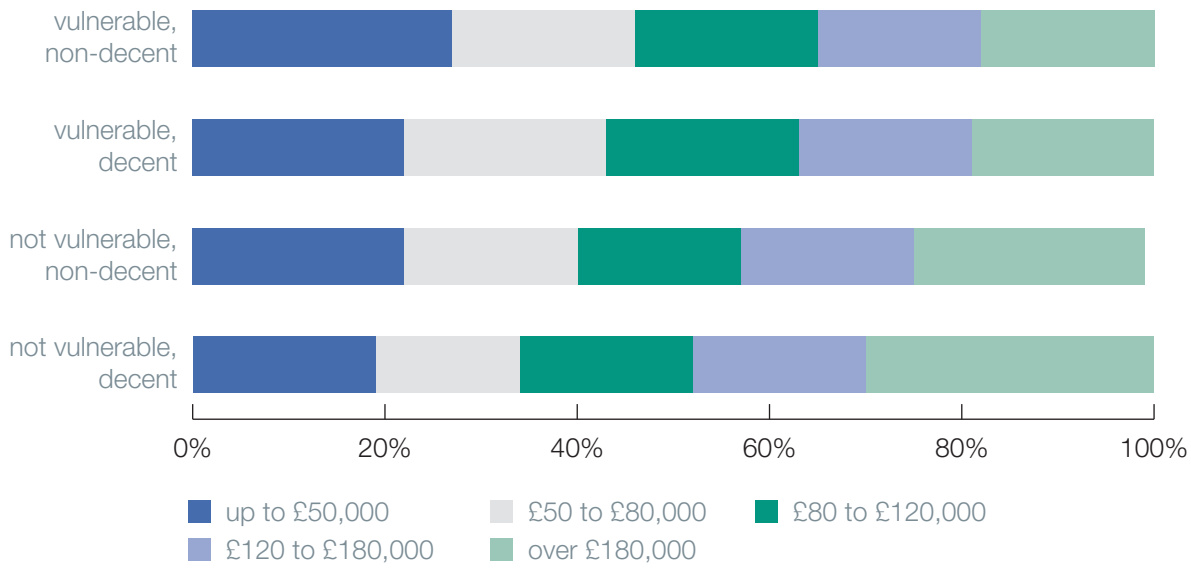
Base: all private sector households and all private sector vulnerable households

Equity in homes

3.24 Some 2.2 million vulnerable households (78% of all private sector vulnerable households) own their homes. Although they are much more likely to own outright (52% of vulnerable homeowners do so) than other homeowners (38%) they nevertheless tend to have less equity than their non-vulnerable counterparts. The amount of equity held by a homeowner is the difference between the value of their home and the amount outstanding on any loan secured against it.[11]

3.25 Vulnerable homeowners living in non-decent homes tend to have least equity, Figure 3.12. Around 200,000 (27%) of vulnerable homeowners in non-decent homes have equity in their homes of 50,000 or less.[12] While 36% of this group have over 120,000 worth of equity, this compares to 46% of non-vulnerable homeowners living in decent homes.

Figure 3.12: Vulnerable home owners, equity and decent homes, 2003



Base: all households in owner occupation

3.26 The very modest circumstances of most vulnerable homeowners will be one factor influencing the level of equity held. These circumstances are likely to have influenced how much was borrowed for the purchase of the property or other uses and what proportion of this has been subsequently repaid.

[11] See glossary for explanation of assumptions underpinning equity calculation.

[12] These figures represent total housing equity not the amount which could be released through an equity release scheme. The amount that can be accessed varies according to the rates and conditions of different equity release schemes.

3.27 The other factor is the value of the home. In this context, the amount of equity held by vulnerable homeowners is strongly related to where they live. Vulnerable homeowners in the south east regions tend to have much higher levels of equity compared to those living elsewhere. Around 63% of those in the south east have equity of more than £120,000 compared with 38% for those in the rest of England and only 15% of vulnerable homeowners in northern regions, Figure 3.13. In contrast around 43% of vulnerable owner occupiers in the north have less than £50,000 worth of equity compared to only 6% in south east regions.

Figure 3.13: Equity of vulnerable home owners by region, 2003

Base: all vulnerable households in owner occupation

Chapter 4

General Disrepair

4.1 Homes consist of a wide range of elements that tend to deteriorate over time and with use and therefore require regular maintenance and periodic repair or replacement. Almost 40% of the housing stock is sixty years or more old and more than 20% is over eighty years old. The overall state of repair of much of the housing stock is therefore dependent on the level of work carried out to maintain, repair and improve it. This chapter describes the nature and extent of disrepair in the housing stock in 2003.

4.2 'Repair' is also a criterion of the decent homes standard which addresses elements of the property that need replacing or major repair and that are older than their expected lifetime. This chapter assesses the level of disrepair which covers, not only existing faults requiring any treatment (repair or replacement), but includes replacement of any elements that will be needed within the next ten years.

Disrepair includes major and minor faults to the elements of the home covering:

- the external fabric
- the interior fabric
- amenities and services
- the building structure
- any common areas (flats only)
- any shared facilities (flats only)

The specific elements included in each of the above are listed at Tables 1 and 2.

4.3 The chapter first examines the incidence of existing faults to the home's external fabric, internal fabric and other parts and to the common parts of blocks of flats, highlighting the main changes since 1996. It then uses standardised repair costs as a relative measure of the amount of disrepair to assess how this varies across different sections of the housing stock, in the distinct housing sectors, and with the level of deprivation and different local housing market conditions.

4.4 Some households are more likely than others to live in homes in 'serious' disrepair (the worst 10% of homes). This aspect is covered in Chapter 8.

Summary

- The number of homes with interior, exterior or structural faults has reduced since 1996, although there has been no significant improvement since 2001 (which reflects the trend in homes failing the decent homes repair, fitness and modern facilities and services criteria reported in Chapter 2).

- While the average (mean) cost of repair is £41/m^2, some 70% of homes require less expenditure than this. Half of all homes need £17m^2 or less, while 10% of homes in the most serious disrepair require have costs of more than £110/m^2.

- The cost of repair increases with the age of the property. Homes built since 1980 have average costs of £11/m^2 while those built before 1919 have average costs of £65/m^2.

- Older properties exhibit the greatest differences in the level of disrepair between property types – amongst homes built before 1945, the average repair cost for small terraced houses is around twice that of detached houses.

- Of the four housing tenures, RSL homes are in the best state of repair with an average (mean) cost of £31/m^2.

- Private rented homes tend to be in the worst repair with an average cost of £66/m^2. This is partly a reflection of the age profile of privately rented homes (60% built before 1945). However even amongst older properties, privately rented homes tend to have the highest repair cost.

- In cities and other urban centres the cost to repair is twice that of other areas (£27/m^2 compared to around £15/m^2). This is largely a consequence of the prevalence of older private housing in these centres – the repair cost for social housing is similar across all types of locations.

- Homes in the most deprived (NRF) districts have higher levels of disrepair compared to other districts (£45/m^2 compared to 38/m^2), primarily reflecting the higher proportion of older stock found in the most deprived districts.

Incidence of disrepair

4.5 Almost two thirds of homes (65%) have faults to the exterior fabric, most commonly to the wall finish and to windows and their frames, Table 4.1. Generally speaking, homes are less likely to have faults to the internal fabric (39%) and these are most commonly associated with ceilings (23%).

Table 4.1: Incidence of faults to homes, 2003

exterior fabric		interior fabric	
wall finish	28%	ceilings	23%
windows/frames	25%	walls	19%
roof covering	21%	doors	13%
chimney stack	20%	floors	10%
gutters/downpipe	17%	**any faults to interior fabric**	**39%**
doors/frames	17%		
fascias	16%	**structure**	
wall structure	8%	any structural faults	14%
stacks/waste	7%		
valley gutter	7%	**services and amenities**	
roof structure	6%	fences	20%
bays	4%	kitchen	17%
dpc	4%	boundary walls	13%
porches	3%	bathroom	12%
conservatories	2%	primary heating	11%
party parapett	2%	boiler/distribution	6%
dormers	1%	other heating	3%
balconies	1%	hot water	3%
any faults to exterior fabric	**65%**		

Base: all dwellings

Note: all fault rates quoted relate to all dwellings and not just to those with the particular element.

4.6 About a quarter (23%) of all flats have some faults in the common areas, Table 4.2. Faults associated with staircases (16%), such as missing balustrades or faulty stair treads, and faults affecting the walls (11%), for example peeling wallpaper or damaged plaster, are the most prevalent faults found in the common areas of flats. Some 42% of flats have faults to shared facilities – most commonly faults associated with landscaping (33% of all flats).

Table 4.2: Faults to share facilities and common areas, 2003

common areas (flats only)		shared facilities (flats only)	
staircases	16%		
walls	11%	landscaping	33%
ceilings	9%	stores/common room	13%
floors	8%	communal parking	13%
access doors	7%	surfaces/fences	12%
access windows	6%	common electrics	6%
access lighting	4%		
balustrades	3%		
any faults to common areas	**23%**	**any faults to shared facilities**	**42%**

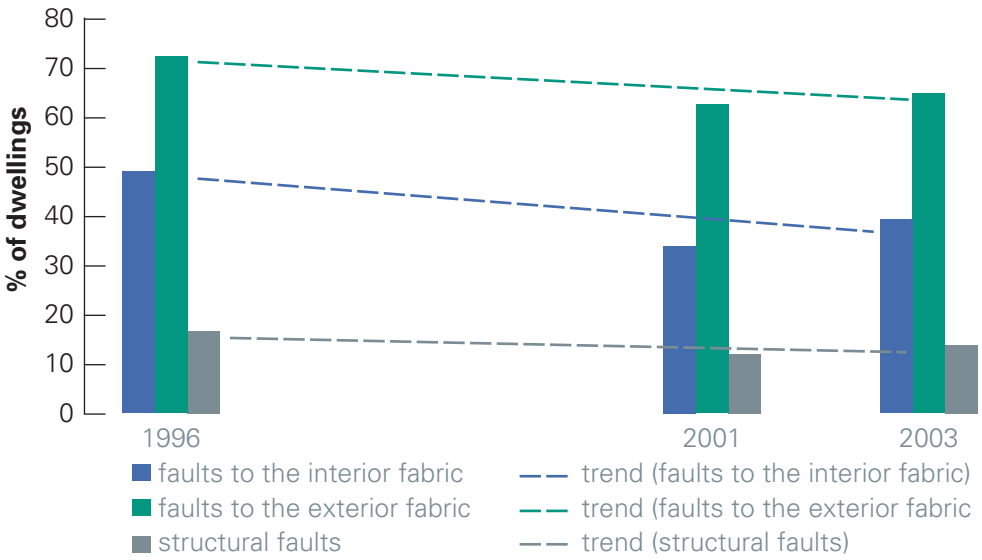
Base: all flats

Note: Figures relate to all flats not just those with common areas or shared facilities

Change since 1996

4.7 Just focusing on problems with the interior and exterior fabric and with the structure of the property, the incidence of faults has decreased since 1996, Figure 4.1. However since 2001 the number of faults has not changed significantly. This finding mirrors that of Chapter 2 where it was found that the number of homes non-decent on the combined criteria of repair, fitness and modern facilities and services has remained the same since 2001.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of homes with faults, 1996, 2001 and 2003



Base: all dwellings

4.8 As in 1996 and 2001 the private housing sector continues to have a higher percentage of homes with faults to the external fabric than the social sector, (66% compared to 62% in the social sector) and the social sector continues to have a higher percentage with faults to the internal fabric (45% compared to 38% in the private sector). This is likely to reflect differing priorities as regards repairs in the two sectors, with social landlords giving greater emphasis to keeping properties externally sound and watertight.

The extent of disrepair

4.9 The incidence of faults provides a good indication as to where the main problems with disrepair occur. However it does not indicate the scale or severity of these problems. The rest of this chapter uses standardised repair costs to indicate the spend required to rectify faults, as a means of assessing the scale of disrepair and comparing different sections of the housing stock.

Standardised repair costs include any currently required repairs plus the replacement of any elements assessed as being necessary during the next ten years to:

- the external fabric
- the interior fabric
- amenities and services
- the building structure
- any common areas
- any shared facilities

These costs are based on standardised building prices (i.e. do not take into account regional variation in the costs of work) and are calculated per square meter of floor area (m^2). This enables homes in different locations and of different tenure and size to be directly compared in terms of their degree of disrepair. A detailed definition of repair costs is included in the Glossary.

4.10 There is substantial variation in the level of disrepair across the housing stock. While the average (mean) cost of repair is £41/m^2, half the housing stock requires £17/m^2 or less (the median value of repair) and this includes one quarter of the housing stock which has negligible levels of disrepair (less than £2/m^2). Around 70% of the stock requires less than the average (mean) cost to repair. At the other end of the scale 10% homes with the most serious level of disrepair have costs of more than £110/m^2.

4.11 The nature of the distribution of levels of disrepair means that the average (mean) cost cannot be considered to be 'typical' of the housing stock and comparisons based on the average can be overly influenced by a relatively small number of homes with very high costs in a particular section of the housing stock, which distort comparisons of 'typical' levels of disrepair. But it is also of interest to know where these 'worst' homes are concentrated. To address these concerns, firstly, the median cost (that is, the value where half the stock has a higher and half have a lower general disrepair cost) is used in preference as a measure of 'typical' repair costs. Secondly, percentile values of repair costs are used to illustrate and compare the distribution of the level of disrepair in different sections of the stock: with, for example, the 90th percentile value indicating the threshold (in £/m^2) for the 10% of homes in the worst state of disrepair in a particular section of the stock.[13]

4.12 Table 4.3 summarises the 'typical' (median) and average (mean) repair costs for homes by a range of characteristics. Both measures show that there are significant differences in the level of disrepair according to property age, type, tenure, location and whether vacant.

[13] For more details see the technical report at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1155269

Table 4.3: Summary of median and mean general repair costs, 2003

general repair costs (£/m²)

	median	mean		median	mean
age of dwelling			**vacancy**		
pre 1919	39	65	occupied	16	39
1919 to 1944	31	57	vacant	42	88
1945 to 1964	21	41			
1965 to 1980	11	28	**overall region of England**		
post 1980	0*	11	northern regions	18	41
			south east regions	19	42
dwelling type			rest of England	15	40
small terraced house	25	50			
medium/large terraced house	26	46	**urban, suburbanor rural**		
semi-detached house	22	44	urban	27	51
detached house	5	24	suburban	14	36
bungalow	12	48	rural	15	40
converted flat	40	79			
purpose built flat, low rise	10	28	**Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (88) districts**		
purpose built flat, high rise	13	29	other districts	14	38
			NRF districts	22	45
tenure					
owner occupied	15	38	**housing market conditions**		
private rented	31	66	areas of negligible/limited demand	18	45
local authority	22	43	areas of moderate demand	19	43
RSL	9	31	areas of high demand	14	37
			all dwellings	**17**	**41**

Base: all dwellings

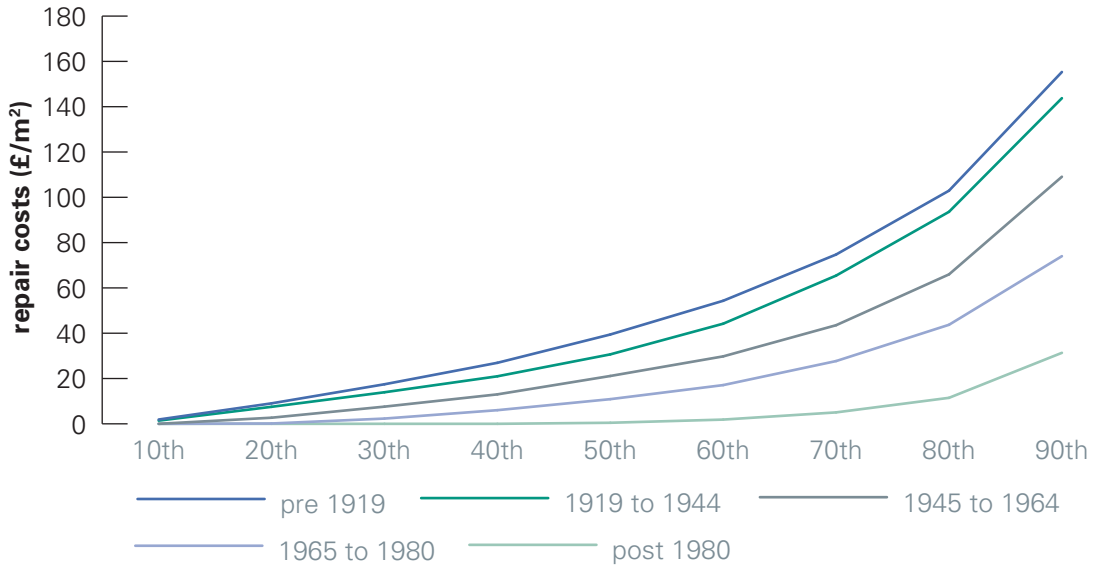
Note: The median repair cost for post 1980 dwellings is less than £0.50/m².

Age and type of housing

4.13 Average repair costs increase sharply with age of the property, from £11/m² for homes built since 1980 up to £65/m² for those built before 1919, Table 4.3. Median costs also rise sharply with age, although not as fast as mean costs, indicating that homes with very high repair costs tend to be older properties.

4.14 The greatest levels of disrepair are concentrated in homes built before 1945, Figure 4.2. The worst 10% of the 1919-45 housing stock has a level of disrepair that is not substantially different to the worst of the oldest (pre-1919) stock. The worst 10% of the pre-1919 housing stock has a level of disrepair in excess of £155/m², with worst homes built 1919-45 in excess of £144/m². These compare to £31/m² for the worst 10% of homes built since 1980.

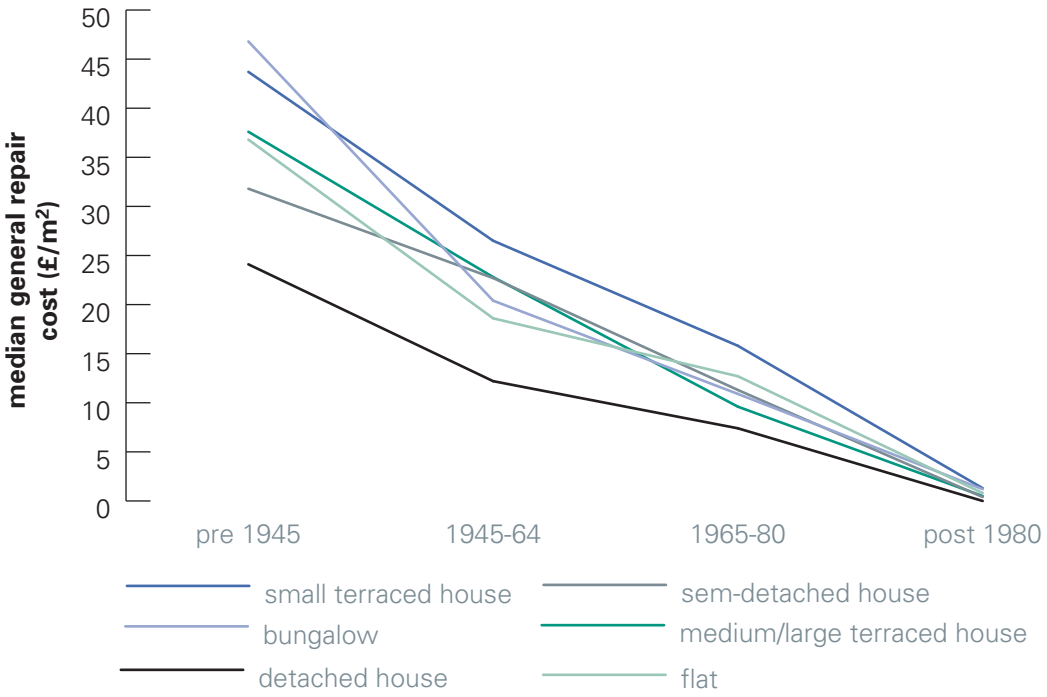
Figure 4.2: Distribution of general disrepair by dwelling age, 2003



Base: all dwellings

4.15 Detached houses of all ages up to 1980 consistently have the lowest median repair costs with small terraced houses tending to have the highest, Figure 4.3. Older properties also exhibit greater differences in the level of disrepair for distinct types of homes. For homes built before 1945, the level of disrepair for small terraced houses is typically around twice that of detached houses. To some extent this may reflect original differences in construction standards as well as the level of subsequent maintenance work as these properties have aged.

Figure 4.3: Median general repair costs (£/m^2) by age and dwelling type, 2003



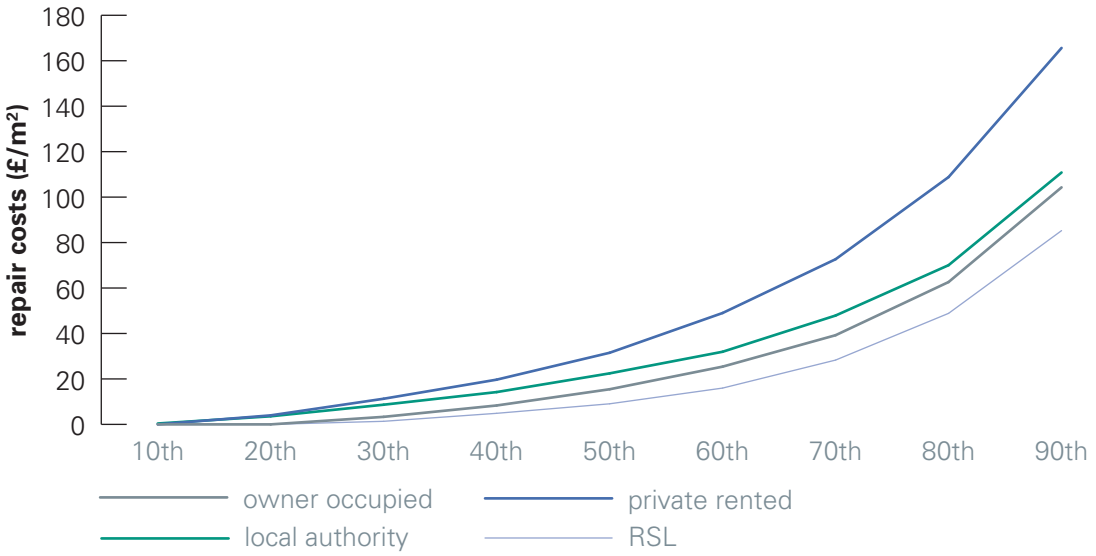
Base: all dwellings

Tenure

4.16 Typically there is little difference in the level of disrepair of private and social sector housing (median repair costs of around £16/m^2 to £17/m^2). However, this disguises important differences in the individual tenures within the two sectors. RSL homes are typically in the best state of repair (median value of £9/m^2) while private rented homes tend to be in the worst state of repair (£31/m^2), Table 4.3.

4.17 Homes with very high levels of disrepair are also disproportionately concentrated among the privately rented stock, Figure 4.4. The worst 10% of private rented homes has much higher levels of disrepair than the worst 10% of the stock in the other tenure groups (£165/m^2 or more, compared with £85 -111/m^2 or more in the other tenures).

Figure 4.4: Distribution of general repair costs (£/m^2) by tenure, 2003

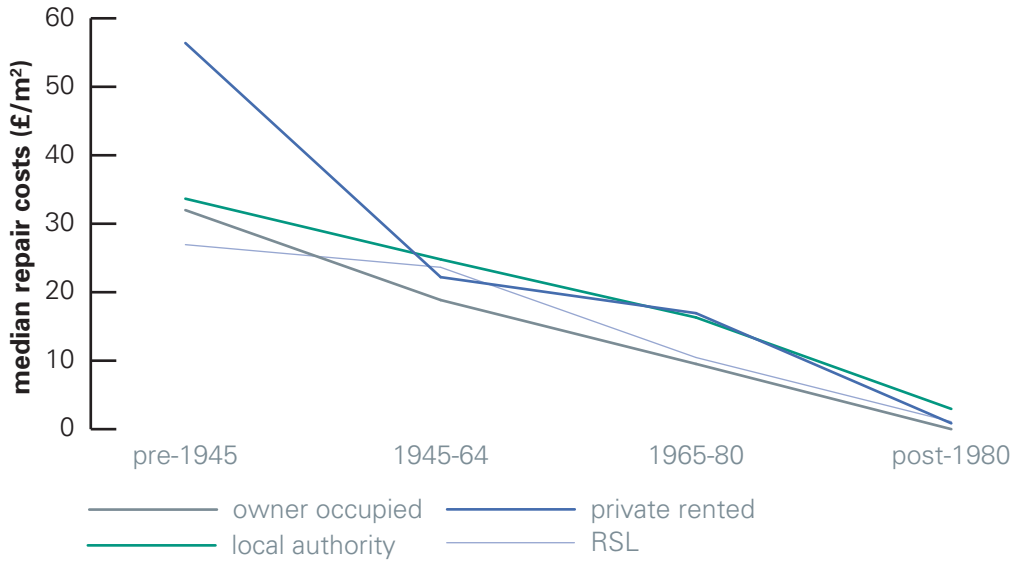


Base: all dwellings

4.18 This difference between tenures reflects to a large extent the age composition of the stock. Some 60% of private rented homes were built before 1945 which tend to have much higher repair costs than more recently built homes.

4.19 However while there is relatively little difference in typical levels of disrepair across the tenures for homes built since 1945, those built before then tend to have much higher costs if they are privately rented, Figure 4.5. This suggests that the worst of the older private stock tends to be rented rather than occupied by its owners and/or such properties do not benefit from the same level of investment in repair and maintenance.

Figure 4.5: Median general repair cost (£/m^2) by tenure and age, 2003



Base: all dwellings

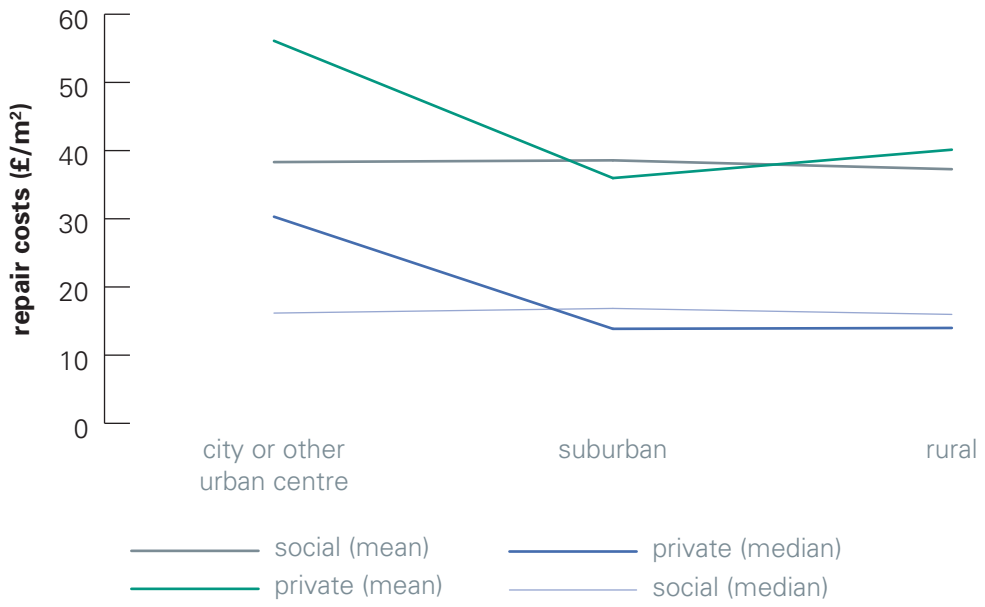
4.20 Across the whole stock and within each tenure, vacant homes have significantly higher repair costs than their occupied counterparts – typical (median) costs are £42/m^2 compared with £16/m^2 for occupied homes.

