

Article

Indicators of house building, UK: overview

Starts and completions of new build dwellings in the UK, on a quarterly and annual basis, time series data.

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1 . Overview of the data

Housing is a devolved area of government. This release brings together published data from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to provide quarterly UK totals for newly built dwellings.

Where possible, data are presented separately for dwellings started and completed, and split by sector (private enterprise, housing associations or local authorities). This allows users to easily compare over time and between areas, as well as with a total for Great Britain and the UK, in a timely manner.

These statistics provide a timely leading indicator of housing supply. However, they do not cover all house building in the UK, because most of the data in this release are based on local authority building inspectors and National House Building Council (NHBC) information, which cover most, but not all, large house building projects.

For England, the primary and most comprehensive measure of housing supply is the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) [annual housing supply: net additional dwellings series](#). This is a more complete (but less frequent) measure of changes to the size of the dwelling stock based on the more detailed annual returns from local authorities and the Greater London Authority. In addition to new build completions, the net additional dwelling series includes conversions, demolitions and changes of use.

As part of housing supply statistics, MHCLG [publish a chart \(Figure 5\)](#) showing the comparison between the net additions and housing supply house building measures.

Similarly, the Scottish Government's [Housing statistics quarterly](#) update reports on new-build activity by sector. It also includes conversions and changes of use. These additional components help record the different ways homes are created, providing a more comprehensive understanding of new housing supply.

The sources used in this release are:

- available earlier and with little lag
- available for quarters, financial years and calendar years
- broadly comparable across the UK, providing a measure of activity of house building for the whole UK

2 . Data on indicators of house building, UK

[Indicators of house building. UK: permanent dwellings started and completed by country](#)

Dataset | Latest

Starts and completions of new build dwellings in the UK, on a quarterly and annual basis, split by housing sector, where available, time series data.

[House building. UK: permanent dwellings started and completed by local authority](#)

Dataset | Latest

Starts and completions of new build dwellings in local authorities across the UK, on an annual basis, time series data.

3 . Data sources and quality

A dwelling is counted as "started" on the date work begins on the laying of the foundation. It is counted as "completed" when it becomes ready for occupation or when a completion certificate is issued.

More quality and methodology information on strengths, limitations, appropriate uses, and how the data were created is available in our [House building data. UK Quality and Methodology Information](#).

Data sources by country

- England – [Housing supply: indicators of new supply statistics:Live Table 213](#), local authority new build form returns; National House Building Council (NHBC) data; Registered Building Control Approvers returns; Building Safety Regulator returns
- [Wales – New house building statistics](#): local authority building inspectors; NHBC data
- [Scotland – Housing statistics quarterly update: new housebuilding and affordable housing supply](#): local authority new build form returns; Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme
- [Northern Ireland – New dwelling statistics](#): District Council Building Control

Revisions

Each quarterly publication of these UK statistics will reflect the revisions made in the source data from each country. This ensures that statistics for the UK are consistent with the latest statistics, at time of publication, in each constituent country.

Limitations of the data

Each country produces its own statistics on house building, that are subject to revisions and have variations in sources and how the data are collected and processed.

For example, Scotland's data contain imputed estimates for a small number of local authorities. A small amount of data for England are missing and therefore imputed.

England

[England's housing supply figures](#) do not include data sources that become available later, which typically cover smaller developments. These reports capture additional new builds to those reported in the sources used in this release, based on building inspector reports. Consequently, there is likely to be an undercount in England's supply figure in these statistics.

Figures on new build dwelling starts and completions for England are from records kept for building control purposes. The house building figures reflect the sector of the developer building the dwelling, rather than the intended final sector. This may lead to an undercount of housing association, and local authority starts and completions recorded in these tables, and a corresponding overcount of private enterprise figures. This problem is more likely to affect starts than completions.

Wales

Data are based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the National House Building Council (NHBC), a private approved inspector. They do not include information from other private approved inspectors. This likely results in an undercount in the total number of new dwellings started and completed.

It is sometimes difficult for building control officers and the NHBC to identify the intended final tenure of the property (the basis for the tenure information). This may lead to an undercount of social sector new house building and an overcount for the private sector in Wales. Within the social sector, it may also lead to an undercount of local authority new house building and an overcount for the housing association sector. Therefore, the sector data should be treated with caution.

Northern Ireland

[Northern Ireland's new dwelling data](#) count of the number of starts and completions inspections conducted by building control officers in each council area. The date of a new dwelling start is the date that the first building control inspection takes place, rather than when the foundations are laid.

4 . Related links

[Housing supply: indicators of new supply statistics](#)

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government publication | Updated quarterly

This collection brings together all documents relating to 'Housing supply: indicators of new supply statistics'.

[New house building](#)

Welsh Government publication | Updated quarterly

Information on the number of new dwellings started and completed.

[New house building](#)

Scottish Government publication | Updated quarterly

Statistics that include affordable housing, new housing supply, rents in the private sector, local authority housing and social housing.

[New dwelling statistics](#)

Department of Finance (Northern Ireland) publication | Updated quarterly

Land and Property Services (LPS) receives information from Building Control in each council in Northern Ireland. This information contains the number of recorded new dwellings (houses and apartments) started and completed.

[Housing supply: net additional dwellings](#)

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government publication | Updated annually

This collection brings together all documents on housing supply: net additional dwellings (formerly known as "net supply of housing").

[Tackling the under-supply of housing in England](#)

House of Commons Library

Report on house building levels and policies in 2023, with accompanying spreadsheet adding additional historical estimates of house building to the data in this series.

5 . Cite this article

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