

Article

House building data, UK: financial year ending March 2021

Time series data on starts and completions of new build dwellings in the UK, on a quarterly and annual basis (formerly produced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities).

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1 . Overview

This release provides [data on newly built dwellings in the UK](#). Where possible, data are presented separately for dwellings started and completed, and split by sector (private enterprise, housing associations or local authorities).

The most recent data available are for the financial year ending March 2021, whereas quarterly and calendar year data are not as up-to-date. For the UK, quarterly data are available up to March 2020. They are created by aggregating previously published data from the four UK countries. This release also publishes statistics at the individual country level, and data are presented for quarters beyond March 2020 where available.

Unfortunately, coronavirus has affected some data collection. UK figures are therefore anticipated to only be available on a financial year basis in future releases. However, we will continue to publish calendar year and quarterly figures on an individual country basis where possible. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) will announce future publications on the [ONS release calendar](#).

A dwelling is counted as "started" on the date work begins on the laying of the foundation, and as "completed" when it becomes ready for occupation or when a completion certificate is issued. This is consistent with the statistics previously published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The statistics presented in this release do not cover all new housing supply. For example, they do not include conversions and changes of use. See Limitations of the data in the [Data sources and quality](#) section for further information.

Individual country-level statistics are available separately from the producers of each country's statistics (see [Related links](#)). Those individual country datasets include statistics for small geographical areas, which are not presented in this release.

2 . Data

[House building, UK: permanent dwellings started and completed](#)

Dataset | Released 19 January 2022

Time series data on starts and completions of new build dwellings in the UK, on a quarterly and annual basis (formerly produced by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities).

3 . Data sources and quality

These statistics are based on administrative data sources. Information about the data sources, and the earliest time periods for which data are available from each of the four UK countries is available as follows.

Sources

- England: local authority new build form returns; National House Building Council (NHBC) data; approved inspector data returns
- Wales: local authority building inspectors; National House Building Council (NHBC) data
- Scotland: local authority new build form returns; Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme
- Northern Ireland: District Council Building Control

Earliest time periods available (starts and completions, and by sector¹, unless stated)

Quarterly

- Wales: April to June 1974 onwards
- England, Scotland, Northern Ireland: January to March 1978 onwards

Financial year

- England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: year ending 1970 onwards

Calendar year

- Scotland: 1945 onwards, completions only
- England: 1946 onwards
- Wales: 1946 onwards, completions only
- Northern Ireland: 1949 onwards, completions only

Each publication of these statistics reflects 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.

Uses and users

The datasets in this release give timely information relating to starts and completions of new dwellings in the UK. They are used to inform government housing policy, and for housing market analysis and research. They are also used by forecasters and decision-makers, including at the Bank of England. The compilation of the UK data in this release also allow international comparisons of housing supply.

Limitations of the data

These statistics provide a timely indicator of housing supply, however, there are limitations of coverage and comparability. For England, more comprehensive (but less frequent) measures of [changes to the size of the dwelling stock](#) are published annually by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). These provide a fuller measure of new housing supply based on additional sources, including building control, site visits, and Council Tax and planning databases.

In addition, there are limitations of comparability across the UK in these statistics. Each country produces its own statistics on house building, which are subject to revisions and have variations in sources and how the data are collected and processed. For example, a small amount of data for England is missing and therefore imputed.

For England, figures on new build dwelling starts and completions 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.

For Wales, data are based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the National House Building Council (NHBC), a private approved inspector; it does not include information from other private approved inspectors. It is sometimes difficult for building control officers and NHBC to identify the intended final tenure of the property (the basis for the tenure information). This may lead to an under-count of social sector new house building and an over-count for the private sector. Within the social sector, it may also lead to an under-count of local authority new house building and an over-count for the registered social landlord sector. Therefore, the sector data should be treated with caution.

Notes for: Data sources and quality

1. "Sector" refers to new dwellings constructed by private enterprises, housing associations, or registered social landlords and local authorities. Other data providers may use the term "tenure". Statistics on starts for Wales are not available split by sector from the financial year ending 2012.

4 . Related links

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

Web page | Updated quarterly

This collection from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities brings together all documents on housing supply: indicators of new supply on the GOV.UK website.

[New house building](#)

Web page | Updated each financial year

Information on the number of new dwellings started and completed on the Welsh Government website.

[Housing statistics](#)

Web page | Updated quarterly

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

[New dwelling statistics](#)

Web page | Updated quarterly

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