Urban and rural

4.21 The level of disrepair is substantially higher in cities and other urban centres compared to either suburban or rural locations. Typical (median) costs to repair in the urban centres (£27/m^2) are almost twice those found elsewhere (£14-15/m^2) and this overall pattern is mirrored in average (mean) costs. However the greater level of disrepair in the city and urban centres is primarily a feature of private sector housing, Figure 4.6. The level of disrepair within social sector housing is similar across all locations.

4.22 The key factor in the higher levels of disrepair in the private sector housing of city and urban centres is the concentration of older property. Traditional rural locations characterised by almost exclusively private sector and older properties also have high levels of disrepair but these are not reflected in the overall picture for rural locations to the same extent because of many newer developments – see Chapter 1.

Figure 4.6: Average repair costs by the type of area

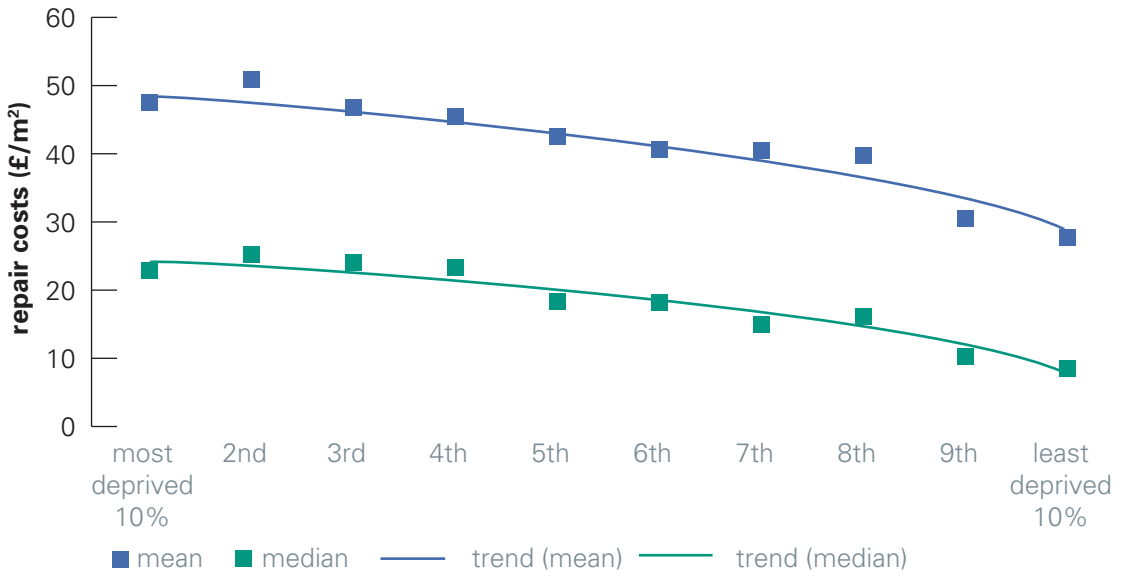


Base: all dwellings

Deprivation

4.23 Homes in the most deprived local areas tend to have greater levels of disrepair than elsewhere, although the differences are not as great as might be expected, Figure 4.7. While the typical (median) repair in the most deprived 10% of local areas (£22/m^2) is three times that found in the least deprived areas (£8/m^2) it is not substantially greater than the national average (£17/m^2). The same pattern applies with average (mean) costs (£47/m^2 for the most deprived compared to the national average of £42/m^2).

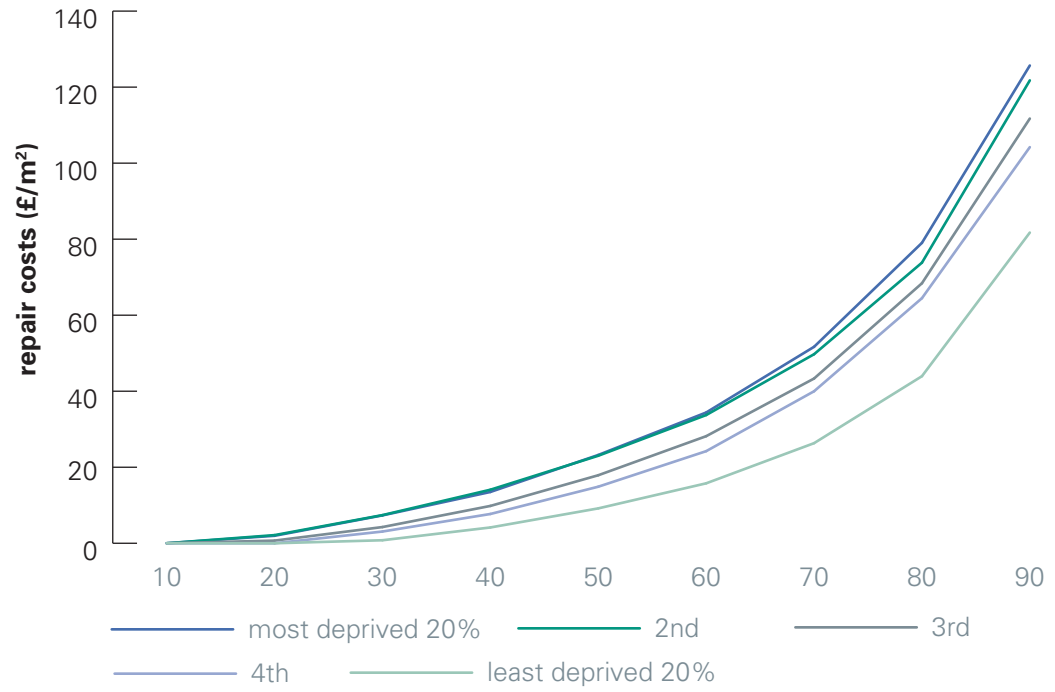
Figure 4.7: Repair cost £/m^2) by level of deprivation



Base: all dwellings

4.24 This is because the key difference in the level of disrepair is between the 20% least deprived (or most affluent) areas compared with elsewhere, Figure 4.8. There is little difference in the level or distribution of disrepair among the most deprived 40% of local areas and differences are not substantial anywhere outside of the most affluent 20% of areas. The typical (median) repair cost in the latter areas is £9/m^2, half of that found elsewhere.

Figure 4.8: Distribution of general repair costs (£/m^2) by level of deprivation, 2003

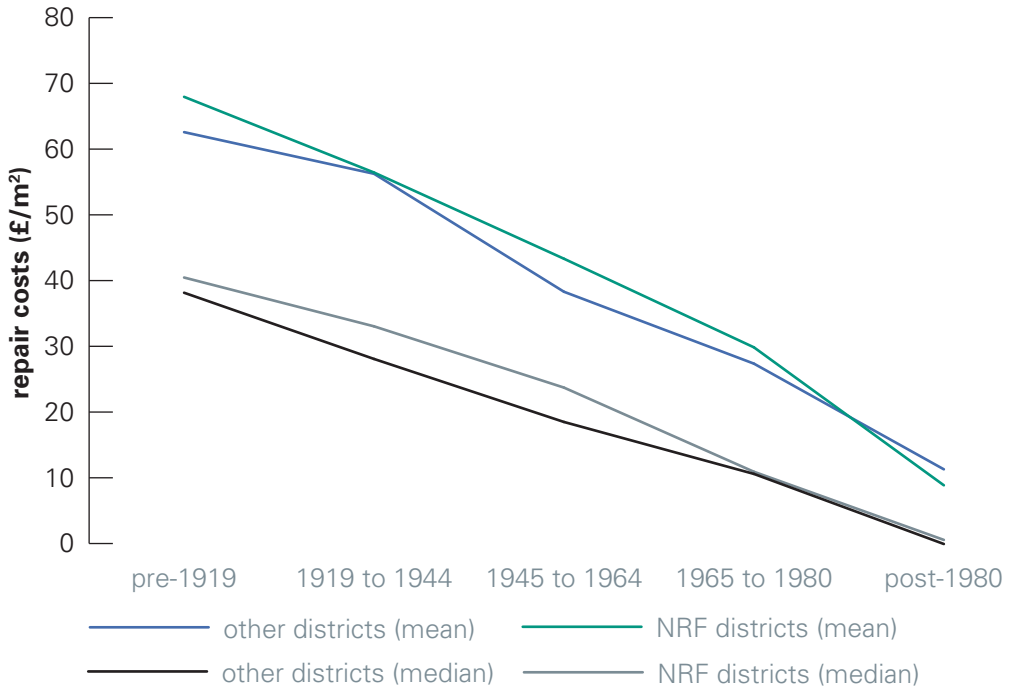


Base: all dwellings

4.25 Homes in the most deprived (NRF funded) districts have higher average (mean) repair costs than those in other districts (£45/m^2 compared to £38/m^2), and this is also reflected in the differences in the typical (median) repair cost for homes in these districts (£22/m^2 compared to £14/m^2).

4.26 However, there is little difference in the level of disrepair within similarly aged properties in the most deprived districts compared with elsewhere, suggesting that the overall difference in repair costs reflects the higher proportion of older stock in the NRF funded districts (see Chapter 1), Figure 4.9.

Figure 4.9: Average repair costs (£/m^2) by NRF districts and dwelling age, 2003



Base: all dwellings

Market Conditions

4.27 The cost of repair has no direct relationship with the level of demand, with properties in areas of 'high' demand having an average general repair cost of £37/m^2 which is not too dissimilar to £45/m^2 for those in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand.

4.28 However, in areas of more extreme low demand there does appear to be a link with increased problems of disrepair. Homes in areas where property takes 27 or more weeks to sell have an average repair cost of £72/m^2, whereas those taking less than 9 weeks to sell have an average repair cost of almost half this value (£38/m^2).

Chapter 5

Energy Efficiency

5.1 The energy efficiency of homes is an important factor in the provision of comfort for occupants and, particularly important for poorer households, the cost of heating their homes. It is also a key factor in the context of combating climate change through limiting carbon dioxide emissions. These strands are brought together in the Government's sustainable energy policies.

5.2 This chapter assesses the energy efficiency of homes using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). The decent homes standard (Chapter 2) includes properties that do not provide a 'reasonable degree of thermal comfort'. This covers a broad spectrum of homes from those that are energy inefficient to those above average in their energy efficiency. SAP ratings enable the most inefficient (SAP rating less than 30) as well as the most efficient (SAP rating 75 or more) to be separately identified. Chapter 8 looks at disadvantaged households and the extent to which they live in energy inefficient homes.

SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) is an index of energy efficiency. It is based on calculated annual space and water heating costs for a standard heating regime for a home and is expressed on a scale of 1 (highly energy inefficient) to 120 (highly energy efficient).

- Overall, the energy efficiency of the housing stock has improved by 6 SAP points since 1996 and now averages over 51, with twice the number of homes with insulated cavity walls and with 150mm loft insulation than existed in 1996.

- Some 87% of homes now have central heating installed, 79% of homes have gas central heating.

- For homes with SAP below 50 there is a marked increase in the number of owners and tenants who consider their heating 'ineffective' and may find it difficult to keep 'comfortably warm' during cold winter snaps.

- With typically newer, better insulated, and more efficient building types (terraced houses and flats), the social sector has an average SAP rating of 57 compared to 50 in the private sector. RSL properties have the highest average score of 61 while privately rented properties average only 47.

- Private sector homes in urban centres are more likely to have solid walls and poor insulation than their suburban counterparts and have on average lower SAP ratings.

- Homes in rural areas have the lowest average SAP ratings. Heating systems in these areas differ markedly from other locations and account for 95% of all oil fuelled systems and 60% of solid fuel systems.

- There is little variation in the SAP ratings of social sector homes according to the level of deprivation of the area unlike the private sector where homes with the highest SAP ratings are in the most and least deprived areas.

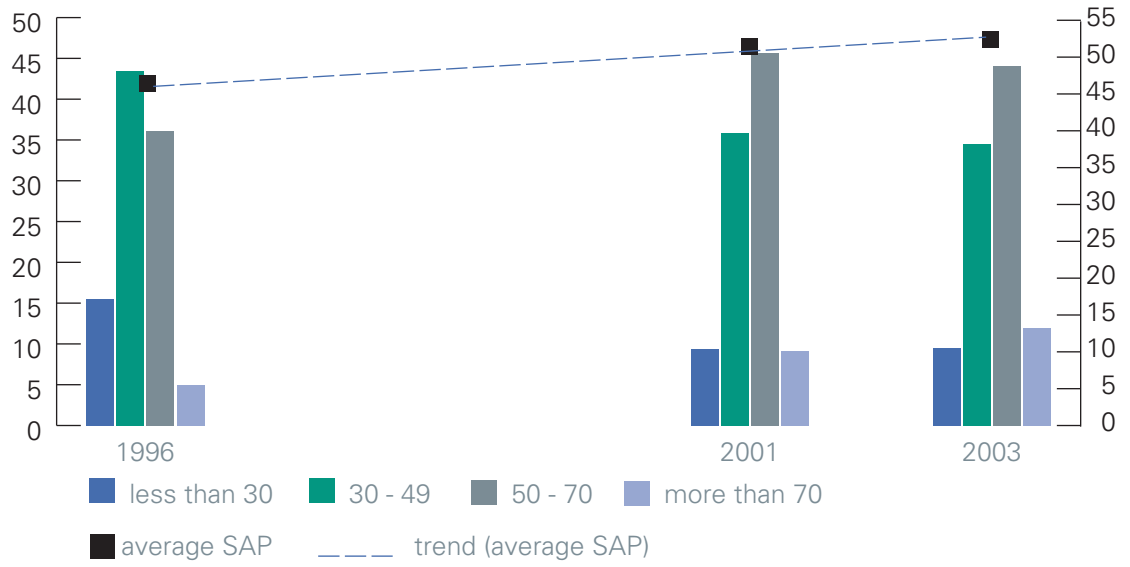
- Homes in areas of higher demand and of relative affluence are typified by larger and detached housing – factors which tend to offset energy efficiency gains from the better insulation and more effective heating systems they have installed. The pattern of housing demand reflected here is likely to contribute to the increased likelihood of exposure to low heating temperatures experienced by many as income declines with retirement.

Overall trend

5.3 The average SAP rating for the housing stock in 2003 is 51.4; this has progressively increased from 45.5 in 1996 and 50.6 in 2001, Figure 5.1. This rise reflects a doubling in the number of properties with insulated cavity walls, a similar increase in lofts with at least 150mm insulation and a 7% rise in homes using gas central heating since 1996.

5.4 In 2003, 9% of homes have a SAP rating less than 30 and 12% achieve a rating greater than 70. The proportion of homes with the highest SAP ratings has increased from 9% to 12% between 2001 and 2003, up from 5% in 1996, whilst the proportion below 30 has dropped from 15% in 1996, Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of average SAP ratings, 1996 – 2003



Base: all dwellings, 1996 to 2003

Insulation and heating

5.5 Effective insulation and heating are the key factors to improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock. Good energy efficiency, indicated by a high SAP rating, is characterised by insulated cavity walls, a high level of loft insulation and central heating, particularly where gas fuels the heating system and is also used as the water heating source. For example, a typical inter-war medium sized semi detached house fulfilling these criteria has a SAP value of around 65, whereas one without any of these features may be expected to achieve a score of only 40.

Table 5.1: Energy efficiency related characteristics of homes, 2003

	number (000s)	% of all homes	average SAP	% with SAP less than 30	% with SAP greater than 70
walls:					
non-cavity wall	6,793	31.6	44	16.5	2.7
uninsulated cavity wall	9,357	43.6	51	8.2	10.7
insulated cavity wall	5,334	24.8	62	2.7	25.9
lofts:					
loft with less than 100mm insulation	6,695	31.2	45	13.8	2.9
100mm insulation or more	12,497	58.2	54	7.0	14.7
no loft	2,291	10.7	56	10.0	23.6
heating system:					
central heating	18,604	86.6	54	4.7	13.2
storage heaters	1,587	7.4	39	35.5	5.0
fixed room heating	1,241	5.8	32	43.9	2.0
portable heating only	53	0.2	9	91.7	0.0
heating fuel:					
gas fired system	18,250	84.9	54	3.9	12.3
oil fired system	815	3.8	44	15.3	5.3
solid fuel fired system	430	2.0	18	80.0	0.0
electrical system	1,989	9.3	34	44.0	4.1
all housing stock	**21,484**	**100.0**	**51**	**9.5**	**11.9**

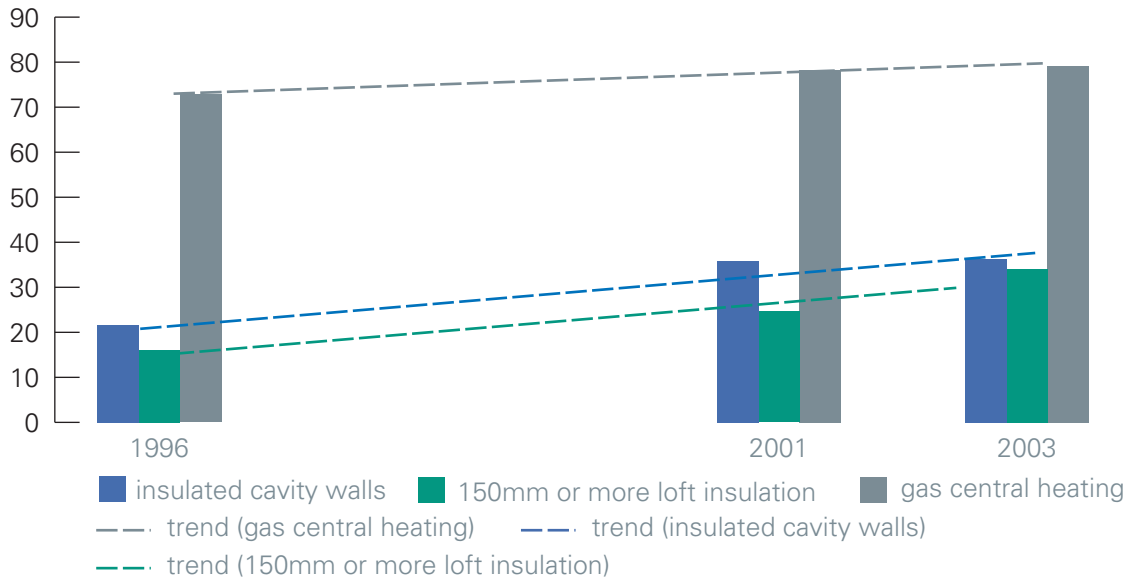
Base: all dwellings.

Cavity wall insulation

5.6 In 2003, just over 68% of homes have cavity walls and of these 36% have cavity insulation, an increase from 22% in 1996, Figure 5.2.[14] Homes with insulated cavity walls have the highest average SAP rating of 62, with 26% of these achieving a SAP rating of 70 or higher. Homes with uninsulated cavity walls have an average SAP rating of 51, 11% of which have a SAP rating of 70 or more. Homes with solid walls, however, average only 44, of which only 3% are in the highest SAP rating category.

[14] A home is considered to have cavity walls if 50% or more of the external walls are described as having cavity construction. All other dwellings have been grouped together as having non-cavity walls.

Figure 5.2: Percentage of housing stock with key energy efficiency factors, 1996 – 2003



Base: selected stock 1996 – 2003:
a) for insulated cavity walls – all dwellings with cavity walls;
b) for 150mm or more loft insulation – all dwellings with lofts;
c) for gas fired central heating – all dwellings.

Loft insulation

5.7 In 2003 around 89% of the housing stock has a loft space and 96% of these homes have some loft insulation, an increase from 93% of homes with lofts being insulated in 1996. Almost 65% of lofts have 100mm or more of loft insulation and 26% have at least 150mm.

5.8 As might be expected, those homes with more loft insulation present tend to be more energy efficient. On average homes with loft insulation of 100mm or more have an average SAP rating of 54, 8 SAP rating points more than those with less than 100mm.[15] Around 15% of homes with 100mm or more of insulation have a SAP rating of 70 or above, compared to only 3% of those with less than 100mm. Homes with no loft space also score highly, with an average SAP rating of 56. The majority of these are purpose built flats which typically have a high rating (see below).

Space and water heating

5.9 Some 87% of the housing stock is centrally heated and the most common method of heating the home is gas-fired central heating, which is present in 79% of the stock – an increase of 7 percentage points from 1996. The growth in the use of gas-fired central heating has been rapid. Prior to 1976 non central gas systems predominated. Gas

[15] The average SAP rating of dwellings with more loft insulation will also be influenced by the greater likelihood of those dwellings having other energy efficient measures.

central heating was first used in more than 50% of the stock in 1985.[16] Only 7% of homes with central heating currently use an alternative fuel to gas. Around 7% of homes have programmable heating and the vast majority of these have storage heaters. Fixed room heaters comprise 6% of space heating systems, of which 74% are fuelled by gas, 17% by electricity and 9% by solid fuel whilst in less than 1% of homes the only recorded heat source is a portable heater.

5.10 Central heating systems that provide the main source of hot water make up 83% of the stock and 92% of these use mains gas. 12% of homes have an immersion heater as the main source of hot water and the remaining 4% either have an instantaneous water heater or a dedicated boiler.

5.11 The average SAP rating for homes with central heating is 54, and these comprise 96% of all homes scoring 70 or above. Programmable heating systems average around 39, with homes using fixed heaters averaging 32. Around 45% of homes using fixed heaters as their primary heating source have a SAP rating of less than 30.

5.12 The fuel used by central heating systems is also important for energy efficiency. Homes with gas and oil fired central heating having significantly higher SAP ratings (55 and 44 respectively) than those with electric or solid fuel-based central heating systems (24 and 20 respectively).

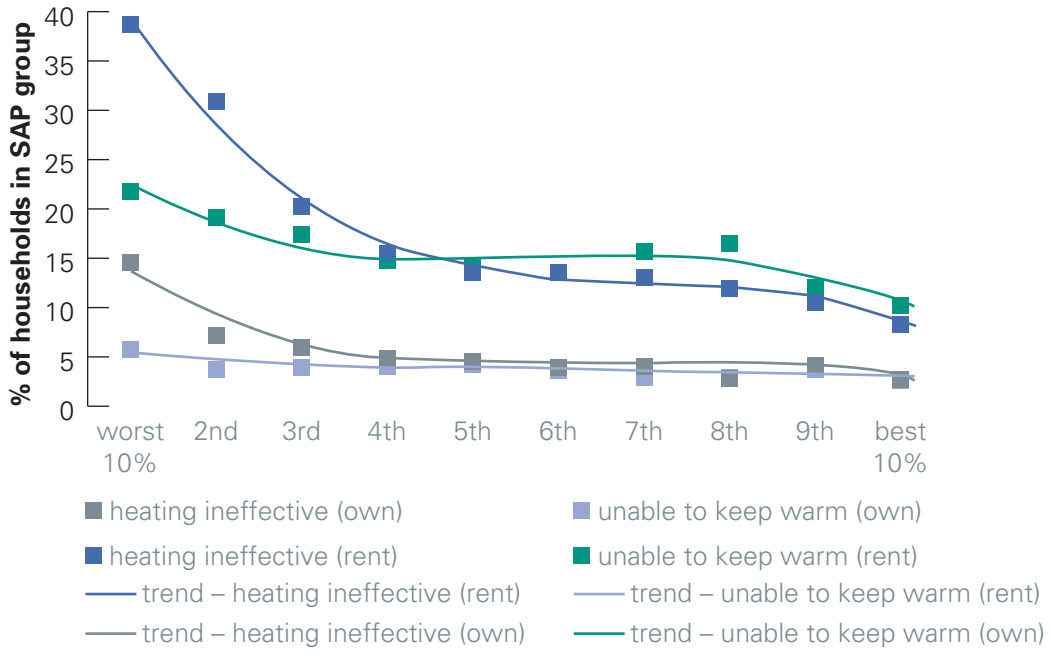
Household perceptions

5.13 As might be expected, households whose homes have a low SAP rating are more likely to consider their heating and insulation ineffective. Among the 40% of households occupying less energy efficient homes (with SAP ratings below 50), the proportion of households who consider their space heating ineffective increases significantly at progressively lower SAP ratings, Figure 5.3. Around 40% of the 0.3 million social and private tenants living in the most inefficient tenth of homes (SAP less than 32) consider their heating 'ineffective', as do 15% of the 1.4 million owner occupiers in similarly rated homes.[17] The proportion of households who consider they are unable to keep 'comfortably warm' during cold winter spells rises from 10% of tenants and 2% of owners in the most efficient tenth of homes to over 20% and 5% respectively of those occupying the most inefficient tenth of homes (a SAP rating less than 32).

[16] 2001 Domestic Energy Factfile (BR427).

[17] Figures for tenants and home owners are considered separately because, while both need to meet their fuel bills, home owners typically have much greater personal responsibility and choice (subject to their resources) regarding the energy efficiency-related measures present in their home. However, occupants' assessments (home owners and tenants) of the effectiveness of their heating systems are also likely to be related to their income – that is, their ability to meet the running cost of heating their home. Fuel poverty is jointly monitored and assessed by DTI and DEFRA at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/energy/fuelpov/index.htm.

Figure 5.3: Household views on the effectiveness of space heating in their home, by whether own or rent, 2003



Base: all households.

Notes:

Households are ranked into ten equal sized groups based on the SAP rating of their homes. The (rounded) SAP ratings defining these groups are: 32, 40, 45, 49, 52, 56, 60, 65, 72.

The 40% of households occupying less energy efficient homes (referred to in the text) are the 1st ('worst 10%) to '4th' group in the Figure.

'Heating ineffective' includes those who indicated 'not very effective' and 'not at all effective' to the question 'How effective is the heating?'.

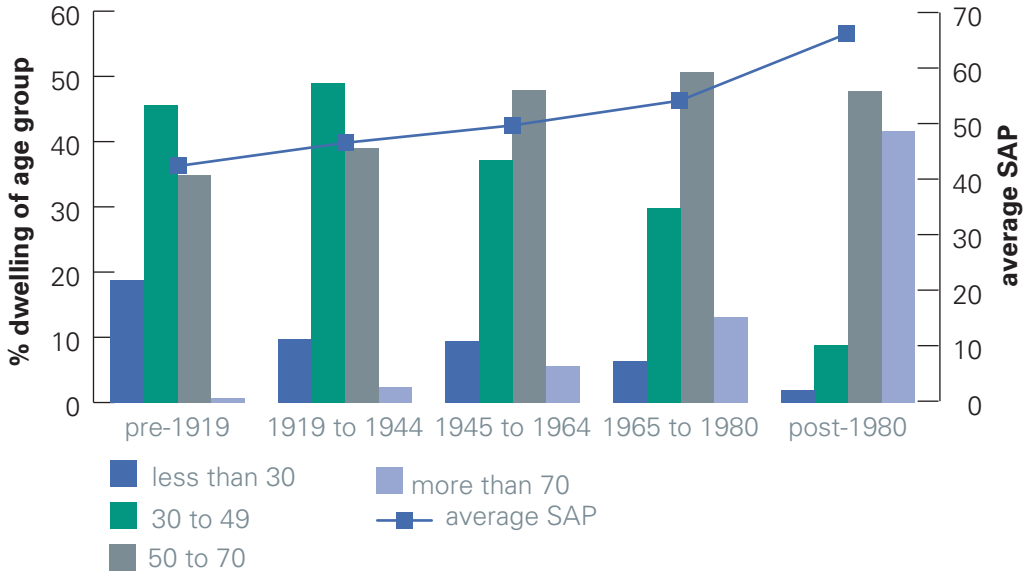
'Unable to keep warm' includes those responding 'no' to the question 'During the cold winter weather, can you normally keep comfortably warm in your living room?'.

Age, type and size of home

age

5.14 The older housing stock is typically less energy efficient. Homes built since 1980 have the highest average SAP rating (66) whilst those built before 1919 have the lowest (42). A significant majority of the post-1980 stock (42%) has a SAP rating greater than 70 compared to less than 1% of the pre 1919 stock, Figure 5.4.

Figure 5.4: SAP distributions by dwelling age, 2003



Base: all dwellings.

5.15 The more recently built housing stock is more likely to have cavity walls and around half of such homes built since 1980 have insulated cavity walls, reflecting the increased emphasis on energy efficiency in the Building Regulations throughout the 1980's and 1990's, Table 5.12. Older properties are far more likely than those built more recently to have an uninsulated loft or one insulated with less than 100mm. Some 85% of fixed room heating systems are in homes built before 1965.

Table 5.2: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by dwelling age, 2003

	pre-1919	1919-44	1945-64	1965-80	post-1980	all
percentage of stock in age group with:						
cavity walls	14.6	58.1	85.3	90.6	96.1	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	1.7	14.6	31.1	30.4	49.0	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	50.6	62.6	67.3	62.7	86.5	65.1
central heating	82.6	89.9	87.5	89.0	83.9	86.6
gas fired heating	81.6	91.5	86.6	84.5	80.6	84.9
average SAP	**42**	**47**	**50**	**54**	**66**	**51**

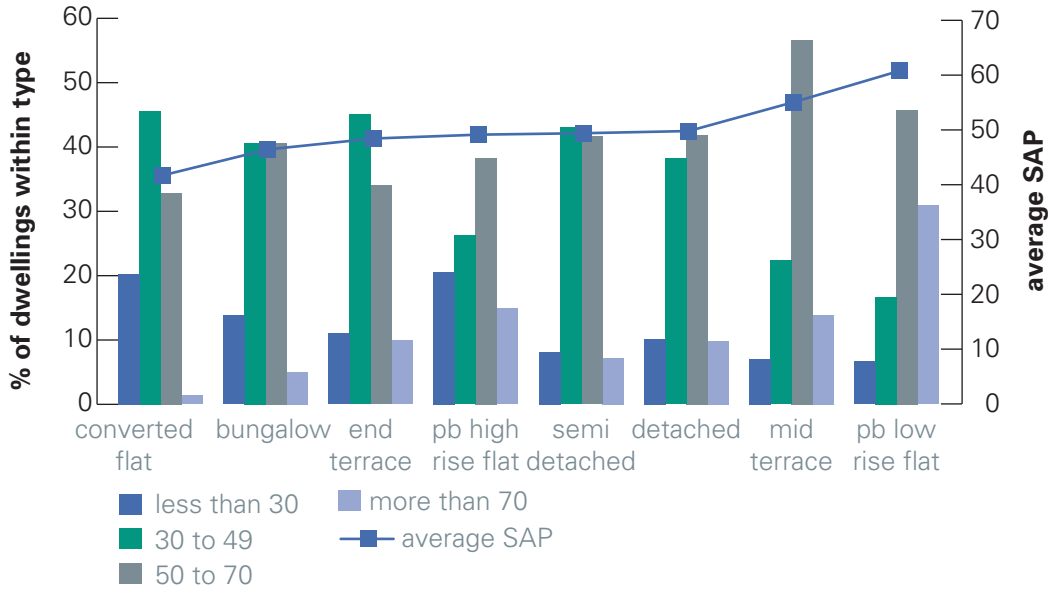
Base: all dwellings for cavity walls, central heating, gas fired heating and average SAP; all dwellings with cavity walls for cavity wall insulation; all dwellings with lofts for loft insulation.

5.16 Since 1996, the oldest of the housing stock has not improved as much as the rest. Homes built since 1919 have generally seen an increase of around 6 SAP rating points since 1996, compared to an improvement of around 3 SAP points for those built before 1919. Improving the energy efficiency of older homes may not be as cost effective (with, for example, 85% of homes built before 1919 having no cavity walls which makes any potential improvement more expensive).

type of home

5.17 Energy efficiency is affected by the proportion of external surfaces over which heat can be lost through the building fabric. Homes that have a lower proportion of external wall area also tend to have higher SAP ratings. Flats have an average SAP rating around 6 points higher than houses, with low-rise purpose built flats in particular having an average SAP rating of 61. Mid terrace houses also have a relatively high average SAP rating of 55, Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5: SAP distributions by type of home, 2003



Base: all dwellings.

5.18 However the relative combinations of different energy efficiency characteristics in particular types of homes also strongly influence their average SAP rating. Converted flats have on average the lowest SAP rating (42) as a consequence of only 15% of them having cavity walls (of which only 6% are insulated) and only 30% of lofts have 100mm or more insulation, Figure 5.5 and Table 5.3. In part this is a reflection of their age, with 83% of converted flats being built before 1919.

Table 5.3: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by dwelling type, 2003

percentage of stock in dwelling type with:	converted flat	bungalow	end terrace	pb high rise flat	semi detached	detached	mid terrace	pb low rise flat	all
cavity walls	16.3	86.2	63.4	43.6	73.9	82.1	47.9	78.4	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	0.9	37.5	22.7	5.2	25.0	35.4	15.2	26.9	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	30.5	71.1	65.1	80.5	64.5	69.6	59.9	73.4	65.1
central heating	74.0	89.0	87.0	69.1	91.2	97.5	84.0	70.4	86.6
gas fired heating	77.1	79.3	89.7	56.4	89.9	83.9	91.2	70.0	84.9
average SAP	**42**	**46**	**48**	**49**	**49**	**50**	**55**	**61**	**51**

Base: all dwellings for cavity walls, central heating, gas fired heating and average SAP; all dwellings with cavity walls for cavity wall insulation; all dwellings with lofts for loft insulation.

Note: 54% of converted, 58% of purpose built (pb) low rise, and 90% of pb high rise flats do not have lofts.

size

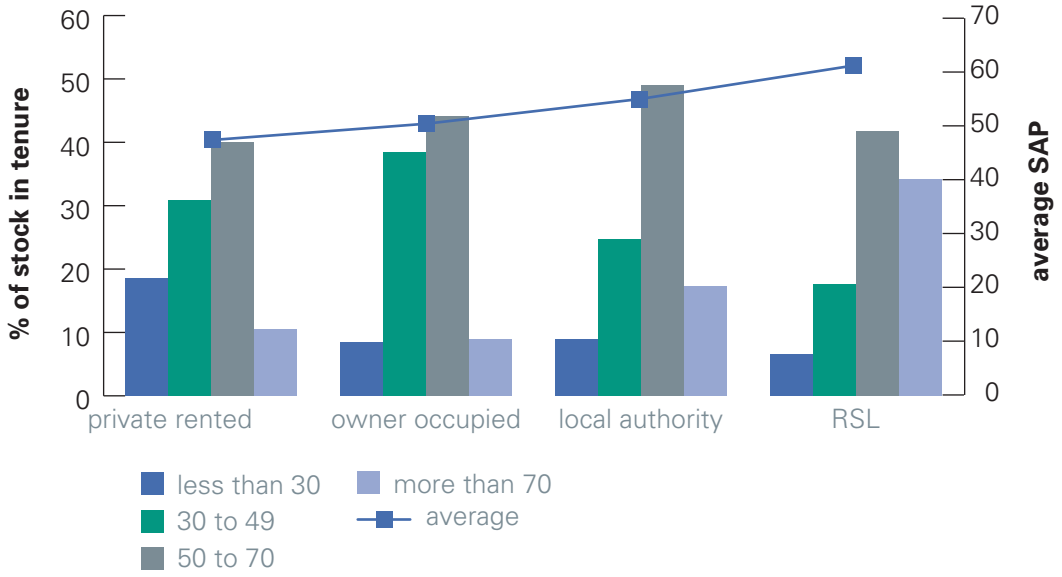
5.19 Larger homes tend to be less energy efficient. Homes with floor area less than 50m^2 in terms of their floor area have an average SAP rating of 55 compared with 49 for those that are 110m^2 or more.

5.20 This difference can be attributed to heat loss associated with detached houses, typically found at the top end of property size, compared to purpose built flats and terraced housing which are generally smaller. However the effect of size is to a certain extent mitigated by larger homes being more likely to have central heating systems installed.

Tenure

5.21 The private and social housing sectors, and the distinct tenures within them, differ markedly in their average SAP ratings. The social sector has an average rating of 57 compared to 50 in the private sector. But RSL properties have the highest average score of 61 while privately rented properties average only 47, Figure 5.6 and Table 5.4. Around one third of RSL properties have a SAP rating of more than 70, while nearly one fifth of privately rented homes have ratings less than 30.

Figure 5.6: SAP distributions by tenure, 2003



Base: all dwellings

5.22 Cavity walls and their insulation, and loft insulation are all more prevalent in the social sector compared with the private sector, Table 5.4. Some 43% of social sector homes with cavity walls also have insulation, compared to 35% in the private sector. This shows a considerable increase from 1996 when the proportion was around 22% regardless of tenure. While the social sector (83%) is less likely to have central heating installed than owner occupied (but not privately rented) homes, properties, another 7% of social sector homes are heated by energy efficient communal systems.

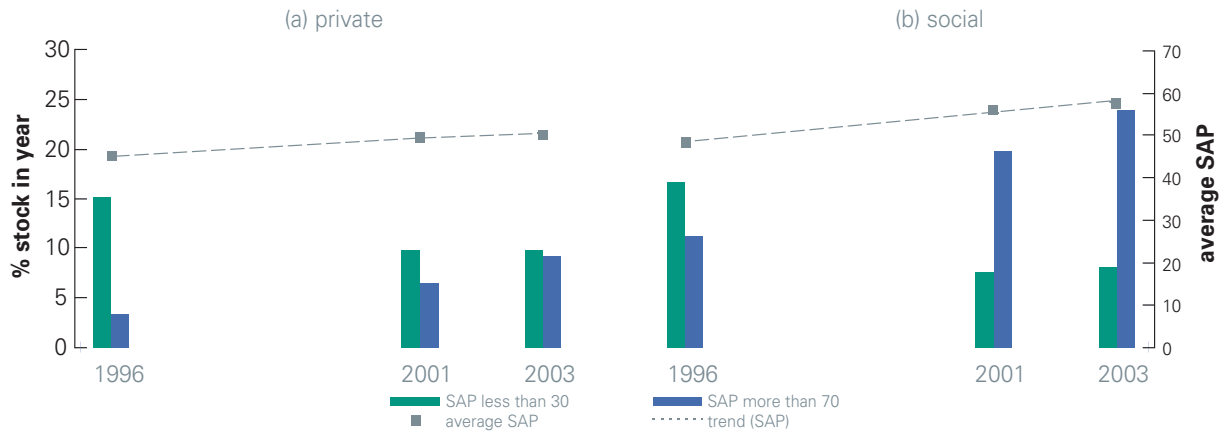
Table 5.4: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by tenure, 2003

	private			social			
	private rented	owner occupied	all private	local authority	RSL	all social	all dwellings
percentage of stock in tenure with:							
cavity walls	47.9	69.5	66.8	72.9	78.6	75.2	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	13.1	24.6	23.1	30.9	33.9	32.1	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	49.7	63.8	62.2	80.6	81.8	81.1	65.1
central heating	71.3	89.7	87.4	84.8	81.1	83.3	86.6
gas fired heating	72.5	87.2	85.4	85.6	78.9	83.0	84.9
average SAP	**47**	**50**	**50**	**55**	**61**	**57**	**51**

Base: all dwellings for cavity walls, central heating, gas fired heating and average SAP; all dwellings with cavity walls for cavity wall insulation; all dwellings with lofts for loft insulation.

5.23 There has been greater improvement in the energy efficiency of the social sector than the private since 1996: some 9 SAP points up from an average of 48 in 1996, compared to an increase of 5 SAP points from 45 in the private sector, Figure 5.7. The proportion of social sector housing stock exceeding a SAP rating of 70 has more than doubled from 11% to 24% since 1996 – three times more than the stock with SAP rating of less than 30. In the private sector the proportion of housing stock over SAP 70 has risen from a much lower 1996 starting point of 3% to 9% which is around the same proportion of the private stock with a SAP rating less than 30.

Figure 5.7: Average SAP and percentage of stock with low and high SAP rating by housing sector, 1996 – 2003



Base: all dwellings, 1996-2003.

Broad regional areas

5.24 Average SAP ratings do not differ significantly across regional areas within either the private or social sector stock, Table 5.5 and Figure 5.8. Within the private housing sector SAP ratings in the northern and south east regions are a little higher (51) than the rest of England (49), and in the social sector the stock of the south east regions is a little higher (59) than elsewhere (57).

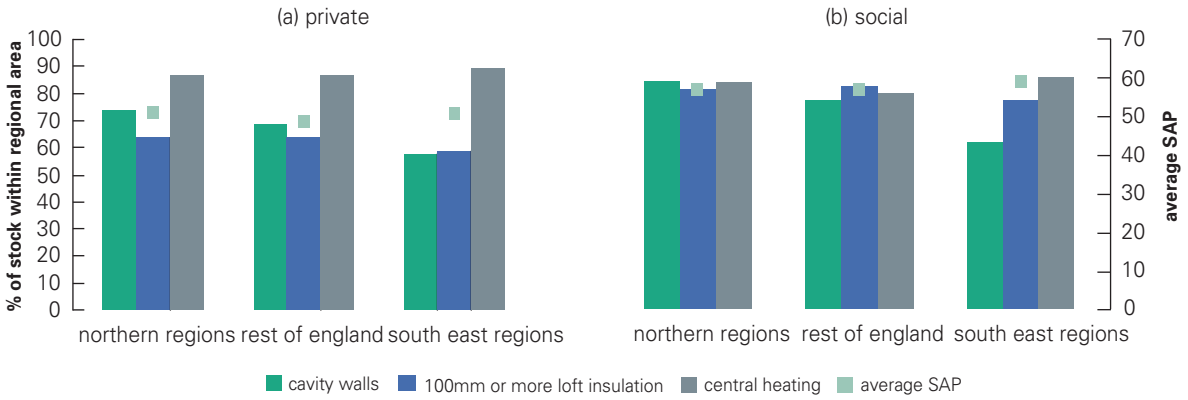
Table 5.5: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by regional area and housing sector, 2003

	private sector			social sector			
	northern regions	rest of England	south east regions	northern regions	rest of England	south east regions	all dwellings
percentage of stock in regional area with:							
cavity walls	74.1	68.7	57.5	84.6	77.8	61.5	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	25.9	23.8	19.7	36.3	34.3	24.9	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	63.7	63.4	58.7	81.7	82.6	77.6	65.1
central heating	86.6	86.5	89.2	84.1	80.2	86.0	86.6
gas fired heating	90.5	80.5	87.3	85.2	78.8	85.5	84.9
average SAP	**51**	**49**	**51**	**57**	**57**	**59**	**51**

Base: all dwellings for cavity walls, central heating, gas fired heating and average SAP; all dwellings with cavity walls for cavity wall insulation; all dwellings with lofts for loft insulation.

5.25 For both housing sectors, a key difference in the energy efficiency-related characteristics of the housing stock across the regional areas is the proportion of homes with cavity walls and the proportion of those with insulation, Figure 5.8. In both sectors cavity walls and cavity wall insulation are most prevalent in northern regions and least prevalent in south east regions. However the south east regions tend to have more homes with central heating in both sectors. The rest of England is least likely to have gas fired heating systems.

Figure 5.8: SAP and energy efficient related characteristics of the housing stock by regional area and housing sector, 2003



Base: all dwellings, 2003.

Urban and rural

5.26 Suburban homes are generally the most energy efficient, with a higher than average SAP rating (52) in the private sector than homes located elsewhere and a high average SAP rating in the social sector of 58, Table 5.6.

5.27 In contrast, the rural stock has the lowest averages SAP rating within both private (46) and social (53) housing sectors. Although rural properties make up only 21% of the total housing stock, 37% of homes with SAP ratings below 30 are in rural areas. The heating systems of homes in rural locations differ markedly from those existing elsewhere, and account for 95% of all oil fuelled systems and 60% of solid fuel systems. One third of rural housing is heated by electric, oil or solid fuel compared to around 9% of suburban homes.

Table 5.6: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of housing stock by type of location and housing sector, 2003

	private sector			social sector			
	city/ other urban centre	suburban	rural	city/ other urban centre	suburban	rural	all dwellings
percentage of stock in type of location with:							
cavity walls	41.1	75.8	70.7	63.5	79.8	87.6	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	10.9	26.4	27.5	23.2	35.5	42.2	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	54.0	63.8	65.4	81.3	80.3	83.8	65.1
central heating	80.9	89.8	88.1	83.7	84.4	76.5	86.6
gas fired heating	87.6	92.5	66.4	85.0	86.3	61.7	84.9
average SAP	**49**	**52**	**46**	**58**	**58**	**53**	**51**

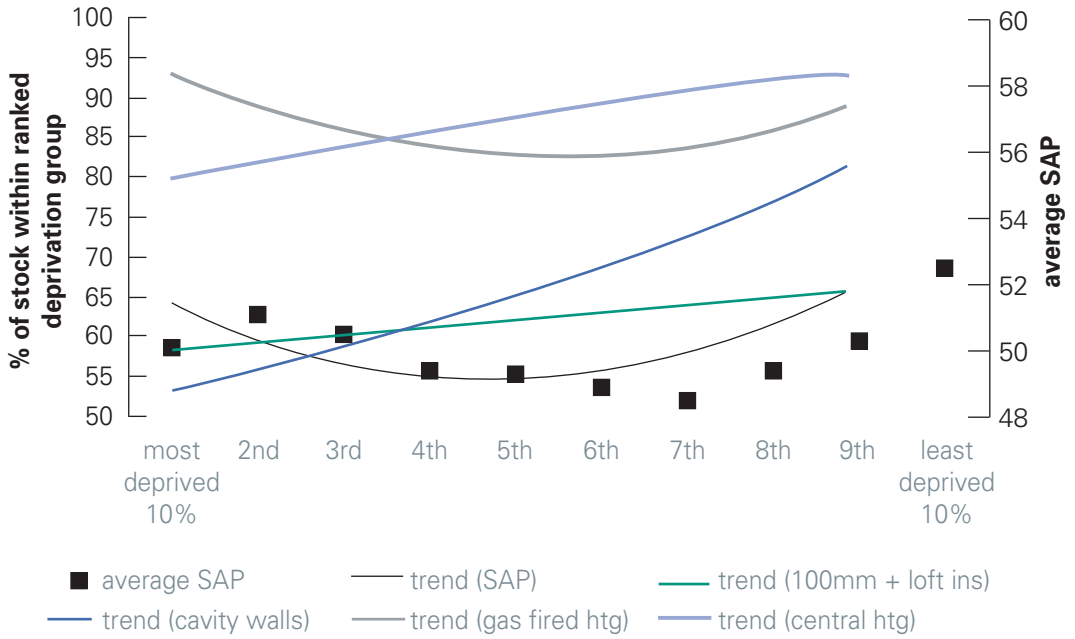
Base: all dwellings for cavity walls, central heating, gas fired heating and average SAP; all dwellings with cavity walls for cavity wall insulation; all dwellings with lofts for loft insulation.

5.28 While the private sector homes of city and other urban centres have on average lower SAP ratings than their suburban counterparts, the social sector properties in these centres are relatively energy efficient (58). Private sector housing in the urban centres is much less likely to have cavity walls, cavity wall or loft insulation, or central heating. Key factors here are the relatively high concentration of older and privately rented properties in the urban centres.

Deprivation

5.29 Generally, the social sector provides higher levels of energy efficiency than is achieved in the private sector whatever the level of deprivation of the area – the average SAP rating for social sector housing in the 10% most deprived areas of the country (57) being higher than achieved by private owners in the least deprived areas (53), Figures 5.9 and 5.10.

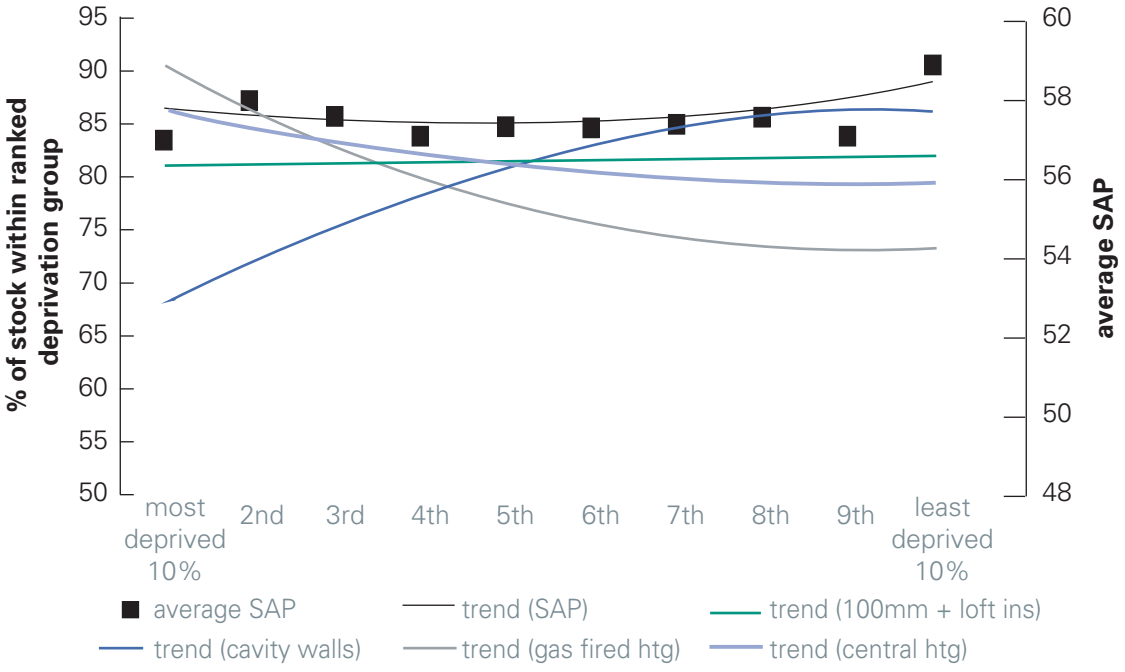
Figure 5.9: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of private sector stock by ranked deprivation of local area, 2003



Base: all private sector dwellings

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output areas ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004) and grouped into 10 equal numbers of areas.

Figure 5.10: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of social sector stock by ranked deprivation of local area, 2003



Base: all social sector dwellings.

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output areas ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004) and grouped into 10 equal numbers of areas.

5.30 Private sector housing has higher average SAP ratings in the most and least deprived areas, with lower ratings occurring in the mid-ranking levels of deprivation. This complex picture results from a range of counteracting tendencies.

5.31 For example, on the one hand the less deprived areas have a higher incidence of housing of cavity wall construction (and insulated cavity walls), with central heating systems and more effective (100mm or more) loft insulation than homes in the more deprived areas. This reflects in part the greater concentration of more recently built homes in less deprived areas, but also the greater affluence of home owners and private tenants who are much more likely to be able to afford higher standards. On the other hand, the more deprived areas have much higher concentrations of what are on average more energy efficient building types – around half the private stock in the 10% most deprived areas comprises mid-terraced houses and purpose built low rise flats (a proportion of which is ex-local authority housing).

5.32 More affluent areas therefore tend to be characterised by private sector homes that are less energy efficient in terms of their size and proportion of external surfaces (the majority of the private housing stock of the 10% least deprived areas comprises detached houses and bungalows) compared to those in the more deprived areas; but which have more effective wall construction, insulation and heating systems.

5.33 For social sector housing, the average SAP rating appears to be little different from the sector as a whole whatever the level of deprivation of the area.[18] However there are some similarities to private sector housing with more energy efficient dwelling types – mid-terraced houses and purpose built low rise flats – comprising the majority of the sector's stock in the more deprived areas and more recently built and cavity wall constructed homes in the more affluent areas. While around half of all social sector high rise flats (with typically low SAP ratings) are located in the 10% most deprived areas, these account for only 10% of the sector's homes in these areas.

5.34 It is not surprising, in consequence of the pattern of SAP ratings across ranked local areas, that there is little difference in the overall energy efficiency of homes for each housing sector between the most deprived districts and elsewhere, Table 5.7. The most deprived districts almost exclusively encompass urban and suburban areas only and this is reflected in the high incidence of gas fired heating systems in both their private and social sector housing stock.

[18] This finding does not preclude specific social sector estates being characterised by poor energy efficiency standards. It simply means that such estates do not significantly influence the average SAP rating for the group of areas (with a given deprivation ranking) as a whole.

Table 5.7: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by the NRF most deprived districts and housing sector, 2003

	private sector		social sector		
	other districts	deprived districts	other districts	deprived districts	all dwellings
percentage of stock by district group with:					
cavity walls	70.5	60.6	81.5	70.2	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	25.6	18.9	36.4	28.8	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	63.2	60.4	81.3	80.9	65.1
central heating	88.2	86.0	81.5	84.7	86.6
gas fired heating	82.0	91.1	77.8	87.2	84.9
average SAP	**50**	**51**	**58**	**57**	**51**

Base: all dwellings.

Demand

5.35 Perhaps surprisingly, homes in 'limited to negligible' demand market areas are not significantly likely to be less energy efficient than elsewhere (an average SAP rating of 51 compared to 52 elsewhere). This is primarily because they are much more likely to be social sector stock (42% of homes in these market areas) and less likely to consist of older or private rented property. The homes in 'limited to negligible' demand market areas are also more likely to comprise purpose built flats and terraced housing across both housing sectors which tends to be energy efficient.

Table 5.8: SAP and energy efficiency related characteristics of the housing stock by level of demand in the housing market, 2003

	private sector			social sector			
	negligible or limited	moderate	high	negligible or limited	moderate	high	all dwellings
percentage of stock in market areas with:							
cavity walls	62.8	66.7	68.4	76.1	76.8	71.2	68.4
cavity walls that are insulated	26.0	22.5	23.7	32.2	33.2	30.0	24.8
100mm or more loft insulation	62.7	62.7	61.6	83.3	80.8	79.5	65.1
central heating	82.4	86.9	88.9	81.6	84.3	83.1	86.6
gas fired heating	78.2	87.7	85.5	81.7	83.9	82.9	84.9
average SAP	**48**	**50**	**50**	**56**	**58**	**59**	**51**

Base: all dwellings

5.36 However, social sector homes tend to be a little less energy efficient if they are located in 'limited to negligible' demand market than elsewhere, and the same pattern applies to the private sector, Table 5.8. For the private sector there is a tendency for 'limited to negligible' demand areas to comprise more energy efficient building types (terraced houses and purpose-built flats) but with less efficient heating systems and fuels than elsewhere. This also reflects the tendency for people to prefer and aspire towards larger homes where they have the resources to exercise that choice – typified in the larger semi-detached and detached houses that the great majority of more affluent homeowners occupy. For the social sector there is a relatively greater concentration of low rise purpose-built flats within 'high' demand market areas compared to the sector's stock in other market areas.

Chapter 6

Liveability

6.1 People want to live in places with clean and safe streets and neighbourhoods with access to quality parks, open spaces and play areas. The government's Cleaner Safer Greener Programme[19] is focusing action to raise the standard of open spaces and ensure quality in their design, management and maintenance and sustain the investment being made in communities.

6.2 The English House Condition Survey informs this agenda through its assessment of a range of liveability problems in the immediate environment of people's homes[20].

[19] ODPM, October 2002, http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_urbanpolicy/documents/page/odpm_urbpol_023398.hcsp

[20] These are based on independent surveyor assessments. More details can be found in the Technical Report at http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1155269.

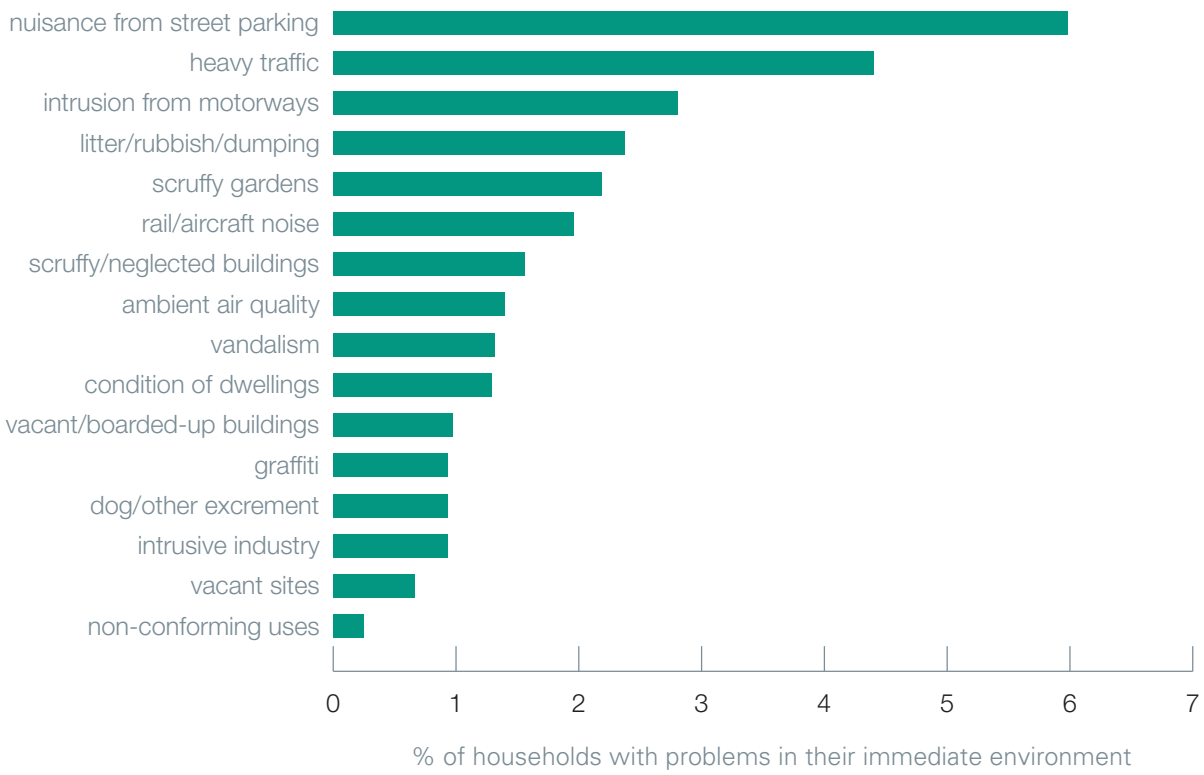
Summary

- 3.3 million households (16%) reside in poor quality environments arising from problems related to the 'upkeep' or the 'utilisation' of buildings and space, and to 'traffic'.
- Compared with others, the 2.3 million households with 'upkeep' or 'utilisation' problems in their immediate environments are additionally more likely to report other problems such as drug dealing, troublesome teenagers, and fear of burglary and they are also more likely to feel unsafe in and around their homes. These households are more than twice as likely to be dissatisfied with where they live than other households.
- Residents of city and other urban centres are much more likely to experience poor quality environments (30%) than those living elsewhere (12%)
- However poor quality environments are not simply a product of more densely populated areas. The chances of having a poor quality environment are higher for households residing in the most deprived (NRF) districts – 21% compared to 12% for households living in other districts. 'Upkeep' problems are twice as likely in the most deprived districts (affecting 15% of households there, compared to 7% elsewhere).
- Households living on local authority built estates are most likely to have poor quality environments but particularly upkeep problems. Traffic related problems are more likely to occur in predominantly privately built areas or those of a mixed tenure composition.
- Of the 3.3 million households living in poor quality environments, 1.3 million also live in non-decent homes. Of these 320,000 (24%) are social sector homes and 250,000 (19%) are private sector homes occupied by vulnerable households.
- Homes in areas of 'limited to negligible' demand are much more likely to have 'upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems in their immediate environments compared to homes in other areas.

Poor quality environments

6.3 Nuisance from street parking and heavy traffic are the most common problems, affecting 6% and 4% of households respectively, Figure 6.1. Intrusion from motorways, scruffy gardens, litter/rubbish dumping and rail/aircraft noise are also among the most prevalent problems.

Figure 6.1: Percentage of households with problems affecting the quality of their immediate environment, 2003



6.4 The sixteen types of problems shown in Figure 6.1 above are not independent of one another but can be grouped together to identify three distinct types of poor quality environments, Box 1.

Box 1: Types of poor quality environments

'Upkeep' problems associated with the upkeep and misuse of public and private building and space include:

Litter and rubbish dumping	Scruffy/neglected buildings
Scruffy gardens	Dog or other excrement
Graffiti	Condition of dwellings
Vandalism	Nuisance from street parking

'Traffic' problems associated with traffic and other transport issues include:

Ambient air quality	Railway/aircraft noise
Heavy traffic	Intrusion from motorways/arterial roads

'Utilisation' problems associated with abandonment or intrusive use of property for non-residential purposes include:

Vacant sites	Non-conforming uses
Intrusive industry	Vacant/boarded up buildings

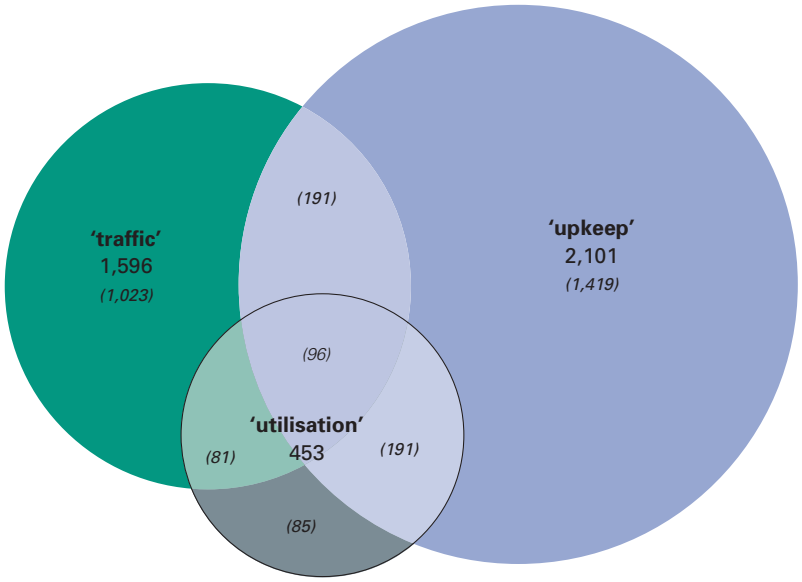
6.5 In total almost 3.3 million (16%) households are living in poor quality environments (where there are problems with 'upkeep', 'traffic' or 'utilisation'), Table 6.1. Over 2 million (10.1%) households have 'upkeep' problems in their immediate environment. This is the most commonly occurring of the three types of problems. 'Traffic' problems affect the homes of almost 1.6 million (7.7%) households while just under half a million (2.2%) households live with 'utilisation' problems in their immediate environment.

Table 6.1: Households living in areas with different types of problems

	No. ('000s)	%
Problems associated with 'upkeep'	2,101	10.1
Problems associated with 'traffic'	1,596	7.7
Problems associated with 'utilisation'	453	2.2
Any problems related to a poor quality environment	**3,291**	**15.9**
Households in areas with only one type of problem	2,527	12.2
Households in areas with any two types of problem	668	3.2
Households in area with all three types of problem	96	0.5

6.6 Most households with poor quality environments (77%) have problems that relate to only one of the three types identified. However, the majority (63%) of those with 'utilisation' problems also have problems associated with 'upkeep', Figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2: Relationships between different types of problems, numbers ('000s) of households with problems in their immediate environments, 2003



Base: all households living in poor quality environments

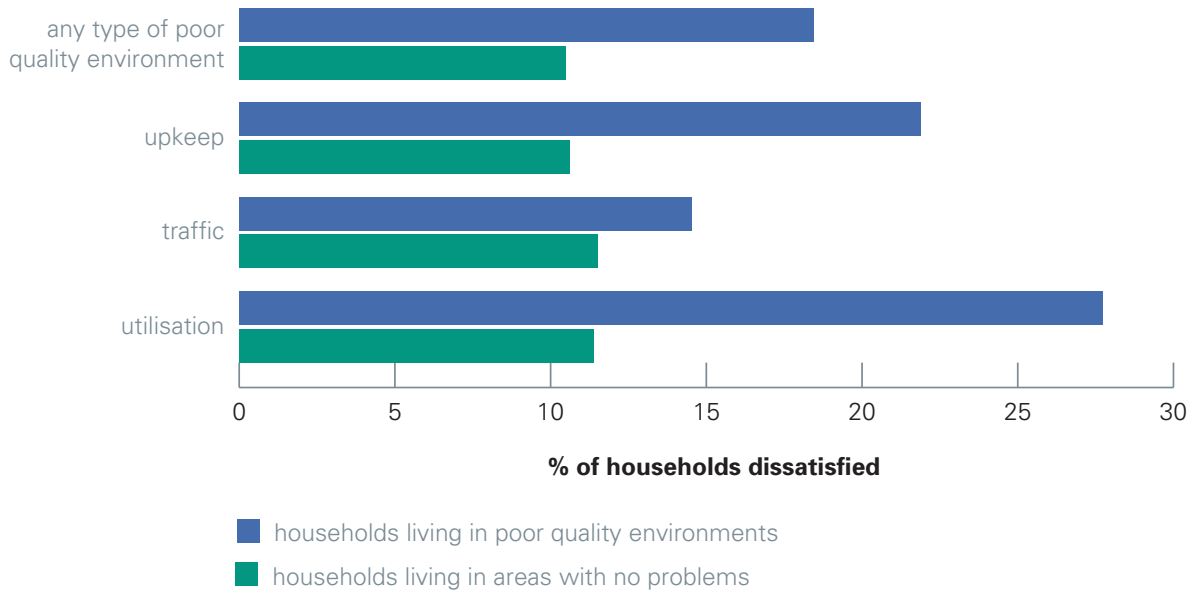
Note: Figures in bold indicate the number of households living in areas with problems; figures in brackets indicate the numbers of households living in areas where problems occur in isolation or overlap with other problems.

Household experience of poor quality environments

Satisfaction with neighbourhood

6.7 While how satisfied people are with their local area may be affected by many different aspects such as the quality of local schools or local amenities, the quality of the local environment clearly impacts on the way people feel about where they live. Households living in poor quality environments are much more likely to be dissatisfied with the area in which they live compared to those who live elsewhere, Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.3: Percentage of households dissatisfied with the area they live in by types of poor quality environments



Base: all households

6.8 Dissatisfaction is particularly the case for households with 'upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems. These households are more than twice as likely to be dissatisfied with the areas in which they live compared with those who live elsewhere.

Perception of problems

6.9 Households living in areas with 'upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems are also much more likely than those living elsewhere to indicate there are problems relating to general criminal behaviour, fear of burglary, drug dealing and use and troublesome teenagers where they live. This is over and above the problems of litter and rubbish dumping, vandalism, graffiti and the poor condition of open spaces and gardens that they report and which the survey also independently verifies, Figure 6.4. For those with 'traffic' problems any difference between themselves and those living elsewhere is more modest.

Figure 6.4: Household perception of problems in the area: difference between those living in areas with specified types of poor quality environments and those living elsewhere, 2003

Base: All households

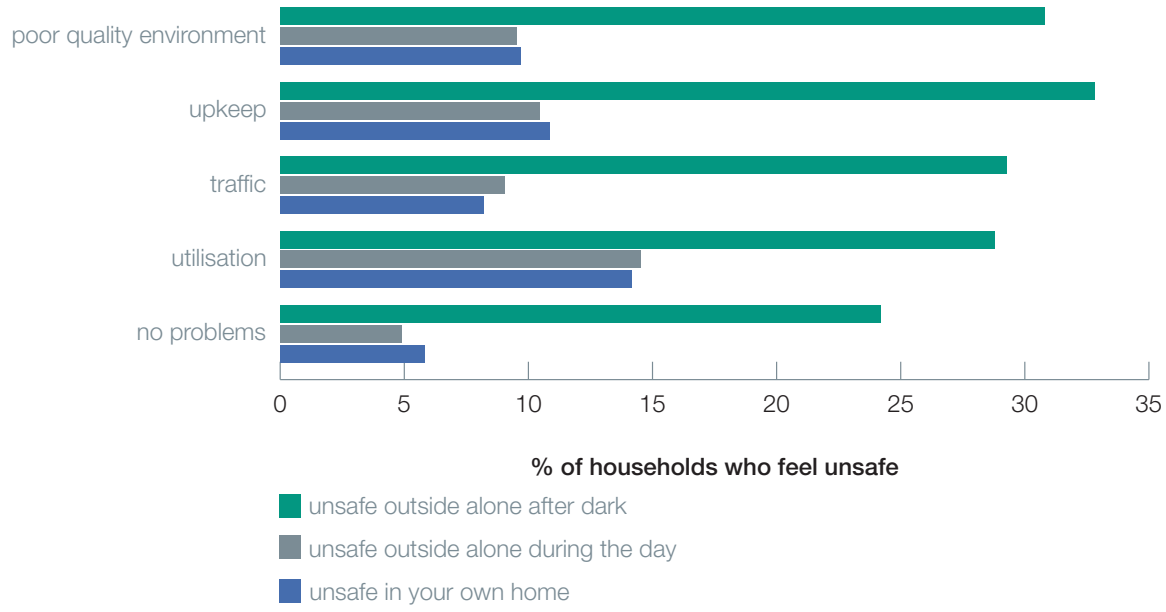
Note: The scale represents the difference in the percentage of households reporting neighbourhood problems whose homes are assessed as having types of poor quality environments, compared to those who do not have those types of poor quality environments. For example, 60% of households living in areas with upkeep problems reported problems with litter and rubbish compared to 38.5% of households in areas with no upkeep problems. This is a difference of 21.5% points (see top bar of figure 4).

Feeling safe

6.10 How safe people feel in and around the place they live in is an important element of liveability. Households who are living in poor quality environments are around twice as likely to feel unsafe in their own homes or outside alone during the day compared with those living in areas with no problems, Figure 6.5. But this disparity is particularly pronounced where there are 'utilisation' problems. Such households are almost three times as likely to feel unsafe in their homes or outside their homes during the day compared to elsewhere.

6.11 Unsurprisingly, being outside alone after dark is where people are most likely to report feeling unsafe and those living in poor quality environments are more likely to feel unsafe than other households (31% compared to 24%)

Figure 6.5: Percentage of households who feel unsafe in and around their homes by poor quality environments



Base: all households

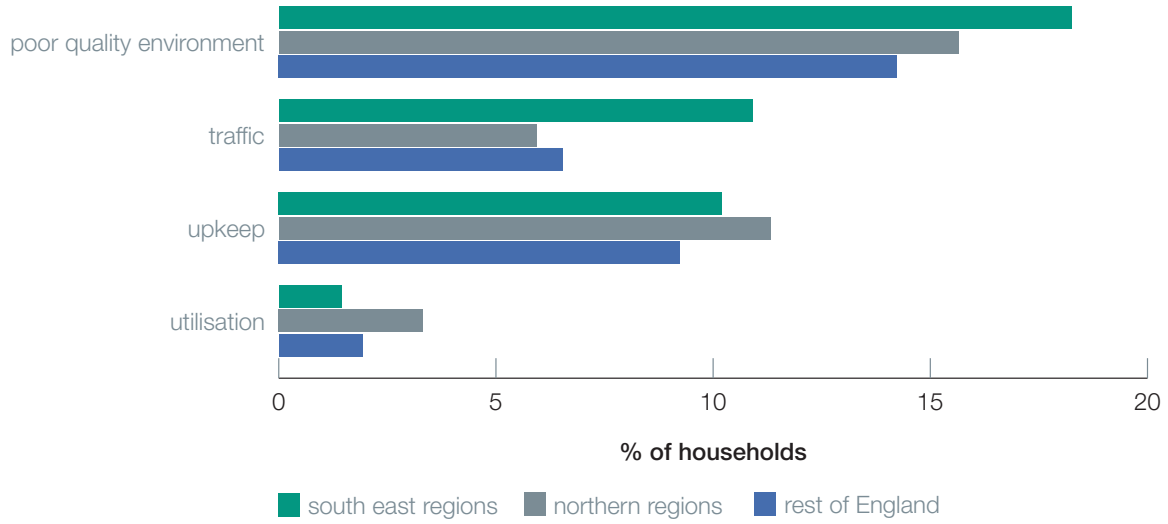
Location of poor quality environments

Regions

6.12 Overall the south east regions have the highest incidence of poor quality environments, 18%, compared to 16% in northern regions and 15% in other regions. But in part this reflects the relative concentration of 'traffic' problems in that area of the country. Households in the south east regions are nearly twice as likely (11%) to have 'traffic' problems than households in northern regions (6%) and the rest of the country (7%), Figure 6.6

6.13 'Upkeep' problems are more or less equally likely to occur across these regional groups but, households in northern regions are more likely than elsewhere to experience 'utilisation' problems.

Figure 6.6: Percentage of households living in poor quality environments by broad regions



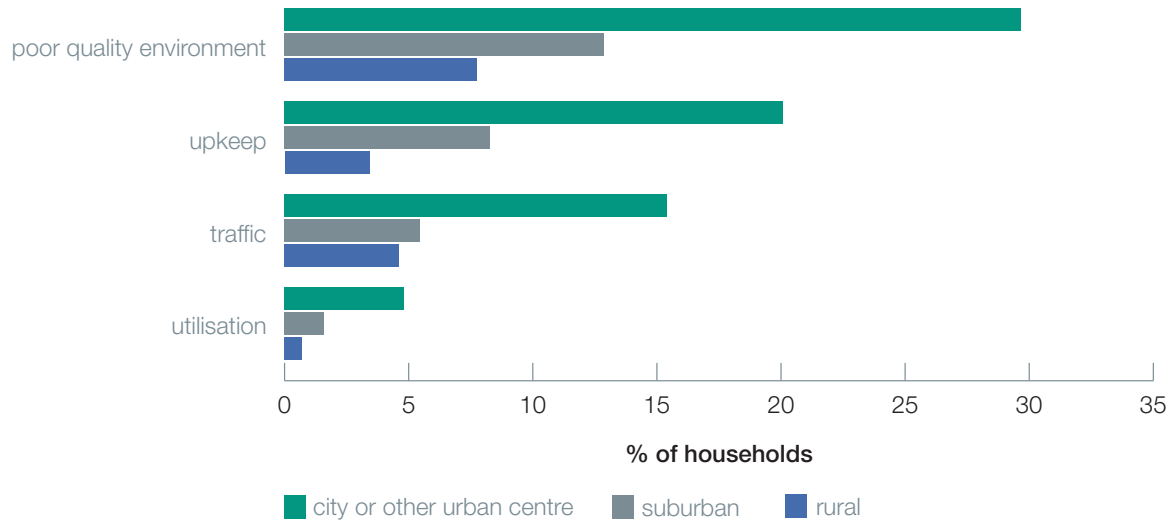
Base: all households

Urban and Rural

6.14 As might be expected, urban centres have the highest incidence of poor quality environments (30%) compared to other types of areas, Figure 6.7. These areas are five times more likely than rural areas to have 'upkeep' problems and seven times more likely to have 'utilisation' problems.

6.15 Not surprisingly 'traffic' problems are most prevalent in urban centres (15%), however rural areas experience similar levels as suburban areas at around 5%.

Figure 6.7: Percentage of households living in poor quality environments by urban, suburban or rural



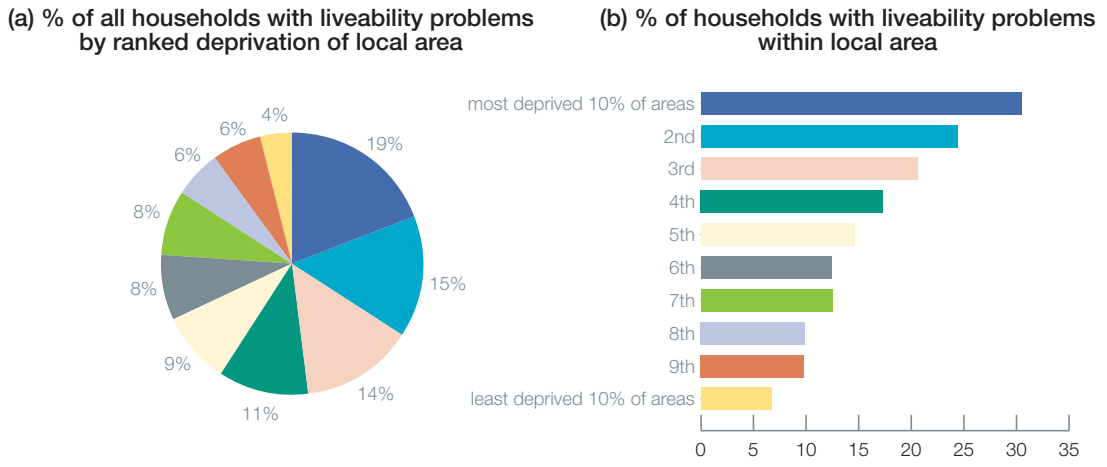
Base: all households

Deprivation

Most deprived local areas

6.16 The more deprived an area is, the more likely it is to have a poor quality environment. Almost half of households living in poor quality environments live in the 30% most deprived local areas (2001 Census Super Output Areas ranked by the IMD 2004), Figure 6.8a. Households living in the 10% most deprived areas are over 4 times more likely to live in poor quality environments than those living in the 10% least deprived areas, Figure 6.8b.

Figure 6.8: Poor quality environments and deprivation-ranked local areas

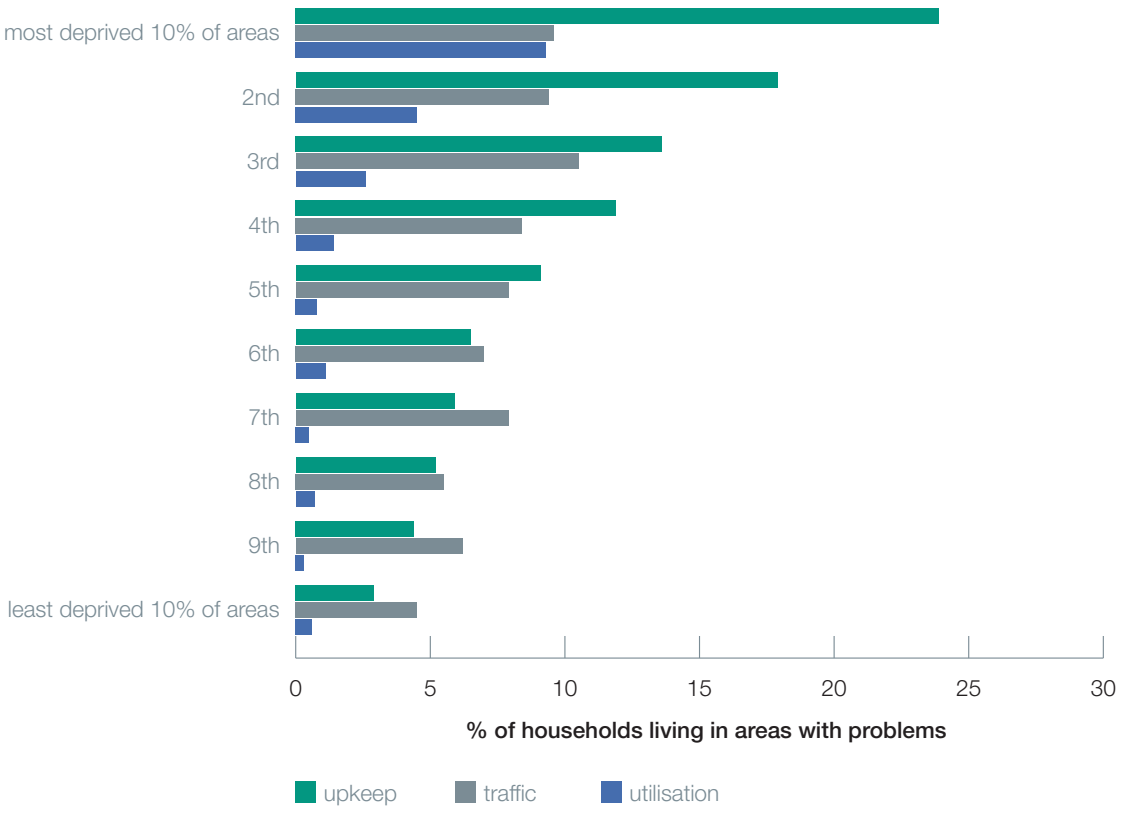


Base: (a) all households with problems; (b) all households

Note: local areas are 2001 Census lower level Super Output Areas, ranked by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD2004) and grouped into ten equal numbers of areas

6.17 'Upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems are much more concentrated in the most deprived areas than 'traffic' problems, Figure 6.9. Households in the 10% most deprived areas are five times more likely to be affected by 'upkeep' problems than those in the 10% least deprived areas. Similarly, 'utilisation' problems are also concentrated among the core of most deprived areas.

Figure 6.9: Type of poor quality environment by deprivation ranked areas



Base: all households

Most deprived districts

6.18 This pattern is reflected in the incidence of these problems in the most deprived districts. Households who live in the 88 districts supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF88) are much more likely to live in poor quality environments, 21% compared to 12% of residents living in other areas, Table 6.2. Households in the 88 NRF districts are also more likely to live in areas affected by each of the different types of problems than other areas. The biggest difference is for problems associated with 'upkeep' where households in NRF areas are twice as likely to live with problems associated with 'upkeep' in their immediate environment.

Table 6.2: Percentage and number of households in Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) areas living in poor quality environments

	Deprived areas (NRF88)		Other areas	
	No. ('000s)	%	No. ('000s)	%
Problems associated with 'upkeep'	1,213	14.5	888	7.2
Problems associated with 'traffic'	791	9.5	805	6.5
Problems associated with 'utilisation'	313	3.7	140	1.1
Any problems related to a poor quality environment	**1,768**	**21.2**	**1,523**	**12.3**

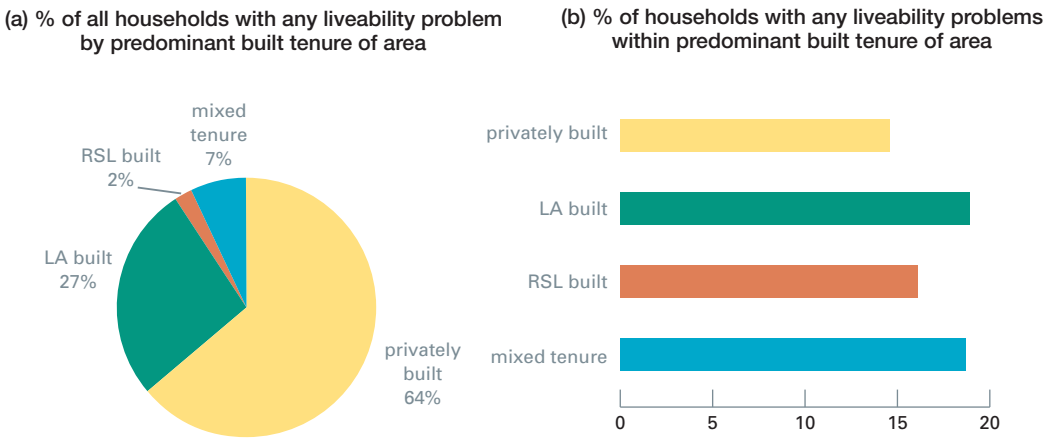
Base: all households

Housing in poor quality environments

Built tenure of the area

6.19 Residents of local authority built estates are most likely to live with poor quality environments (19%), whilst areas where private sector builds predominate are least likely to suffer from problems (15%), Figure 6.11b. However the majority (64%) of areas with poor quality environments are in areas where private sector built tenure predominates, partly reflecting the size of this sector, Figure 6.11a.

Figure 6.11: Poor quality environments by predominant built tenure of the area

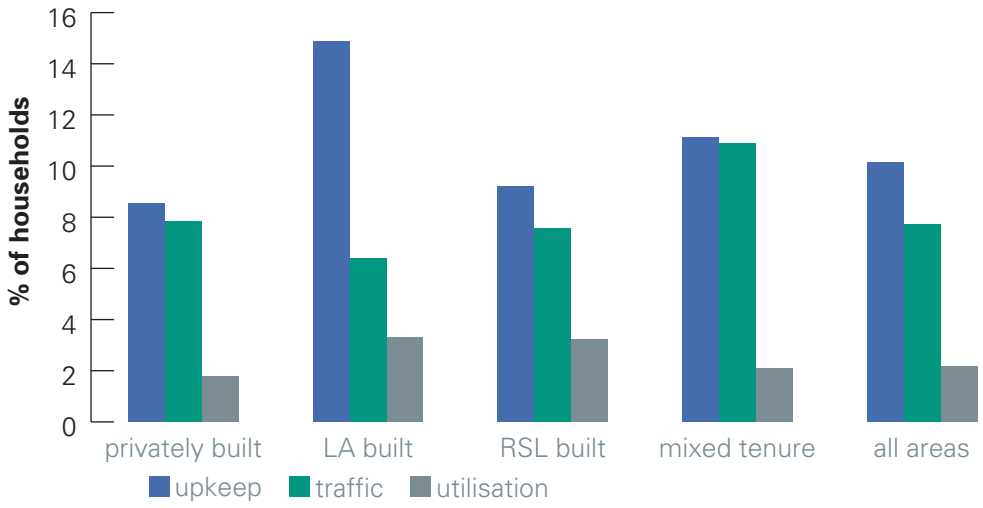


Base: a) all households with problems b) all households

6.20 The types of problems experienced also vary with the predominant tenure of areas, Figure 6.12. Households on local authority built estates are most likely to be affected by 'upkeep' problems (15% compared to the national average of 10%). However local authority built estates are much less likely to be affected by 'traffic' problems than where other built tenures predominate. In particular, it is areas of mixed tenure which tend to be subject to 'traffic' problems (11%, compared to the national average of 8%).

6.21 'Utilisation' problems are most common in areas where LA and RSL built tenures predominate. Around 3% of households in these areas have such problems in their immediate environment.

Figure 6.12: Types of poor quality environment by predominant built tenure of area

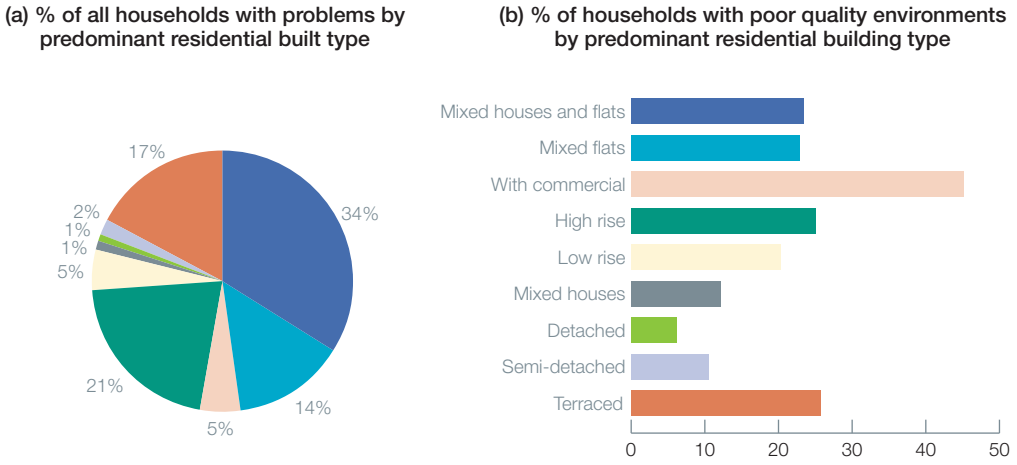


Base: all households

Type and age of housing stock in the area

6.22 Over a third of households who live in poor quality environments live in areas characterised by terraced housing, Figure 6.13a. A further 38% live in areas where mixed houses or mixed houses and flats are the predominant build type. Although small in number, households resident alongside commercial property are particularly likely to live in poor quality environments – around 45% of them in this survey, Figure 6.13b. Households living in areas of terraced housing are more than four times as likely to have poor quality environments compared to the residents of areas characterised by detached housing.

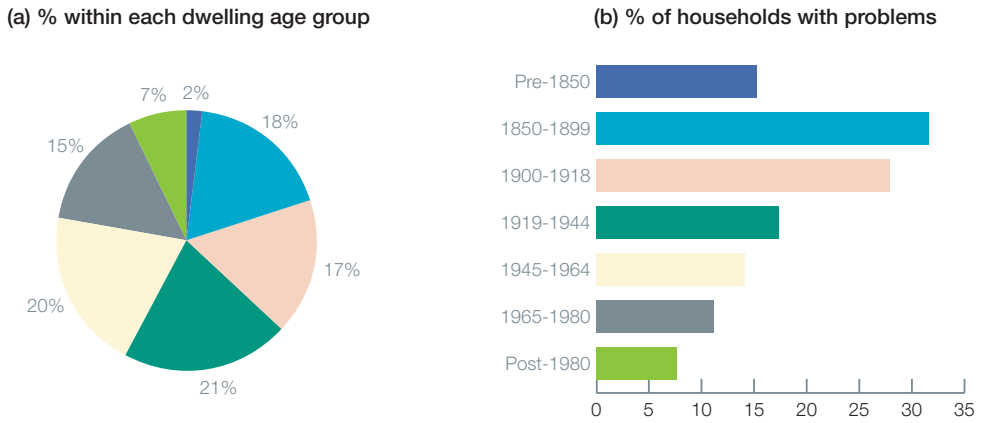
Figure 6.13: Poor quality environments by the predominant residential built type



Base: a) all households with problems, b) all households

6.23 Poor quality environments are found across both older and newer areas of housing development, with areas developed since 1945 providing homes for around 40% of those households who live with such problems, Figure 6.14a. Nevertheless, poor quality environments are much more likely to be in evidence where older property continues to dominate an area's housing, Figure 6.14b. Around one third of households living in areas built between 1850-1899 are affected compared to only 8% of households in post-1980 housing developments.

Figure 6.14: Percentage of households experiencing poor quality environments by the predominant age of dwellings in the area



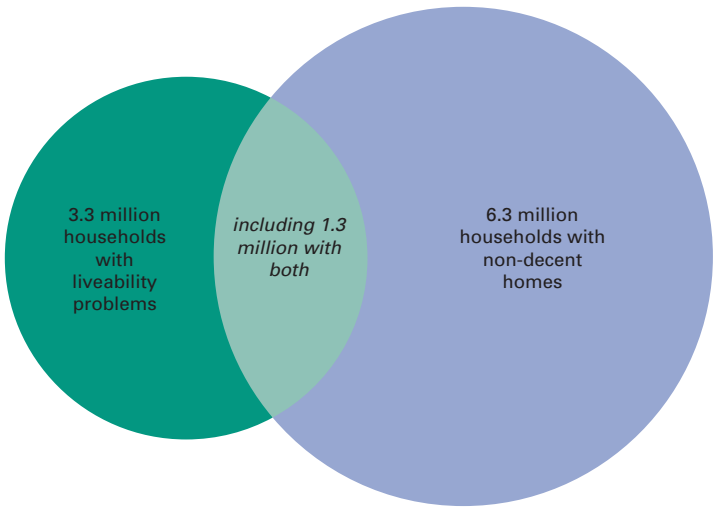
Base: a) households with poor quality environments, b) all households

Decent homes

6.24 Of the 3.3 million households with liveability problems, 40% or 1.3 million also live in non-decent homes, Figure 6.15 (compared to only 28% without such problems). Of these, 320,000 (24%) are social sector tenants and a further 250,000 (19%) are private sector vulnerable households.

6.25 The 1.3 million households living in non-decent homes with liveability problems make up 21% of all households living in non-decent homes. In addition the average cost to make their homes decent is 40% higher than for homes in areas with no liveability problems, 8,739 compared to 6,283 respectively. Households living in non-decent homes in poor quality environments are more likely than other households living in non-decent homes to be in deprived areas and to be living in older homes (built before 1944). These characteristics are both associated with higher costs to make decent.

Figure 6.15: Households with poor quality environments and occupying non-decent homes



Base: all households with liveability problems and all households in non-decent homes.

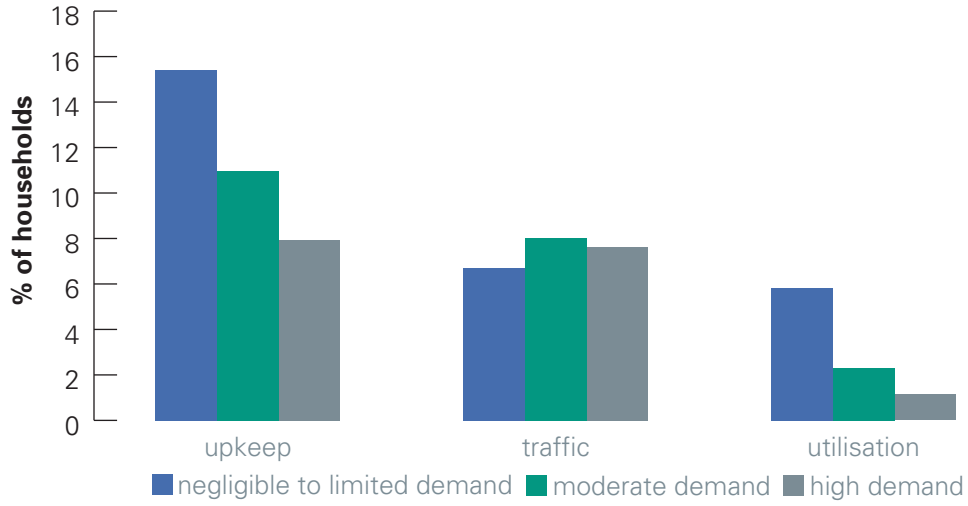
Market conditions

6.26 'Upkeep' and 'utilisation' problems show a strong link with housing demand. Homes in areas where there is 'limited to negligible' housing demand are twice as likely to have problems of upkeep in their immediate environment compared to homes in areas where the demand is 'high' (15% and 8% respectively), Figure 6.16. Similarly households in areas where property takes more than six months to sell are over three times more likely to have 'upkeep' problems than households in areas where property sells in less than 9 weeks.

6.27 Areas where demand is 'limited to negligible' are also much more likely to have 'utilisation' problems. Again the length of time to sell shows a strong association too. Areas where it takes on average more than six months to sell a property are eight times more likely to have 'utilisation' problems.

6.28 In contrast there is no clear relationship between housing demand and traffic problems. The incidence of problems related to traffic remains constant for all levels of housing demand.

Figure 6.16: Level of housing market demand in areas by different types of liveability problems



Base: all households

Chapter 7

Secure Homes

7.1 Physical security of the home is a significant concern for households. Security measures may be installed by home owners and landlords as a response to personal or community experience of problems such as burglary or vandalism, or as anticipatory actions with the intention of discouraging and hopefully preventing those problems arising.

7.2 This chapter looks at a range of security features installed in individual homes or in blocks of flats that have common areas, including shared facilities. It also looks at the extent and type of misuse or vandalism of those common areas. The chapter assesses the incidence of different security measures in distinct parts of the housing stock and different types of areas, highlighting which sorts of property are likely to have particular security features.

7.3 The security measures considered here are listed below.

Security measures to the dwelling itself (the individual house or flat)	**Security measures to common areas of blocks of flats**
Secure external doors and windows	Door entry system
Burglar alarm	External lighting
Door viewer	CCTV
	Concierge
	Communal alarm system

Summary

- Security measures are both a response to tackle ongoing problems in particular localities and a protective measure against potential problems in others. The installation of secure windows and doors can also help address issues of noise and draught.
- Some 54% of homes have 'fully secure' windows and doors although this varies substantially between different types of homes – 70% of purpose-built flats are fully secure compared to only 34% of converted flats.
- There has been a substantial increase in security since 1996 when only 30% of homes had fully secure windows and doors.
- Privately rented homes are the least likely to be fully secure – only 40% have fully secure windows and doors against 58% of owner occupied homes.
- Flats with common areas for access and communal leisure activities and other purposes are particularly prone to misuse. Local authority flats are three times more likely to have problems relating to vandalism, graffiti and litter/rubbish in their common areas than flats that are owner occupied, privately rented or owned by RSLs.
- Security measures for common areas are much more prevalent in high rise compared with other flats – CCTV is present in 48% of high rise flats but only 10% of low/medium rise purpose built flats.
- While homes in the most deprived (NRF) districts are no less likely to be fully secure than those in other districts, graffiti, vandalism and littering in the common areas of flats are more prevalent in flats located in the NRF districts.

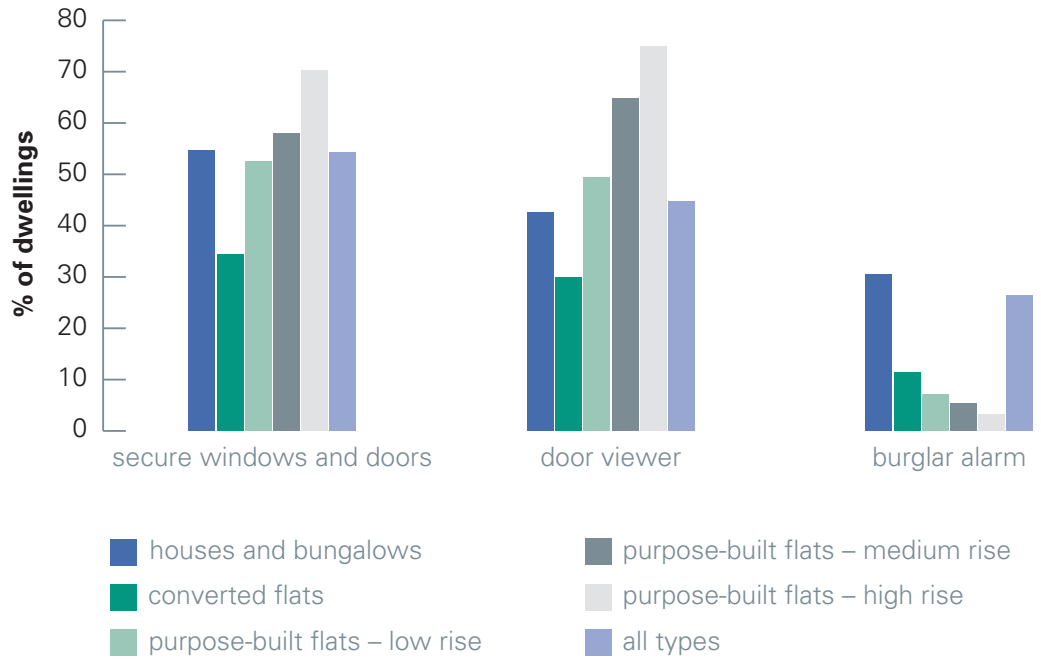
Security measures to the home itself

7.4 In 2003 just over half (54%) of homes had secure external doors and windows[21]. About a quarter (26%) had a burglar alarm and almost half (45%) had a door viewer.

7.5 Levels of security tend to vary among different types of dwellings. Purpose built high rise flats tend to have higher levels of security than other types of dwellings with 70% having secure windows and doors, Figure 7.1. In contrast only about a third (34%) of converted flats have secure windows and doors. Houses are much more likely to have burglar alarms than flats although most types of flat (except for conversions) are more likely to have door viewers than houses or bungalows.

[21] See glossary for detailed definition.

Figure 7.1: Dwelling type and key security features, 2003



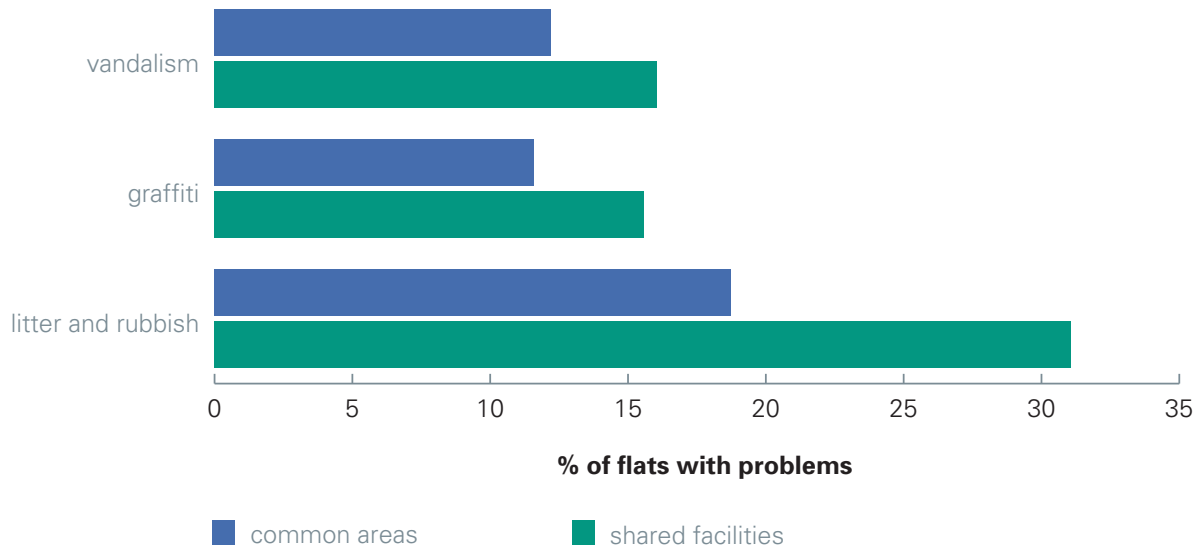
Base: all dwellings

Problems in the common areas and shared facilities of flats

7.6 Common areas or shared facilities in blocks of flats can be vulnerable to abuse, such as littering, graffiti and vandalism. Some 72% of flats have common areas (such as staircases, lobbies or lifts) while around 79% of flats have shared facilities (such as laundry rooms, children's play areas or community rooms).

7.7 In 2003 the presence of litter and rubbish is the most frequently occurring problem in the common areas and shared facilities of flats, Figure 7.2. All three types of problems are more likely to be found in shared facilities compared to common areas.

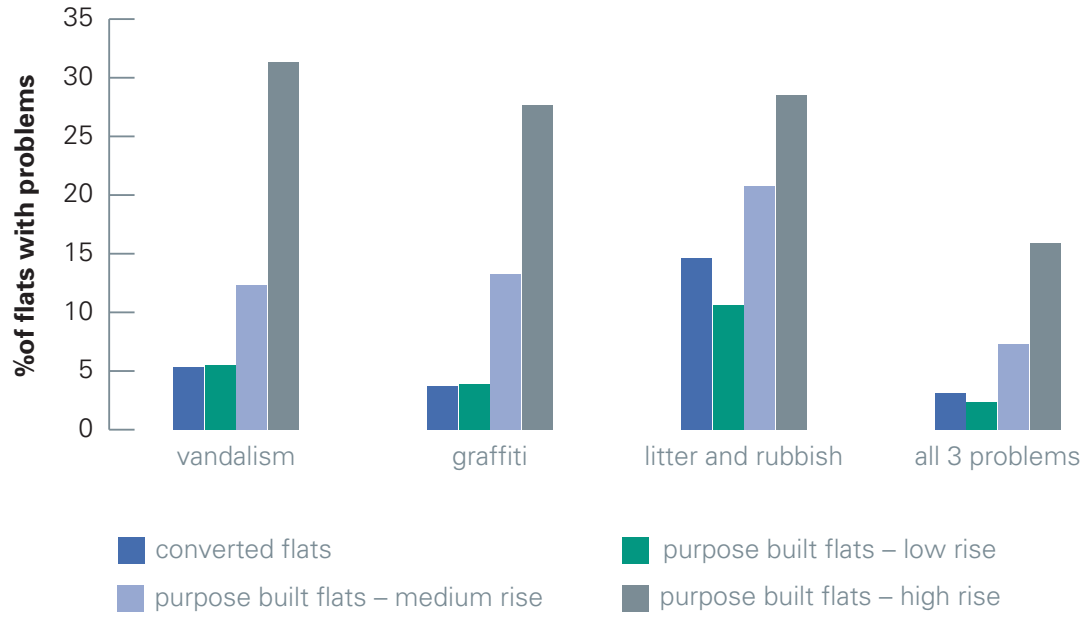
Figure 7.2: Percentage of flats with problems in common areas and shared facilities, 2003



Base: Flats with common areas

7.8 High rise flats are much more likely to have problems with vandalism, graffiti and rubbish in common areas than other types of flats, Figure 7.3. Problems of vandalism affect 31%, graffiti 28% and rubbish 29% of high rise flats and in 16% of high rise flats all three problems can be found. A similar picture emerges for shared facilities with high rise again having much higher incidence of these problems than other dwelling types with shared facilities. The higher incidence of these problems in high rise flats is partly because of the larger area (in square metres) of the common areas and because high rise flats tend to have more shared facilities to be abused.

Figure 7.3: Percentage of flats with problems in common areas by dwelling type, 2003

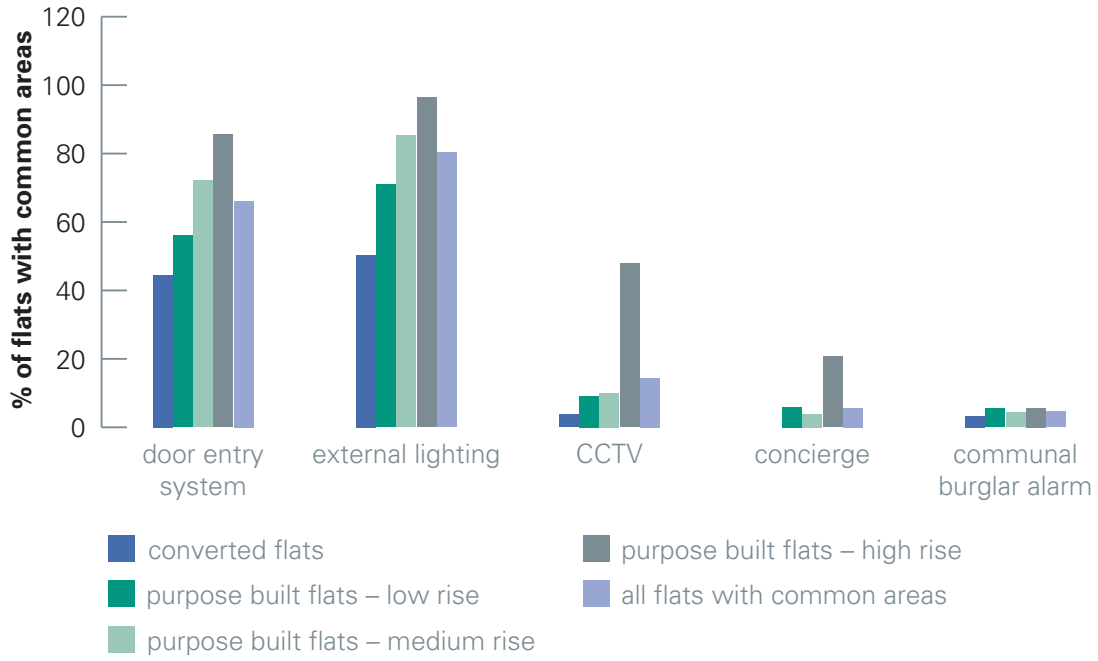


Base: Flats with common areas

Security measures in flats with common areas

7.9 Most flats with common areas have external lighting (72%), while about two thirds (66%) have door entry systems and about 1 in 7 (13%) have CCTV. Concierges and communal burglar alarm systems are far less common, present in just 6% and 4% respectively. Generally speaking, the higher the block the greater the likelihood of any of these measures being present, Figure 7.4. Almost half (48%) of high rise flats have CCTV and 21% have a concierge.

Figure 7.4: Flats with common areas – percentage with block security features by dwelling type, 2003

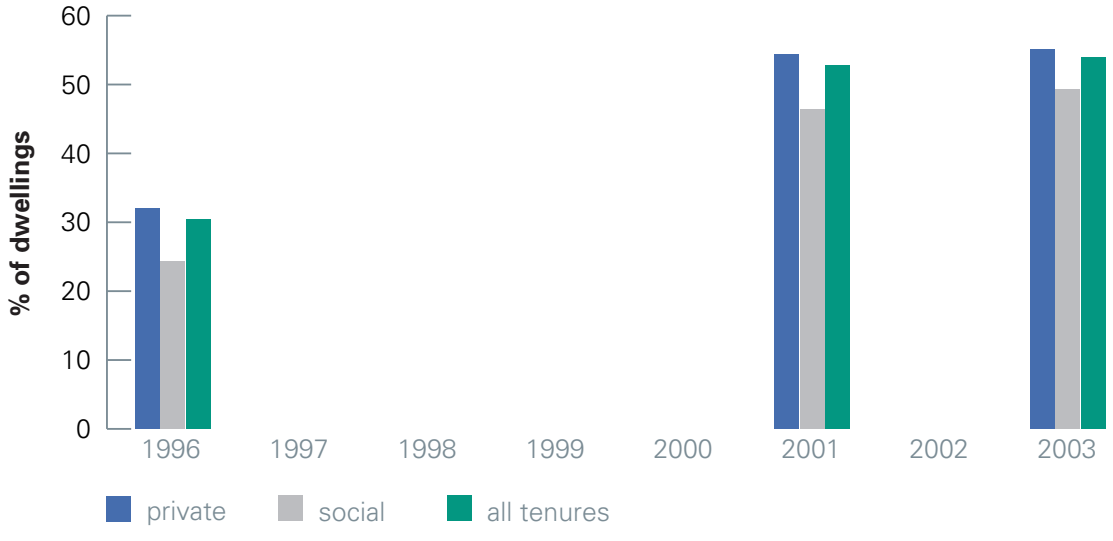


Base: Flats with common areas

Trends

7.10 Between 1996 and 2001, there was a substantial increase in the proportion of dwellings with secure windows and doors from 30% to 53% although it appears to have only increased marginally since 2001, Figure 7.5. Improvement since 1996 has been most marked in the social sector where the proportion of dwellings with secure windows and doors has doubled.

Figure 7.5: Proportion of dwellings with secure windows and doors by sector, 1996 – 2003



Base: all dwellings

Tenure

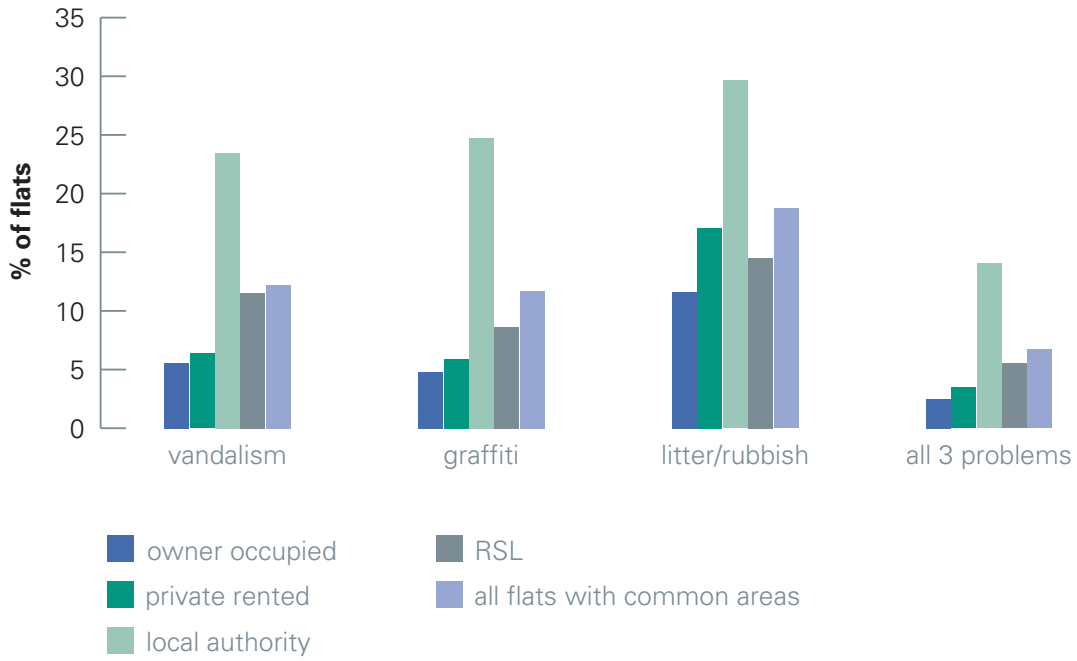
7.11 The incidence of individual dwelling security features varies markedly by tenure. Private rented homes are the least likely to have secure windows and doors (40%) followed by local authority homes (45%), Figure 7.6. Social sector homes are much less likely to have burglar alarms than those in the private sector (9% compared with 30%) but they are more likely to have door viewers than private sector homes (54% compared with 43%). For flats with common areas, those in the social sector are more likely to have door entry systems, concierges, CCTV or external lighting than those in the private sector. RSL flats are the most likely to have CCTV (18%) and door entry systems (75%).

Figure 7.6: Security measures to individual dwellings by tenure, 2003

Base: All dwellings

7.12 Local authority flats with common areas stand out as having the highest incidence of vandalism, graffiti and litter and rubbish in common areas, Figure 7.7. They are more than twice as likely to have all three types of problems as flats that are privately rented, owner occupied or owned by RSLs. There are similar patterns for the incidence of these problems in shared facilities, with the incidence of all problems being much higher for local authority homes. One explanation for this might be that local authority estates tend to have more shared facilities so there is a greater likelihood of abuse occurring.

Figure 7.7: Problems in common areas of flats by tenure, 2003

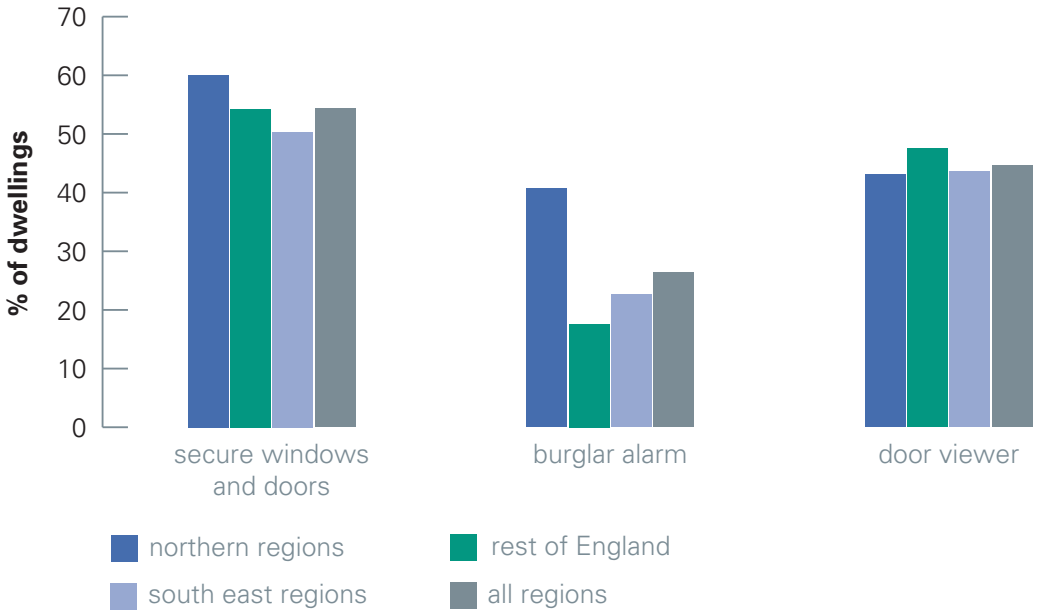


Base: Flats with common areas

Broad Regional Areas

7.13 Homes in the northern regions are more likely to have secure windows and doors and are almost twice as likely to have a burglar alarm as those located elsewhere, Figure 7.8. Some 60% have secure windows and doors and 41% have a burglar alarm. In the north flats with common areas are also more likely to have block security features than those in other regions. Some 73% of these flats in the north have door entry systems, 19% have CCTV and 8% have communal burglar alarms.

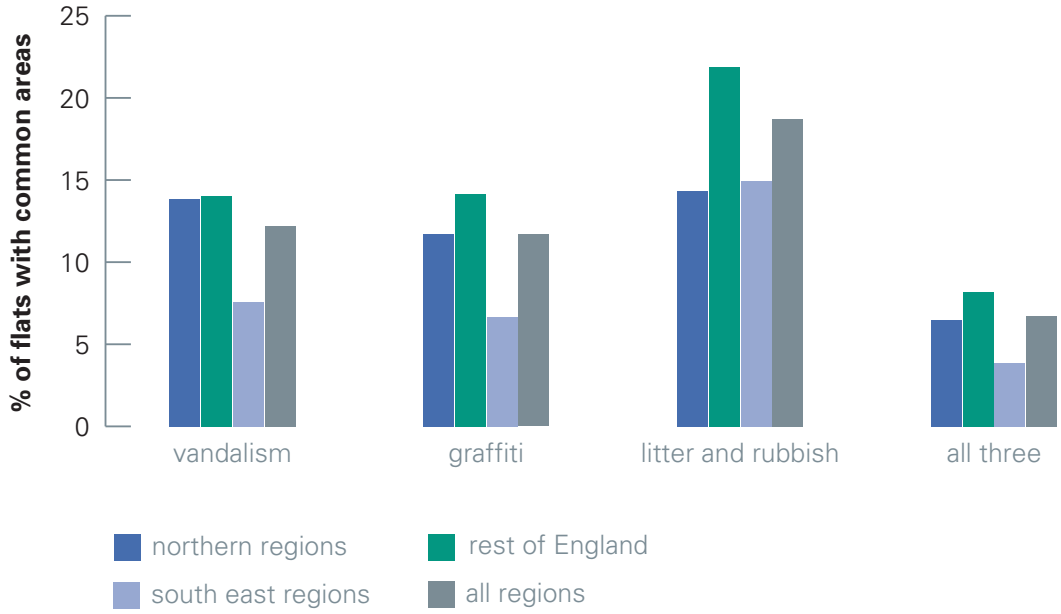
Figure 7.8: Security features to individual dwellings by region, 2003



Base: all dwellings

7.14 Problems with vandalism and graffiti to common areas of blocks of flats tend to be concentrated in the north and in the south east regions reflecting the higher proportion of high rise flats in these areas, Figure 7.9. In the south east regions, a higher proportion of flats with common areas have problems with graffiti (14%) and rubbish (22%). Some 8% of flats in south east regions have problems with vandalism, graffiti and rubbish in common areas compared with 7% in the northern regions and just 4% in the rest of England. Similar regional trends emerge when examining the incidence of problems in shared estate facilities. Flats in the south east regions have the highest incidence of graffiti (18%) in shared facilities.

Figure 7.9: Problems in common areas of flats by region, 2003



Base: Flats with common areas

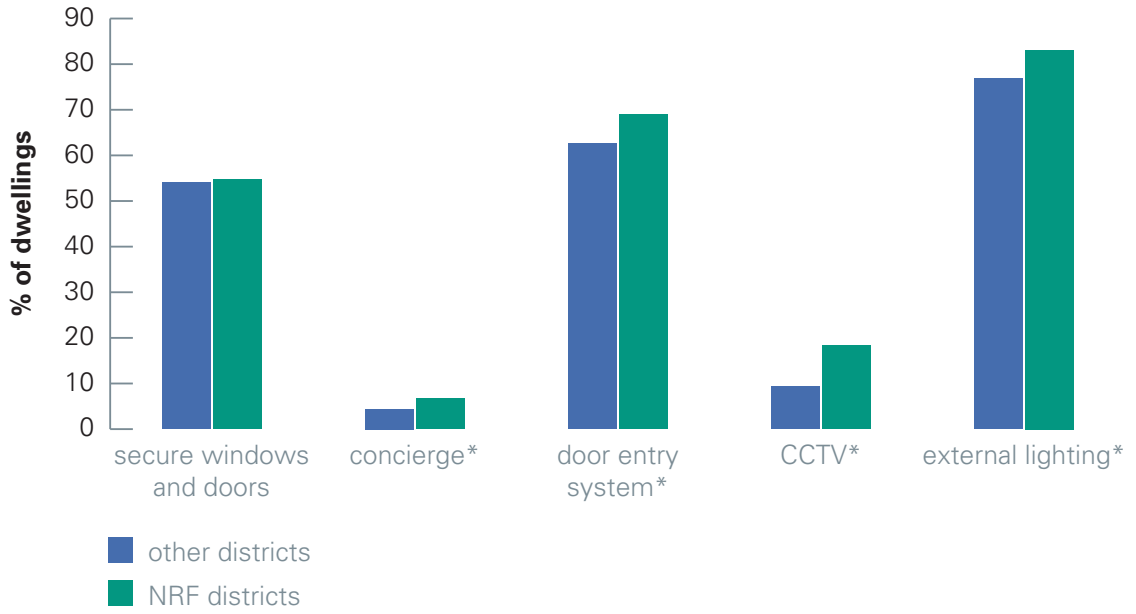
Type of area

7.15 Dwellings in suburban areas are more likely to have secure windows and doors (58% compared with 52% in rural areas and 49% in city and other urban centres). Suburban dwellings are also more likely to have burglar alarms, 29% compared with 24% in rural areas and 22% in city and other urban centres. Door entry, CCTV and communal burglar alarms are more likely to be found in flats located in city and urban centres. Not surprisingly, urban flats are also more likely to have higher levels of problems in both common areas and shared facilities than flats located elsewhere.

Deprivation

7.16 The proportion of homes with secure windows and doors does not vary significantly between NRF districts and other districts, Figure 7.10. Although dwellings in the most deprived areas are less likely to have secure windows and doors than those in the least deprived, the differences are not large (52% compared with 57%) This can partly be explained by the mix of dwelling types and tenure most frequently found in deprived areas. Although flats with common areas in NRF areas are more likely to have block security measures than those in other districts, the only really large differences are for CCTV. The differences in the incidence of most of the block and individual dwelling security measures do not reflect the scale of differences in both the fear and incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour in these areas.

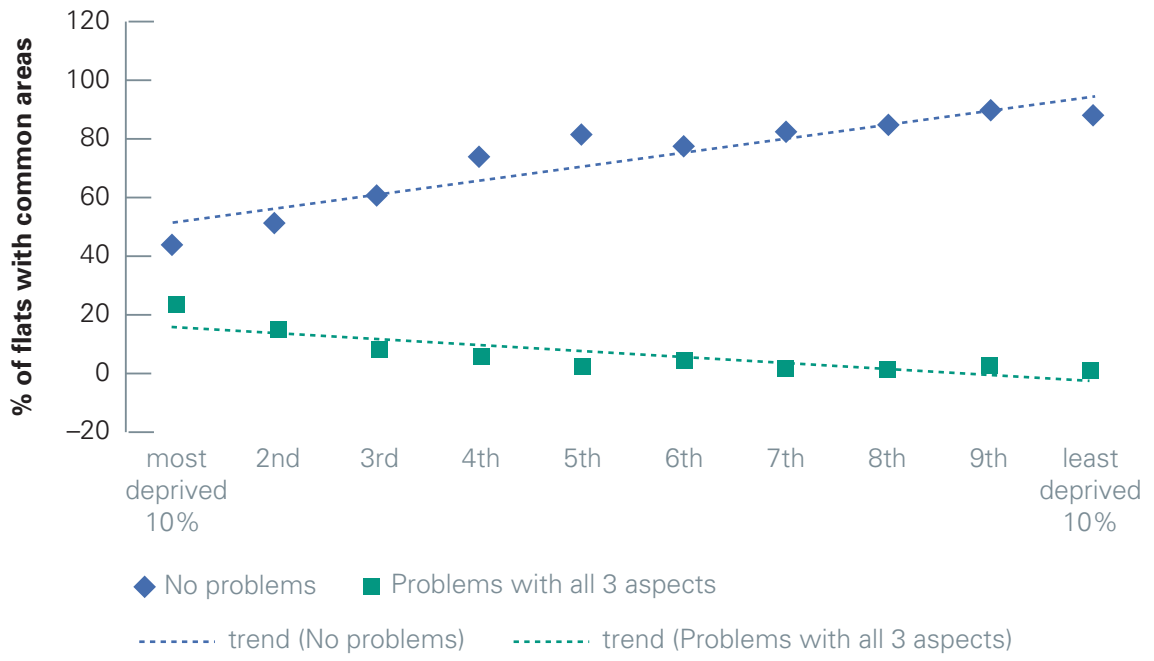
Figure 7.10: Security measures for NRF and other districts, 2003



Base: all dwellings in NRF districts and all dwellings in other districts, * relate to the proportion of flats with common areas

7.17 Vandalism and graffiti are more prevalent in the common areas of flats located in NRF districts. Some 9% of these flats have problems with all three aspects (litter and rubbish, graffiti and vandalism), compared with just 4% of those in other districts. A similar relationship with deprivation is evident when looking at the incidence of problems in shared facilities on estates; 14% of those flats in NRF areas have problems with all three aspects in shared facilities compared to 6% elsewhere. Furthermore the less deprived an area is the less likely the incidence of any problems in shared facilities, Figure 7.11. In the 10% most deprived areas 44% of flats with common areas have no problems in shared facilities compared to almost 90% of flats with common areas in the 10% least deprived areas.

Figure 7.11: Flats with common areas – Deprivation by problems in shared facilities, 2003



Base: Flats with common areas

Note: The three aspects include litter/rubbish, vandalism and graffiti.

Market Conditions

7.18 Dwellings located in areas of negligible or limited demand for housing or where the average property takes over 6 months to sell are less likely to have secure windows and doors (47% for each) than those located elsewhere.

7.19 Negligible or limited demand is associated with problems of vandalism and graffiti in common areas of flats. Some 14% of flats in these areas have problems with vandalism, graffiti and litter in common areas compared with just 6-7% elsewhere. A similar picture emerges for problems associated with shared facilities for these dwellings. There are strong relationships between typical time to sell a property and problems in both common areas of flats and shared facilities. For example, 43% of flats with common areas have problems with vandalism to shared facilities in localities where it takes over 6 months to sell a property compared with 18% where it takes 19-26 weeks and 14% where it takes less than 9 weeks.

Chapter 8

Disparities in living conditions for households

8.1 In 1997 the Government put in place an agenda to tackle social exclusion in recognition of its complex and multi-dimensional nature. This chapter looks a range of (overlapping) households groups that include: firstly those with resource and other constraints that limit their capacity or opportunity to affect their housing circumstances (including low income, workless but also ethnic minority households); and secondly households with people who may be more at risk from poor conditions (due to their age or to long term illness or disability). The chapter assesses the extent to which these households are likely to experience poor living conditions, examining any disparities between these groups and the average for all households and whether these disparities have changed over time.

8.2 The chapter also looks at social sector tenants and private sector vulnerable households who together comprise almost one third of all households. These two groups effectively form the 'target households' of the Government's decent homes agenda and include disproportionate numbers of the 'disadvantaged' and 'at risk' households identified above. Previously, Chapters 2 and 3 have looked at non-decent social sector stock and vulnerable households in the private sector in some detail. This chapter assesses the progress made for these households in terms of decent homes in comparison with the other two thirds of (private sector) households and also their wider living conditions.

8.3 The chapter draws on four indicators of poor living conditions derived from earlier chapters, and set out below.

- **non-decent** homes: that fail any of the four decent homes criteria, repair, fitness, modern facilities and services and thermal comfort (see Chapter 2);
- **energy inefficient** homes: with a SAP rating less than 30 (see Chapter 5);
- homes in **serious disrepair**: the 10% of (occupied) homes with greatest levels of general disrepair, amounting to £106m^2 or more (see Chapter 4);
- homes in **poor quality environments**: that have problems related to upkeep, traffic or utilisation of the area (see Chapter 6).

Summary

- Housing conditions have substantially improved for all households since 1996, including those who are more likely to be disadvantaged or at risk from poor conditions.
- Social tenants and vulnerable private sector households targeted through Decent Homes and other government programmes have made greatest progress and the 'gap' between them and other households in terms of housing conditions has closed significantly since 1996.
- Nevertheless significant disparities remain between disadvantaged households and the national average in respect of housing and environmental conditions. Specific problems are more likely to impact on different forms of disadvantage.
- Poor housing conditions are most likely among the poorest households, but particularly those who own or privately rent and who are have of low income or are workless.
- Older people (aged 60 years or more) in the private housing sector are also much more likely than average to live in poor housing conditions and elderly people (aged 75 years or more), who may be considered most at risk from any exposure to low temperatures, are also the households most likely to occupy energy inefficient homes.
- Ethnic minority households are more likely than average to experience a wide range of poor living conditions but particularly those poor quality environments associated with deprived urban and particularly city centre locations.
- While children as a whole are no more or even less likely than average to experience different types of poor living conditions, this does not include those whose parents are poor or who live with one parent. Lone parent households are much more likely than average to reside in homes with poor quality environments, particularly those problems associated with the upkeep of buildings and public space.

Disadvantaged and at risk households – overall disparities in 2003

8.4 In 2003, 6.3 million households occupy non-decent homes, 1.9 million live in energy inefficient homes, 2.1 million households experience problems of serious disrepair and 3.3 million households reside in poor quality environments. All groups have seen a substantial improvement in their living conditions since 2001 although the extent of the problems does vary among types of disadvantaged group.

Table 8.1: Household groups by poor living conditions, 2003[22]

	non-decent homes		energy inefficient homes		homes in serious disrepair		poor quality environments		all	
	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%
ethnic minorities	563	35	69	4	210	13	413	25	1,626	100
low income	1,612	39	514	12	589	14	827	20	4,119	100
workless	1,002	36	281	10	353	13	592	21	2,778	100
children 0-15	1,634	26	385	6	565	9	1,019	16	6,184	100
lone parents	469	31	122	8	173	11	323	21	1,515	100
illness or disability	2,021	33	569	9	678	11	993	16	6,136	100
older people 60+	2,337	33	778	11	697	10	950	13	7,098	100
elderly 75+	933	36	328	13	298	11	338	13	2,600	100
all households	**6,272**	**30**	**1,860**	**9**	**2,074**	**10**	**3,291**	**16**	**20,724**	**100**

Base: each household group.

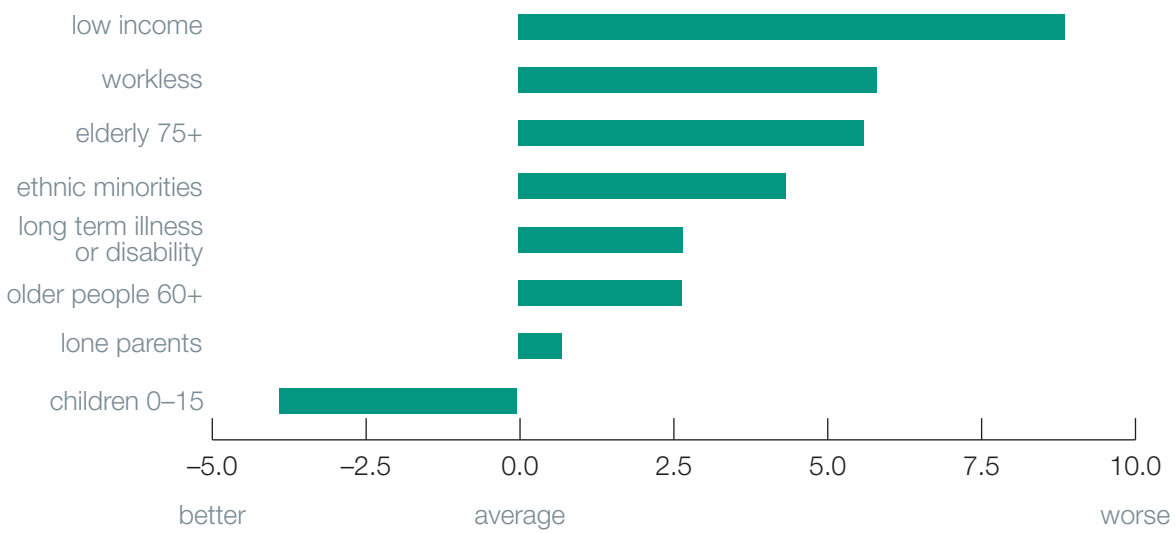
Note: the definition for each group is provided in the Glossary under 'household groups'.

8.5 These household groups do not necessarily experience poor living conditions uniformly across all indicators. For many groups the picture varies from one indicator to another and this is linked to a range of factors such as tenure, income, type of area, and property age and type. The groups of course also overlap in terms of membership – some more so than others – and this affects similarities or differences in the incidence of poor living conditions between these groups.

8.6 Household resources have a major impact on living conditions, particularly in the private housing sector (home owners and those renting from private landlords). Low income households – the poorest fifth – have the highest likelihood of any group of living in a non-decent home (39%), which is 8 percentage points greater than the national average, Figure 8.1.[23] They are also more likely than average to live in energy inefficient homes and in poor quality environments. Workless households also have a greater chance than average of experiencing poor living conditions.

[22] Detailed definitions for the households groups are provided in the glossary.
[23] The apparent discrepancy with Table 8.1 is the effect of rounding in the table.

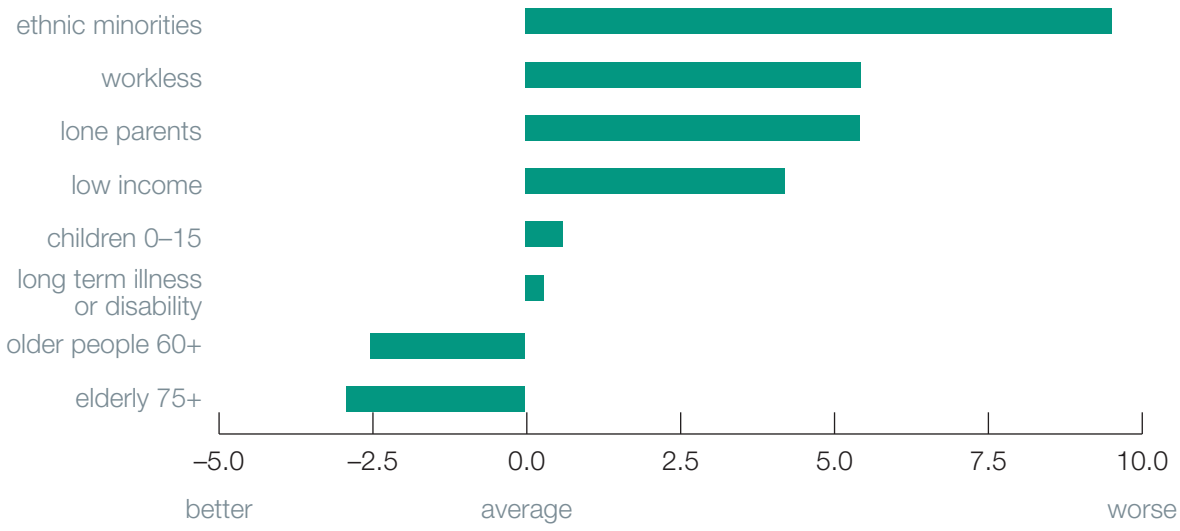
Figure 8.1: Household groups and non-decent homes, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



Base: each household group.

Note: 0 represents the national average for all households living in non-decent homes.

Figure 8.2: Household groups and poor quality environments, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



Base: each household group.

Note: 0 represents the national average for all households living with poor quality environments.

8.7 Ethnic minority households are more likely than average to live in non-decent homes (35%), and have the greatest likelihood of any group of living in poor quality environments (25%), Table 8.1 and Figure 8.2. However, these households are the least likely of all groups to live in energy inefficient homes, with rates less than half the national average.

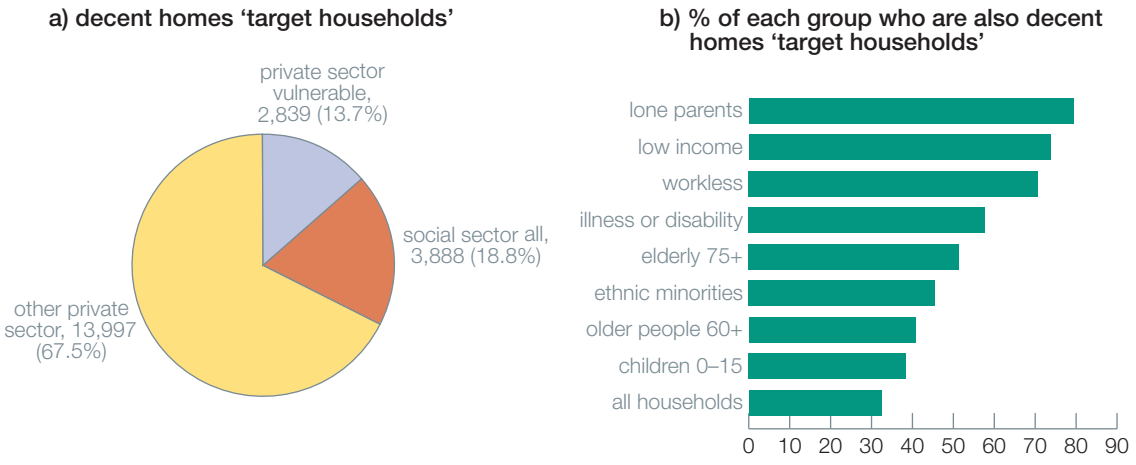
8.8 Older person households, and particularly those with someone over the age of 75, have a greater likelihood of living in non-decent homes than the average for all households, Table 8.1 and Figure 8.1. Of particular concern is the high proportion of older person households living in energy inefficient homes, and in homes failing the thermal comfort criterion of the decent homes standard. However, older people have the lowest chance of all groups of living in poor quality environments, Figure 8.2.

8.9 Overall, households with children are the least likely to experience non decent homes (26%) and are not significantly more likely than average to reside in places with poor quality environments.[24] However, particular groups such as parents with low income and lone parents are more likely to experience poor living conditions than other households with children. Lone parents are among those most likely to live in poor quality environments (21%).

Decent homes 'target' households – overall disparities in 2003

8.10 The 'target' households for the Government decent homes programme comprise almost one third of all households and together constitute the great majority of all lone parents, the poorest fifth of households and workless households, and the majority of households that include anyone who is long term ill or disabled or elderly (aged 75 years or more), Figure 8.3.

Figure 8.3: Decent homes 'target households', number and composition, 2003



Base: a) all households; b) each household group.

8.11 As with the wider disadvantaged and at risk groups reviewed above, the two groups of households targeted through Government decent homes policy do not experience poor living conditions uniformly across all indicators, Table 8.2.

[24] Households with infants (aged 0-4) have a very similar pattern to those with older children in terms of each indicator of poor living conditions and have therefore not been separately identified.

Table 8.2: Decent homes 'target households' by poor living conditions, 2003

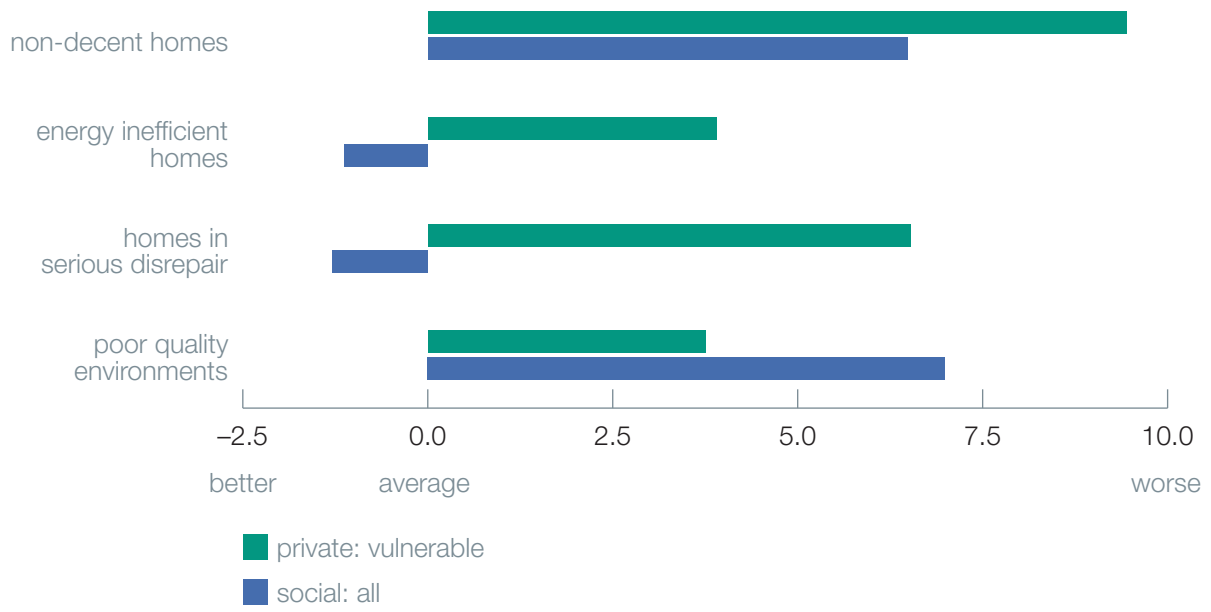
	non-decent homes		energy inefficient homes		homes in serious disrepair		poor quality environments		all	
	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%	no. (000s)	%
social: all	1,331	34	292	8	314	8	818	21	3,888	100
private: vulnerable	1,056	37	356	13	451	16	506	18	2,839	100
private: all other	3,885	28	1,211	9	1,310	9	1,967	14	13,997	100
all households	**6,272**	**30**	**1,860**	**9**	**2,074**	**10**	**3,291**	**16**	**20,724**	**100**

Base: each household group.

8.12 The 2.8 million private sector vulnerable households (those in receipt of means tested or disability related benefits) are more likely than other private sector households to experience all these problems with living conditions, Figure 8.4. Besides the 37% of vulnerable private sector households who live in non-decent homes (see Chapter 3), they are also much more likely to live in homes in serious disrepair – 16% compared to 9% of other private sector households.

8.13 The 3.9 million social sector tenants are also more likely to live in non-decent homes (34%) than non-vulnerable private sector households (28%), though they are no more likely to live in homes that are particularly energy inefficient or in serious disrepair. However they are much more likely to live in a poor quality environment (21%) in comparison with either vulnerable (18%) or non vulnerable (14%) private sector households.

Figure 8.4: Decent homes 'target households' and non-decent homes, percentage difference from non-targeted households for each problem, 2003



Base: each target group.

Notes: 0 represents the average position for all non-target households (private sector non-vulnerable) for each living condition problem.

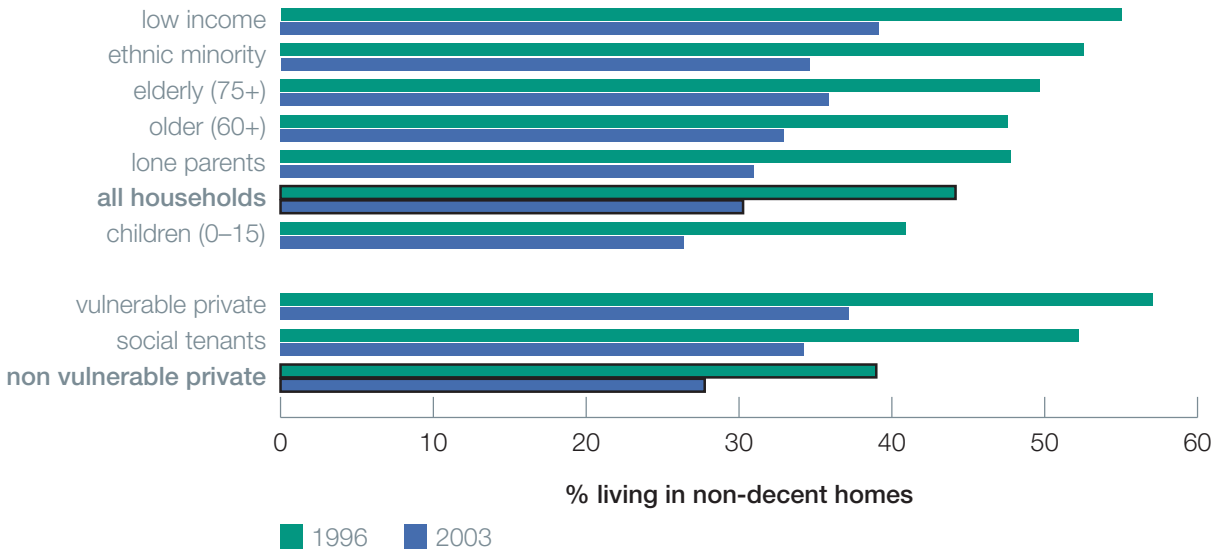
Trends in non-decent homes since 1996[25]

8.14 While significant disparities remain, all households have made substantial improvement in their housing conditions since 1996, with the proportion living in non-decent homes falling from 44% to 30%. Moreover the progress made by or for disadvantaged or at risk households has generally been at least equal to the national average, whatever their 'starting point', Figure 8.5. The disadvantaged groups with the highest incidence of non-decency in 1996 – the poorest fifth and ethnic minorities – both appear to have progressed at rates that may be faster than the national average, although further annual results are required to confirm this.[26]

[25] The focus of this section is on decent homes only using available comparable results across surveys from 1996. Future reports will cover other key aspects of living conditions when accumulated survey results allow.

[26] The apparent higher rates of progress for ethnic minorities, low income households and lone parents that can be derived from the results are, as with the assessment for all groups, sensitive to relatively small differences in annual findings which are themselves within the confidence limits associated with the sample for each survey. The statistical approach used to draw firm conclusions about the rate of progress for individual groups and remaining disparities compared to the average (or another reference group) is detailed in Chapter 7 of the 2003 EHCS Technical Report. The statistical test to compare the national average with the group of interest (e.g. low income) actually excludes the latter from the comparison group "all households". This is to maintain statistical robustness of the comparison.

Figure 8.5: Comparison of groups living in non decent homes, 1996 and 2003



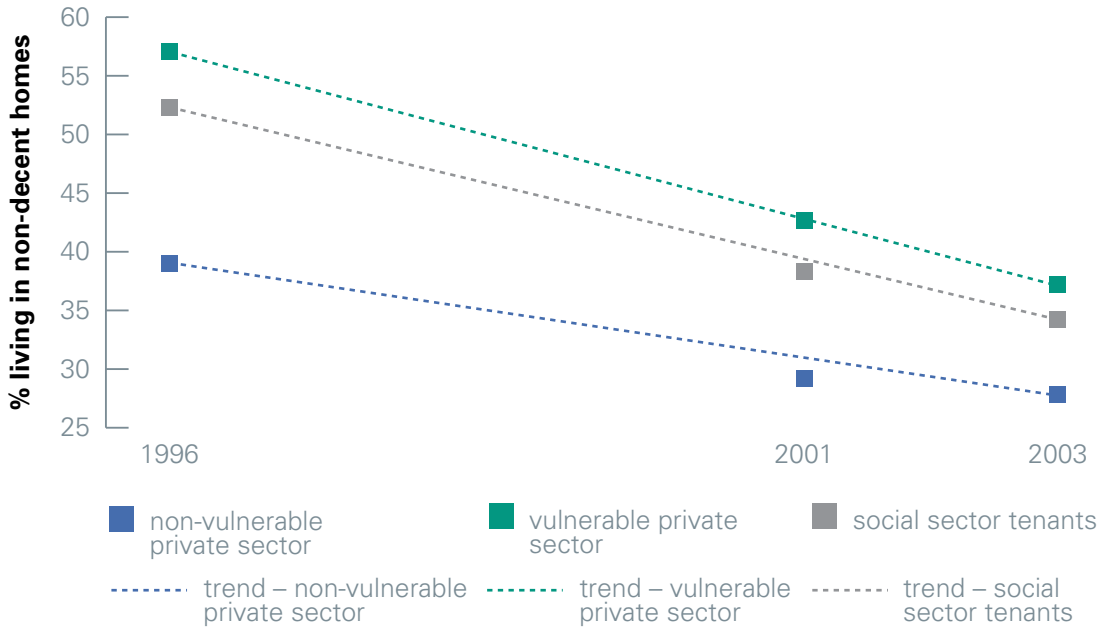
Base: each household group and all households, 1996 and 2003

8.15 For the decent homes 'target households' (social tenants and private sector vulnerable households), the relative gains made since 1996 in comparison to other households are more pronounced. There has been a reduction of 20 percentage points in the proportion of private sector vulnerable households living in non-decent homes (57% to 37%) and 18 percentage points in the proportion of social tenants (52% to 34%).

8.16 This substantial improvement compares with a reduction of 11 percentage points (38% to 27%) for all other households and indicates an overall narrowing of the gap for these 'target households', Figure 8.6. The level of progress for social tenants and private sector vulnerable households reflects the support provided through Government decent homes, fuel poverty and energy efficiency policies, along with housing market circumstances that have been beneficial to private investment in improving existing homes for private owners generally.[27]

[27] Government fuel poverty policy includes a range of programmes to improve the energy efficiency of homes in the social and private housing sectors. These improvements complement support for decent homes and have a substantial impact regarding the thermal comfort criterion of the standard. The Warm Front scheme is the key programme for tackling fuel poverty in the private sector and which uses a definition of vulnerable households which is similar (but not identical) to that used for decent homes targeting through local authority private sector renewal.

Figure 8.6: Private sector vulnerable and social sector households compared to other households living in non decent homes, 1996 to 2003



Base: all households, 1996 to 2003

8.17 Households that include older people or children (those who may be regarded as being more at risk in terms of health consequences from poor housing conditions) are more likely to have experienced improvement if they are social sector tenants or private sector vulnerable households.

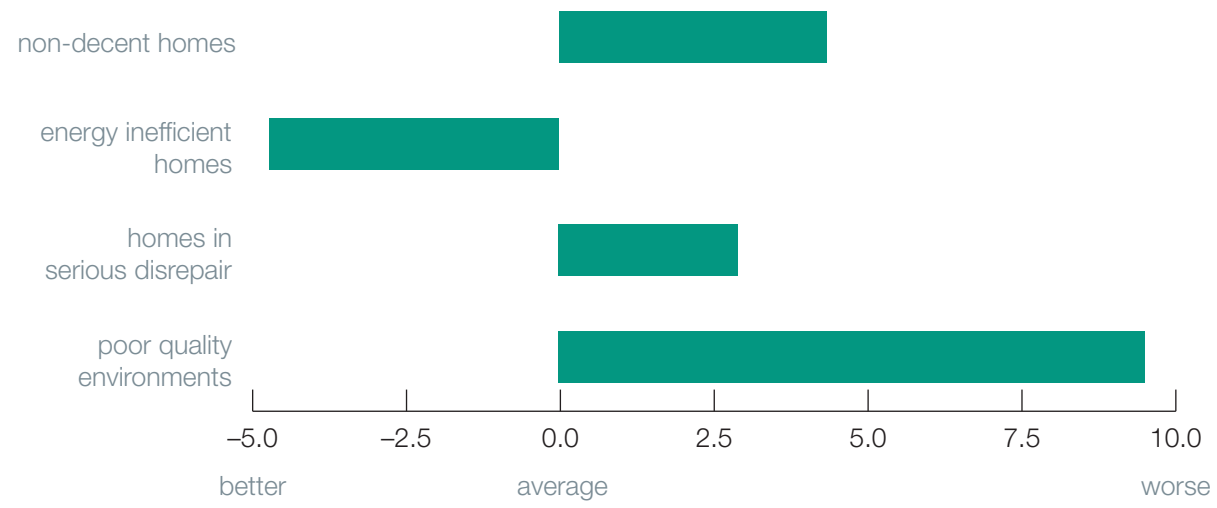
Disadvantaged and at risk households – detailed disparities in 2003

8.18 Despite progress, particularly among social sector tenants and private sector vulnerable households, disparities remain not only in the likelihood of living in a decent home but also wider living conditions of disadvantaged groups.

Ethnic minorities

8.19 While the majority of households living in non-decent homes are white, with only 9% (0.6 million) belonging to any other ethnic group, ethnic minority households are more likely to live in non-decent homes than the average for all households (35% compared to 30%), Table 8.1 and Figure 8.7. There are of course marked differences in living conditions between distinct ethnic minority groups as well as compared with white households. Among the key factors here are the relative concentrations of ethnic minority groups among low income households, as well as in city and urban areas, in flats and in older homes, all of which have greater rates of non-decency.

Figure 8.7: Ethnic minority households and poor living conditions, percentage difference from the national average 2003



Base: all ethnic minority households.

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator

8.20 The majority (71%) of ethnic minority households in non-decent homes live in the private housing sector. While ethnic minority households in the private sector are more likely to live in non-decent homes than the average for the private sector as a whole (34% compared to 29%), ethnic minority households in the social sector are not significantly more likely to live in non-decent homes than the sector average (34%).

8.21 Ethnic minority households do not suffer disproportionately from living in cold homes. The likelihood of ethnic minority households living in energy inefficient homes (4%) is less than that of any other group, and less than half the average for all households (9%), Figure 8.7. Ethnic minority households are no more likely than average to occupy homes that fail the thermal comfort criterion of decent homes.

8.22 The greater than average likelihood of ethnic minority households living in non-decent homes arises because they are much more likely to occupy homes that do not meet the repair, fitness or modern facilities and services criteria. Some 48% of non-decent homes occupied by ethnic minority households are non-decent for these reasons, compared to 40% for all households in non decent homes in 2003. Furthermore, these households are more likely than the average to live in homes with problems of serious disrepair (13% compared to 10%).

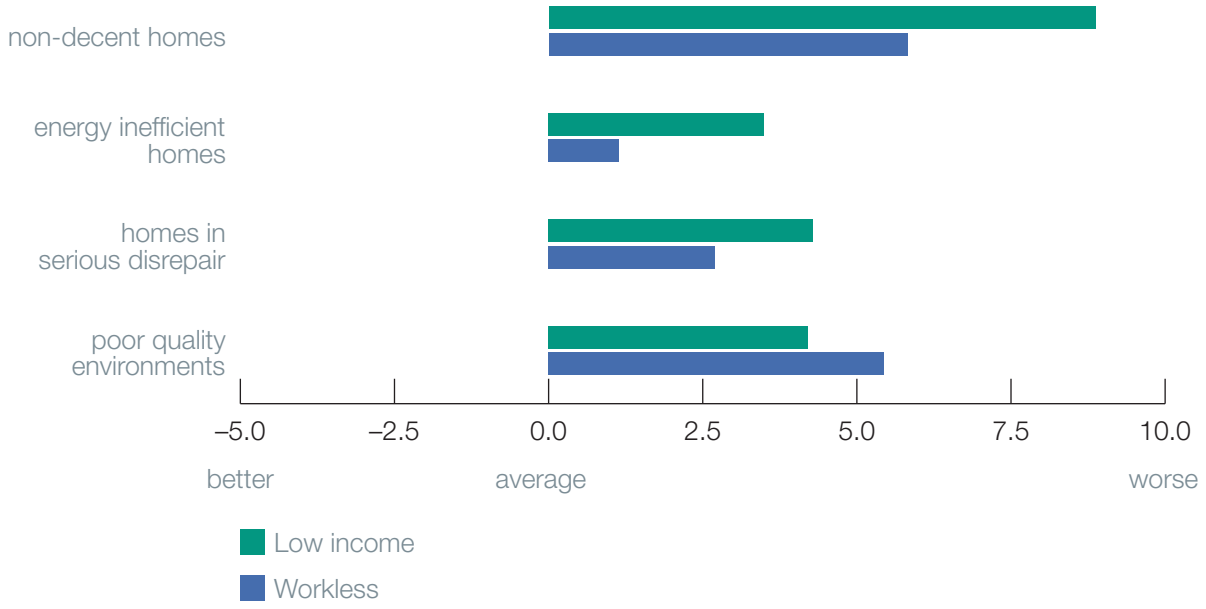
8.23 Ethnic minority households are at greatest risk of living in poor quality environments (25% compared to an average of 16%), Table 8.1 and Figure 8.7. This pattern is the same in both the private and social housing sectors and reflects the relative concentration of ethnic minority households in city and urban areas, and in deprived areas, which suffer from greater problems of environmental quality.

Low income and workless households

8.24 Limited resources constrain the capacity of households to exercise choice in the way they are housed and the environments in which they live. Low income households (the poorest fifth of all) are more likely than average to experience poor living conditions across all indicators. Workless households (pre-retirement age), with a high concentration of those with low income, are also more likely than average to experience poor living conditions.

8.25 Low income households have a significantly greater likelihood (39%) of living in a non decent home than any other group, and than the average for all households (30%), Figures 8.1 and 8.8. The proportion of workless households living in non decent homes is also high (36%). The key difference between the two groups is the presence of retired and older householders in the low income group who are particularly likely to occupy poor housing but less likely to live in poor quality environments (see below).

Figure 8.8: Low income and workless households and poor living conditions, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



Base: all low income households and all workless households.

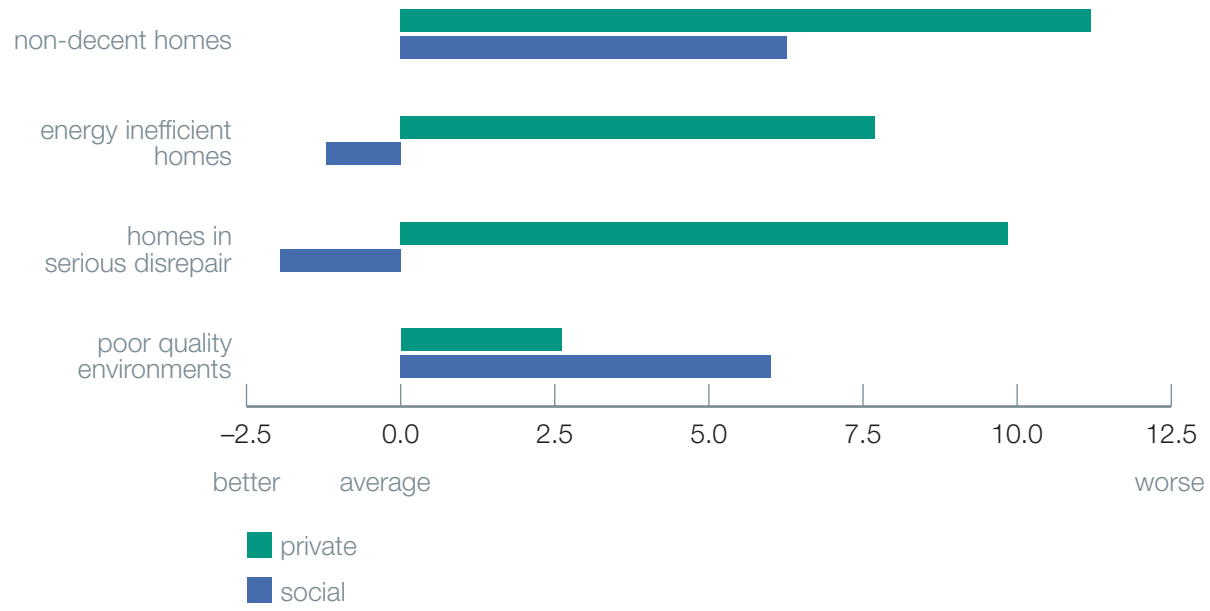
Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator. Low income households are the poorest fifth based on net household income. Workless households are those with one or more householders below retirement age and not in part or full time employment.

8.26 The non-decent homes of low income and workless households are more likely than average to fail on repair, fitness or modern facilities and services (45% compared to the average 40%) and to be in serious disrepair. This is largely driven by the dynamics of the private housing sector where 20% of low income households in the private sector live in homes in serious disrepair against the overall average of 10%.

8.27 Workless households are the more likely of the two groups to live in poor quality environments – 21% compared to the national average of 16%.

8.28 Disparities in living conditions for low income households, along with workless households and other key groups, are typically more marked in the private housing sector compared to the social sector. In the private sector, resources are a key factor influencing access to good housing and neighbourhoods, and, for homeowners, the ability to maintain and improve their home, Figure 8.9. Low income households in the private housing sector are more likely to occupy homes in poor condition and with poor heating standards. However, social tenants with low income are more likely to experience poor quality environments – and problems with the upkeep and misuse of the area in particular. A key factor here is the greater proportion of social sector homes in city and urban areas and deprived areas, which tend to suffer disproportionately with problems of poor quality environments.

Figure 8.9: Low income households and poor living conditions by housing sector, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



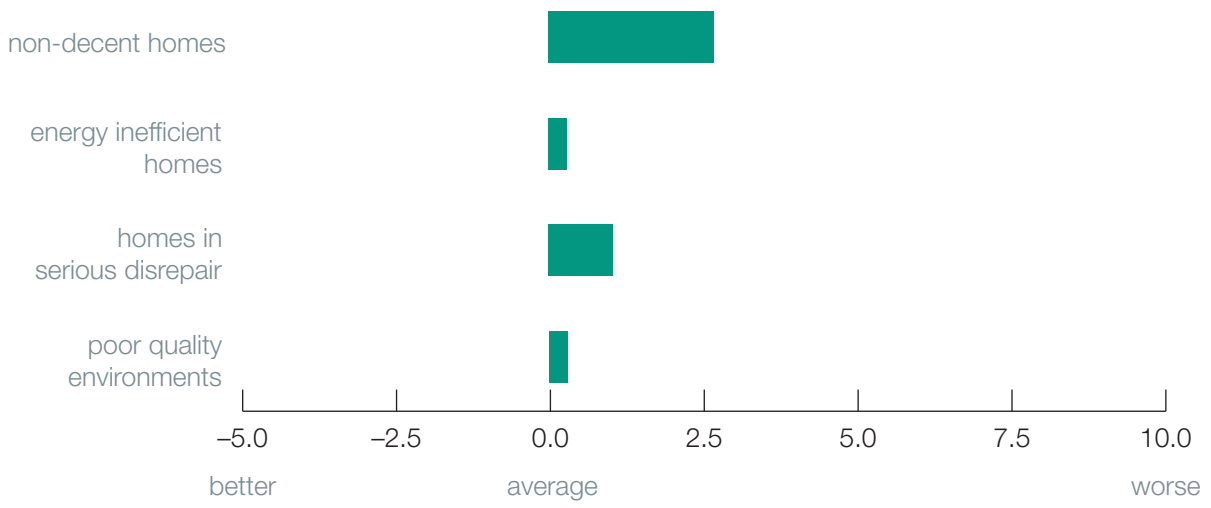
Base: all low income households.

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator.

Long term ill or disabled people

8.29 As a group, households that include someone with a long terms illness or disability tend to follow the overall national pattern in terms of their likelihood of experiencing poor living conditions, Figure 8.10.

Figure 8.10: People with long term illness or disability and poor living conditions, percentage difference from the average, 2003



Base: all households including one or more people with a long term illness or a disability.

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator.

8.30 Some 32% of all households living in non-decent homes (2.0 million) include someone with a long-term illness or disability. Such households are a little more likely (33%) to live in non-decent homes than average (30%). Of course such households may have additional problems with access to and mobility within the home and any necessary adaptations to facilitate their independence.[28]

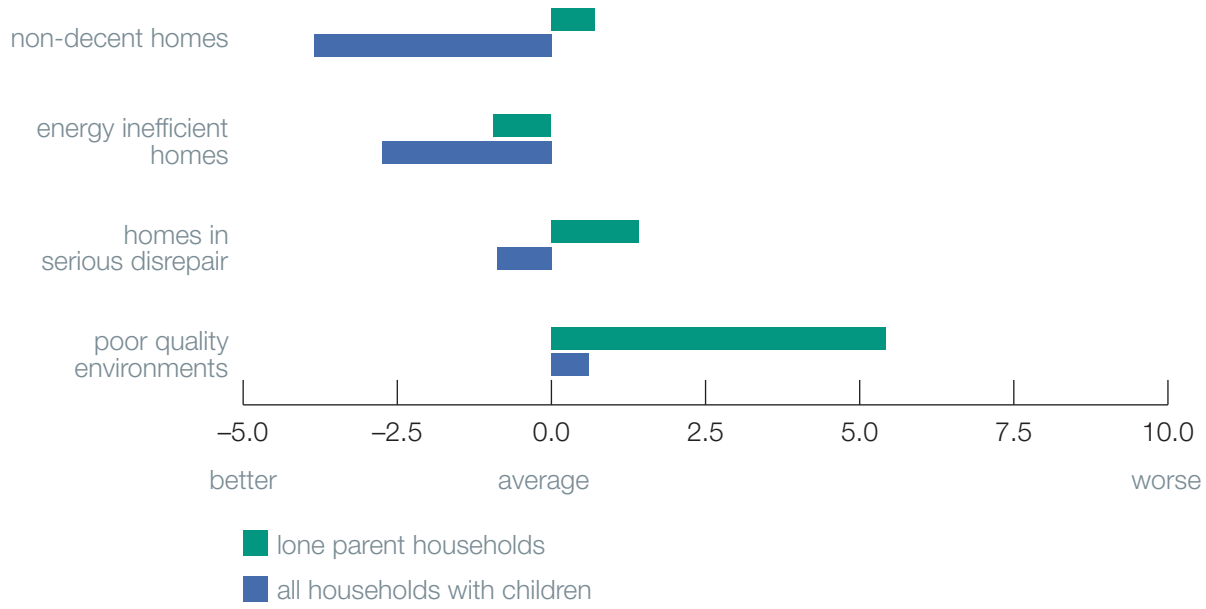
Children

8.31 While satisfactory living conditions are important for everyone, they are particularly important for children and older people who may be more vulnerable to the health and safety risks associated with poor living conditions.

8.32 In general, children are less likely than average to live in homes that are non-decent, energy inefficient or in serious disrepair, Table 8.1 and Figure 8.11. Some 1.6 million households with a child or young person under the age of 16 live in non-decent homes (26% of households with children compared to the national average of 30%). This includes almost 0.7 million households with infants (children under the age of 5). Around 0.4 million (6% of) households with children live in energy inefficient homes and 0.6 million (9%) live in homes with serious disrepair – in both cases proportionately less than the national average. There is no significant difference in the proportion of households with children affected by poor living conditions in the private and social housing sectors.

[28] No comparable information for 1996 is available to assess any trends for households that include long term ill or disabled people. Findings will be monitored and reported from 2001 onwards.

Figure 8.11: Households with children and lone parents and poor living conditions, percentage difference from the national average, 2003

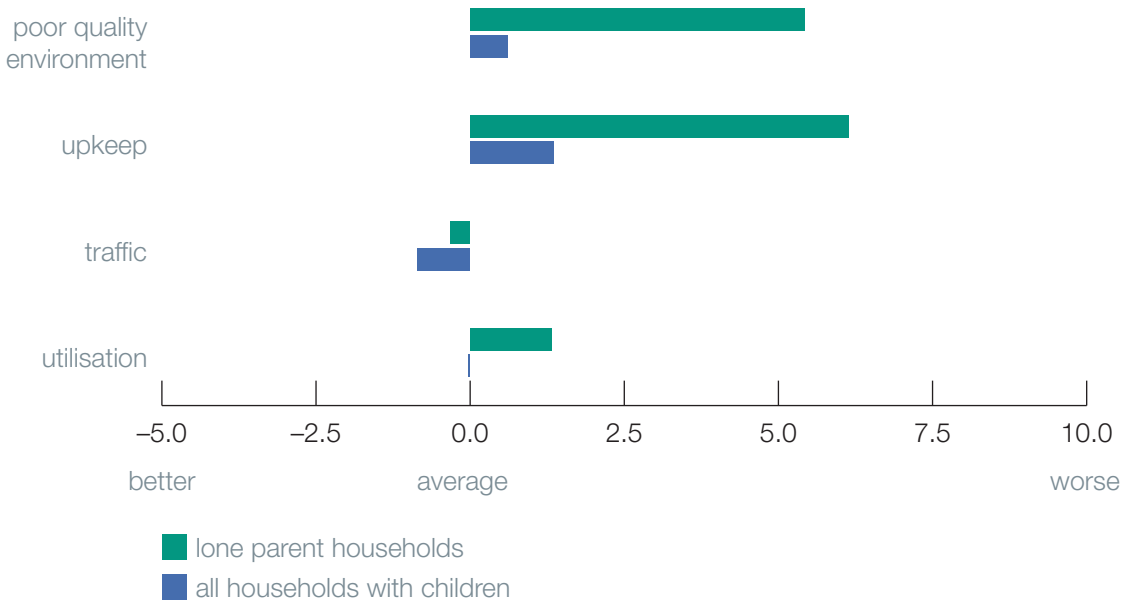


Base: all households with children and all lone parent households.

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator. Households with children include any household with one of more people aged 15 or less.

8.33 Nevertheless, children in low income households in the private housing sector and those in lone parent households (31%) are at a higher risk of living in non-decent homes than children as a whole. However the disparities between lone parents and all households with children (and the national average) are much more marked in terms of poor quality environments, Figure 8.11. While households with children as a whole are no more likely than average to live in poor quality environments (16%), some 21% of lone parent households do, Figure 8.12. For lone parents there is a much greater likelihood of living with problems regarding the upkeep and misuse of the immediate environment (16% of lone parent households compared to 11% of all households with children and 10% of all households).

Figure 8.12: Households with children, lone parent households and poor quality environments, percentage difference from the national average, 2003



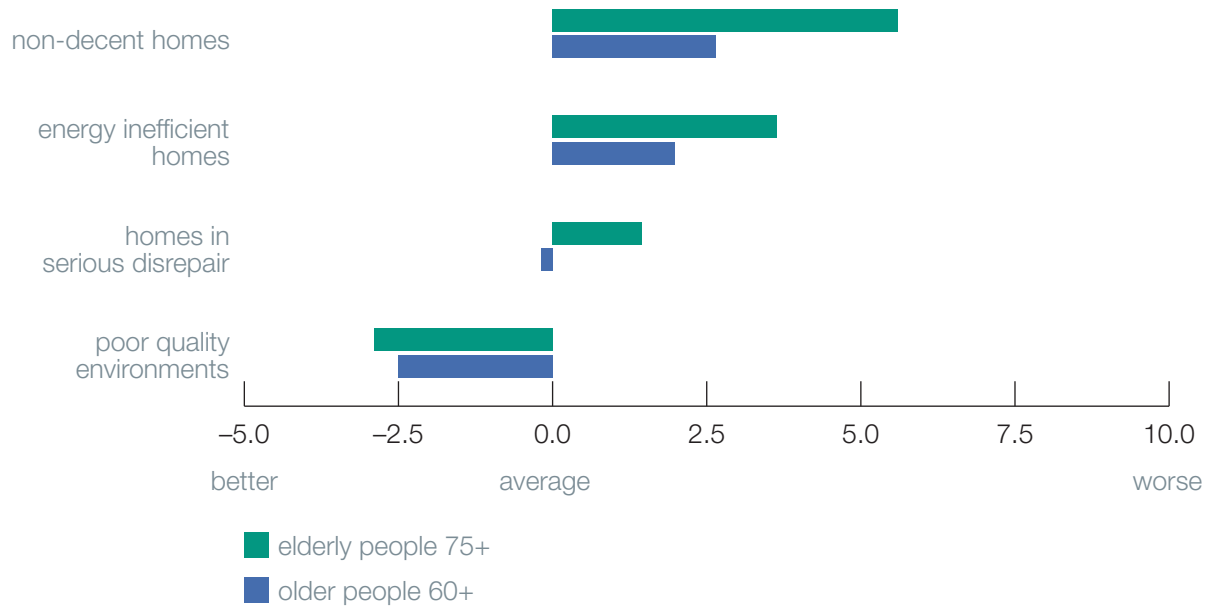
Base: all households with children and all lone parent households.

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator of poor quality environments. Households with children include any household with one of more people aged 15 or less.

Older people

8.34 Health risks from poor housing conditions, including poorly heated homes, are substantially higher for elderly people. Some 2.3 million 'older' households (which include at least one person aged 60 years or more) live in non-decent homes (representing 37% of all households in non-decent homes). Of these, over 0.9 million include someone aged 75 or above. Households including someone over the age of 60 are more likely than average to live in non-decent homes (33% compared to 30%), but for those over the age of 75 the likelihood is greater (36%), Table 8.1 and Figure 8.13. In the private housing sector low income, long term residence and age all further increase the likelihood of older and elderly people living in non decent homes.

Figure 8.13: Older and elderly person households and poor living conditions, percentage difference from the average, 2003



Base: all older person and all elderly person household

Note: 0 represents the national average for each indicator. Older person households include one or more people aged 60 or more. Elderly person households include one of more people aged 75 years or more.

8.35 Older households are more likely to live in cold homes. They are more likely to live in energy inefficient homes (SAP rating less than 30) than the average for all households, particularly if the household includes someone over the age of 75 (13% compared to 9%). The non-decent homes of these households are also more likely to fail on the thermal comfort criterion than average – 0.8 million (29% of all) households that include people aged 75 years or more.

8.36 Older people do not suffer disproportionately from living in poor quality environments. While almost 1.0 million older households reside in homes with such problems, they are less likely than the overall average to do so. This is due in part to the relatively lower concentration of older households in city or urban areas where these problems are more common.

Survey details

The 2003 EHCS findings are based on data collected from 16,648 dwellings and 15,950 households from April 2002 to March 2004. The fieldwork was carried out throughout the period but with 51.6% of dwelling surveys (and 51.5% of household interviews) being achieved during the first year (April 2002 to March 2003). The achieved sample by housing sector is provided below (the renting sectors are over sampled and owner occupied housing under sampled to support key analyses). Full details on the sample design, structure and response rates are available in the technical report.

Achieved sample for 2003 findings

	dwellings	households
private sector	10,567	10,169
social sector	6,081	5,781
all sectors	16,648	15,950

The statistics and figures included in this report are estimates using the full sample for the two year period April 2002 to March 2004. They therefore provide an 'average' position for the period – nominally presented as 'April 2003'. The next results to be published will cover the period April 2003 to March 2005 to provide an 'April 2004' position. The overlapping of the survey periods covered by each successive set of findings will allow an annual series of results.

Each estimate from the survey (as with all sample surveys) has a margin of error associated with it arising from sampling and design effects and from measurement error. The report comments on differences and trends only where these are significant after taking survey error into account. Details on the level of survey error for key measures in the survey are published in the EHCS Technical Report.

The 1996 and 2001 results in this report differ a little from those published in the 2001 report – but do not signify any difference in the major trends or conclusions reported from the EHCS. The differences result firstly from some recalibration of the control totals used to enable the survey to make national estimates. These controls were adjusted in the light of 2001 Census results (which were not available for the 2001 EHCS report). Secondly the differences arise from some retrospective changes in the detailed programming required to measure the decent homes components through the survey. These retrospective changes were carried out to maximise consistency of results between the 1996, 2001 and 2003 surveys. The changes will ensure a consistent approach can be employed for future annual results and for comparison with previous survey findings.

Glossary of definitions and terms

age/construction date of dwelling

The age of the dwelling refers to the date of construction of the oldest part of the building.

basic amenities

Dwellings lack basic amenities where they do not have all of the following:

- kitchen sink;
- bath or shower in a bathroom;
- a wash hand basin;
- hot and cold water to the above;
- inside WC.

cost to make decent/fit

See 'repair costs'

decent homes

A decent home is one that satisfies all of the following four criteria:

- it meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing – at present this is the fitness standard;
- it is in a reasonable state of repair;
- it has reasonably modern facilities and services ;
- it provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

double glazing

This covers factory made sealed window units only. It does not include windows with secondary glazing or external doors with double or secondary glazing (other than double glazed patio doors which count as 2 windows).

dwelling

A dwelling is a self-contained unit of accommodation (normally a house or flat) where all the rooms and amenities (ie kitchen, bath/shower room and WC) are for the exclusive use of the household(s) occupying them. In rare cases, amenities may be located outside the front door but provided they are for the exclusive use of the occupants, the accommodation is still classed as a dwelling.

For the most part a dwelling will be occupied by one household but may contain none (vacant dwelling) or may contain more than one (HMO).

energy efficiency

The main measure of energy efficiency used in the report is the energy cost rating as determined by the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). This is an index based on calculated annual space and water heating costs for a standard heating regime and is expressed on a scale of 1 (highly energy inefficient) to 120 (highly energy efficient).

Energy inefficient homes are those with a SAP rating of 30 or below.

equity

The estimated value of the property minus the total amount outstanding on all mortgages/loans secured against the home.

fitness

The Fitness Standard is defined by the 1989 Local Government and Housing Act:

> section 604: under Section 604 covering all the stock a dwelling is fit for human habitation unless in the opinion of the local housing authority it fails to meet one or more of the following requirements and by reason of that failure is not reasonably suitable for occupation: it is free from disrepair; it is structurally stable; it is free from dampness prejudicial to the health of the occupants (if any); it has adequate provision for lighting, heating and ventilation; it has an adequate piped supply of wholesome water; it has an effective system for the draining of foul, waste and surface water; it has a suitably located WC for the exclusive use of the occupants; it has for the exclusive use of the occupants (if any) a suitably located bath or shower and wash-hand basin, each of which is provided with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water; and there are satisfactory facilities in the dwelling home for the preparation and cooking of food, including a sink with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water.
>
> section 352: in addition to the requirements for dwellings laid down in Section 604, the additional requirements for an HMO as laid down in Section 352 are: there are satisfactory facilities for the storage, preparation and cooking of food including an adequate number of sinks with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water; it has an adequate number of suitably located water-closets for the exclusive use of the occupants; it has, for the exclusive use of the occupants, an adequate number of suitably located fixed baths or showers and wash hand basins each of which is provided with a satisfactory supply of hot and cold water; there are adequate means of escape; and there are adequate other fire precautions.

floor space

The usable internal floor area of the dwelling as measured by the surveyor, rounded to the nearest square metre. It excludes integral garages, balconies, stores accessed from the outside only and the area under partition walls.

flush threshold

Surveyors are asked to record whether a wheelchair can be wheeled in to a dwelling with no steps or cills to negotiate. Flats can have a flush threshold where an appropriately sized lift is present.

heating system

central heating system: a heating system with a distribution system sufficient to provide heat in at least one room in addition to the room or space containing any boiler (including programmable gas convector heaters);

storage heaters: electric storage heaters which run on off-peak electricity;

fixed heaters: other individual heaters/fires, either fixed to the fabric of the building or not readily moved;

non-fixed heaters: individual heaters/fires which are not fixed or wired into a fused spur which can be easily carried by a single person from room to room.

household

One person living alone or a group of people who have the address as their only or main residence and who either share one meal a day or share a living room.

household reference person (HRP)

This is the person in whose name the dwelling is owned or rented or who is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. In the case of joint owners and tenants, the person with the highest income is taken as the HRP. Where incomes are equal, the older is taken as the HRP. This procedure increases the likelihood that the HRP better characterises the household's social and economic position.

homes not fully secure

These are homes without fully secure windows and doors.

household groups

children 0-15: includes persons aged under 16;

elderly 75+: includes at least one person aged 75 or over;

ethnic minorities: where the respondent defines their ethnicity as something other than white;

Illness or disability: whether anybody in the household has a long-term illness or disability. The respondent assesses this and long-term is defined as anything that has troubled the person, or is likely to affect them, over a period of time;

lone parents: lone parent with dependent children: single parent with dependent child/children (i.e. persons aged under 16, or single persons aged 16 to 18 and in full-time education);

low income: A household with income in the lowest 20% of all households income;

older people 60+: includes at least one person aged 60 or over;

workless: A household in which no adult of working age is employed.

income

This is the annual net income of household reference person and any partner from wages, pensions, savings and benefits. It does not include council tax benefit, housing benefit, Income Support Mortgage Interest or any payments made under a Mortgage Payment Protection Insurance policy.

indices of deprivation (IMD) 2004

This is a super output area (SOA) level measure of multiple deprivation and is made up of seven domain indices. The domains relate to Income deprivation, Employment deprivation, Health deprivation and disability, Education, skills and training deprivation, Barriers to housing and services, Living environment deprivation and Crime. They replace the Indices of Deprivation 2000 (ID2000).

Super Output Areas: They are a statistical geography. Their key aspects are stability and uniformity of size. In general SOAs should be seen as building bricks from which other areas can be built up, rather than as socially distinct areas in their own right. There are 32,482 in England

level access

there is no more than two steps up or down to the entrance of the dwelling from the street and spacer to install a ramp (no steeper than 1 in 12 gradient).

'limited or negligible' demand

See 'market conditions'.

liveability

The liveability problems from the survey are based on the professional surveyors' assessments of problems in the immediate environment of the home on a scale of 1 ('no problems') to 5 ('major problems'). These assessments are based on observed problems (in some cases verified with the resident) rather than any specialised measurement instruments or recourse to other environment data. In all sixteen specific environmental problems (separately assessed by the surveyors) are grouped together (through content and factor analysis) into three types of liveability problems related to:

'upkeep' – the upkeep, management or misuse of the private and public space and buildings (specifically, the presence of: scruffy or neglected buildings, poor condition housing; graffiti; scruffy gardens or landscaping; litter, rubbish or dumping; vandalism; dog or other excrement, nuisance from street parking);

'traffic' – road traffic and other forms of transport (specifically the presence of: intrusive motorways and main roads; railway or aircraft noise; heavy traffic; and ambient air quality);

'utilisation' – abandonment or non residential use of property (specifically, vacant sites; vacant or boarded up buildings; intrusive industry; or non conforming use of a residential area);

'poor quality environment' – The overall assessment (providing the estimate of 3.3 million households with liveability problems) is based on whether the home is in an area with any of the three types of liveability problems.

A home is regarded as having a liveability problem of a given type if it is assessed to have 'significant' or 'major' problems (codes 4 and 5 of the scale) in respect of any of the specific environmental problems assessed and grouped under that type. It has not been possible to retrospectively provide fully comparable findings on liveability problems for 1996 and 2001 because of differences in the environmental data collected.

market conditions

Assessments are made of the overall demand for property within the locality assessed; not the demand for the particular property being surveyed. Localities are assessed using the following categories;

Limited to Negligible: A range of market conditions from areas with relatively low value properties that would take a long time to sell or rent, to areas with significant numbers of long-term vacant properties.

Moderate Demand: Although there may be isolated cases of properties that are less popular, there is demand for properties in these locations.

High Demand: Properties in this locality are rapidly sold and let and there is unmet demand.

market value

The market value survey asks experienced professional valuers to provide a market value for each case in the survey. The valuers are given photographs and details of the property including information such as the number of bedrooms, type of garden, parking provision, visual appearance of the area, and a list of the repairs needed to the property. From this information and their own intelligence of the local market, the valuers estimate the price that the property would sell for to an owner-occupier on the open market. For the social sector properties, this is the price that the sitting tenant would expect to pay before any discount is applied.

mean

Simple average, equal to the sum of all values divided by the number of values.

median

One type of average, found by arranging the values in order and then selecting the one in the middle. The median is a useful number in cases where the distribution has very large extreme values which would otherwise skew the data.

neighbourhood renewal funded (NRF) areas

The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) aims to enable England's most deprived local authorities to improve services, narrowing the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the country. 88 local authorities receive NRF funding.

not fully secure

Homes without secure windows and doors.

parking

adequate street parking: street parking is generally available outside or adjacent to the house/module. The road should be sufficiently wide to allow easy passage of traffic.

inadequate street parking: it is difficult to park outside the survey house/module. This might be due to the volume of cars competing for spaces or due to legal restrictions on parking, or the street being too narrow.

poor quality environment

See 'liveability'.

predominant age

Estimate the age of the majority of dwellings in the area. This will not necessarily include the surveyed dwelling since it may not be part of the majority of dwellings.

predominant built tenure

This assessed by the surveyor in the field. This classification ignores current tenure characteristics of the area (e.g. changes that might have arisen from Right to Buy or large scale transfers of formerly local authority stock) and the tenure of the property surveyed. If there is no clear predominant tenure then the area is classified as 'mixed'.

predominant residential built type

This relates to the current built form of the majority of dwellings in the area. This will not necessarily include the surveyed dwelling since it may not be part of the majority. These dwelling types are split broadly into houses, flats, and mixed houses and flats.

regional areas

northern regions: includes the following Government Office Regions: North East, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber;

south east regions: includes the following Government Office Regions: London, South East;

rest of England: includes the following Government Office Regions: East Midlands, West Midlands, South West, East of England.

repair costs

faults: a fault is any problem which is not of a purely cosmetic nature and which either represents a health or safety hazard, or threatens further deterioration to the specific element or any other part of the building.

comprehensive repairs: includes any currently required repairs plus any the surveyor assessed as falling due over the next 10 years. For all exterior elements, whether work was specified or not, they recorded the replacement period of that element – the number of years before it would need replacing. This measure provides a better basis for identifying work that would form part of a planned programme of repair by landlords.

standardised repair costs: these are costs (in pounds per square metre (£/m^2) based on prices for the East Midland region) of undertaking comprehensive repairs. It is assumed that all work is undertaken by contractors on a block contract basis. For flats, the size of the contract is assumed to be the whole block and for houses it is taken as a group of 5 dwellings. As such, the costs are more closely associated with those which may be incurred by a landlord organising the work on a planned programme basis. By reducing costs to a £/m^2 basis the effect of the size of buildings on the amount of disrepair recorded is omitted, otherwise the extent of the disrepair measured is substantially driven by the size of the building. The common price base and contract type eliminate other price variations. These costs should not be used as an indication of the expenditure required to remedy.

costs to make decent: are the costs of making the dwelling fully decent. They represent the required expenditure (i.e. take into account regional and tenure variations in building prices).

For other cost bases not included in this report see the technical report.

SAP

See energy efficiency

secure windows and doors

Homes with secure windows and doors have both of the following:

- main entrance door is solid or double glazed; the frame is strong; it has an auto deadlock or standard Yale lock plus mortise lock;
- all accessible windows (ground floor windows or upper floor windows in reach of flat roofs) are double glazed, either with or without key locks.

serious disrepair

This is defined for households only, and identifies the 10% of households whose dwellings have the highest repair costs per sq m.

tenure

Four categories are used for most reporting purposes:

owner-occupied: includes all households who own their own homes outright or buying them with a mortgage/loan; also includes shared-ownership schemes;

private rented or private tenants: includes all households living in privately owned property which they do not own. Includes households living rent free, or in tied homes. Includes un-registered housing associations tenants;

local authority: includes all households who rent from a local authority or (former) new town;

registered social landlord (RSL): includes all households living in the property of registered housing associations.

Alternative categories include:

homeowner with mortgage: includes all households who have bought their home with a mortgage/loan;

homeowner no mortgage/outright owner: includes all households who own their homes outright.

traffic

See 'liveability'.

type of dwelling

Dwellings are classified, on the basis of the surveyors' inspection, into the following categories:

small terraced house: a house less than 70m^2 forming part of a block where at least one house is attached to two or more other houses;

medium/large terraced house: a house 70m^2 or more forming part of a block where at least one house is attached to two or more other houses;

semi-detached house: a house that is attached to one other house;

detached house: a house where none of the habitable structure is joined to another building (other than garages, outhouses etc.);

bungalow: a house with all of the habitable accommodation on one floor. This excludes chalet bungalows and bungalows with habitable loft conversions, which are treated as houses;

purpose built flat, low rise: a flat in a purpose built block less than 6 storeys high. Includes cases where there is only one flat with independent access in a building which is also used for non-domestic purposes;

purpose built flat, high rise: a flat in a purpose built block of at least 6 storeys high;

converted flat: a flat resulting from the conversion of a house or former non-residential building. Includes buildings converted into a flat plus commercial premises (typically corner shops).

unfitness

See 'fitness'.

upkeep

See 'liveability'.

urban/rural

A field assessment is made of the type of location.

City or other urban centre includes: City centres; the core of towns; and also older urban areas which have been swallowed up by a metropolis;

Suburban includes: The outer area of towns or cities; characterised by large planned housing estates;

Rural includes: Rural residential areas or the suburban areas of villages; traditional village centres including the old heart of villages which have been subarnised; and isolated dwellings or small hamlets in predominantly rural settings.

utilisation

See 'liveability'.

vacant dwellings

The assessment of whether or not a dwelling was vacant was made at the time of the interviewer's visit. Clarification of vacancy was sought from neighbours. Surveyors were required to gain access to vacant dwellings and undertake full inspections.

vulnerable household

A household where the HRP and/or any partner is in receipt of any of the following benefits: Income support, Income-based Job seekers' allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Working Families Tax Credit, Disabled person's Tax Credit, Disability living allowance – Care component, Disability Living Allowance – mobility component, Industrial injuries disablement Benefit, War Disablement Pension and Attendance Allowance.

In 2003-04 Working Families Tax Credit and Disabled person's Tax Credit were replaced by Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. The Child Tax Credit is effectively a replacement for the children's tax credit tax allowance and can be paid to households with incomes of up to about £58,000 per year. Clearly these much better off households receiving tax credits should not be included within the definition of 'vulnerable households'. Instead, the approach taken by DEFRA in assessing eligibility for Warm Front Grants has been followed. Where households are receiving tax credits but none of the other benefits above, only those with a gross assessable income of less than £14,200 per year are classed as 'vulnerable'. A household's gross assessable income is the same as that used for tax credit purposes. Briefly, it includes all income from wages, pensions, savings and benefits except for: Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Child Benefit, Maternity Allowance (to a maximum of £100 per week), Statutory Sick Pay (to a maximum of £100 per week), Disability Living Allowance (care component), Disability Living Allowance (mobility component), Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit, War Disablement Pension, Severe Disablement Allowance and Attendance Allowance.

wider doorsets/circulation

Surveyors are asked to record whether doorsets to entrance of dwelling and primary rooms (living room, kitchen, and at least one bedroom) are at least 900mm (bathrooms only need to be 800mm). Circulations spaces servicing these rooms should be at least 900mm wide and there should be no sudden changes in level impeding access to the primary rooms.

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This report provides a detailed account of the condition of homes and places in England in 2003 including progress made since 1996 and 2001 (the years of previous surveys)

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