



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Decent Homes

4 MILLION HOMES WEBINAR

27/11/2024



Introduction

Aims & housekeeping

Welcome to the Decent Homes webinar supported by 4 Million Homes!

Aims

- We'll run through what is expected of social landlords in terms of the decency and quality of their homes.
- Your feedback will be taken into consideration by the Department as we design the new Decent Homes Standard.
- We will launch a consultation on the new Decent Homes Standard next year, so you'll have a further opportunity to feed in your views.

Housekeeping

- The session will last **one hour**.
- We'd love to hear your thoughts! There will be opportunities for discussion at the end of the session, but if you have any immediate questions, please just raise your hand.



1

The national picture

Looking into the figures: where are we now?

2

Housing quality & standards

An overview of the Decent Homes Standard and other national standards governing housing quality

3

HHSRS and electrical safety

An insight into the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and our proposed measures on electrical safety

The National Picture

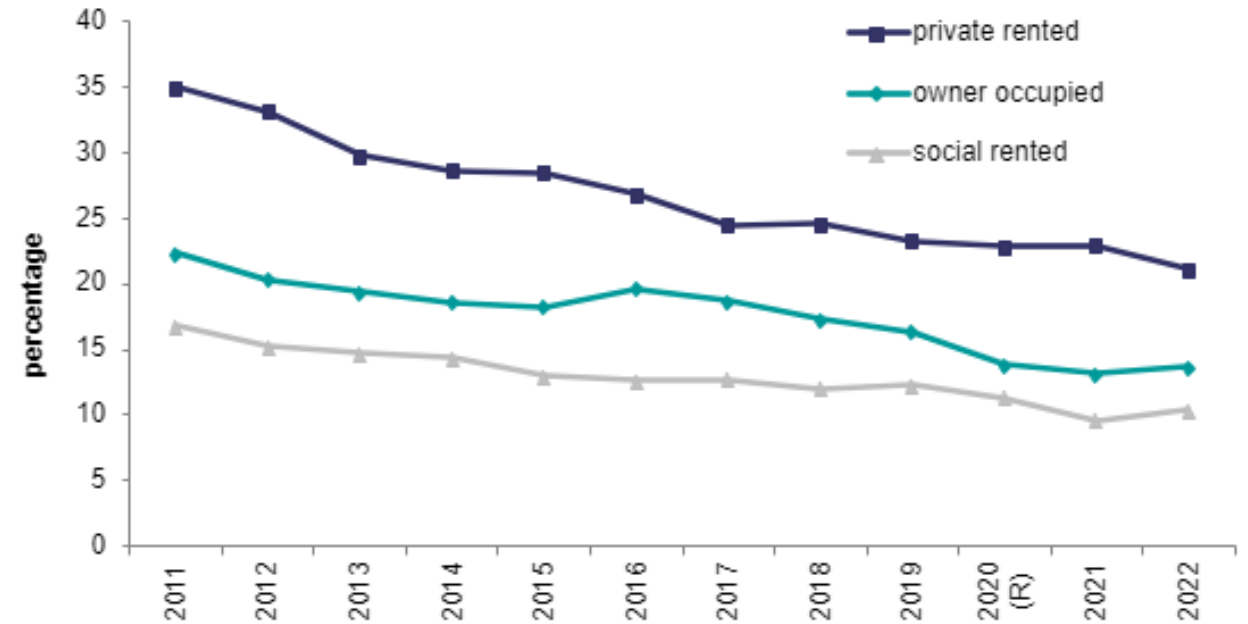
Headline statistics from the
English Housing Survey



The National Picture

Headline figures from the English Housing Survey

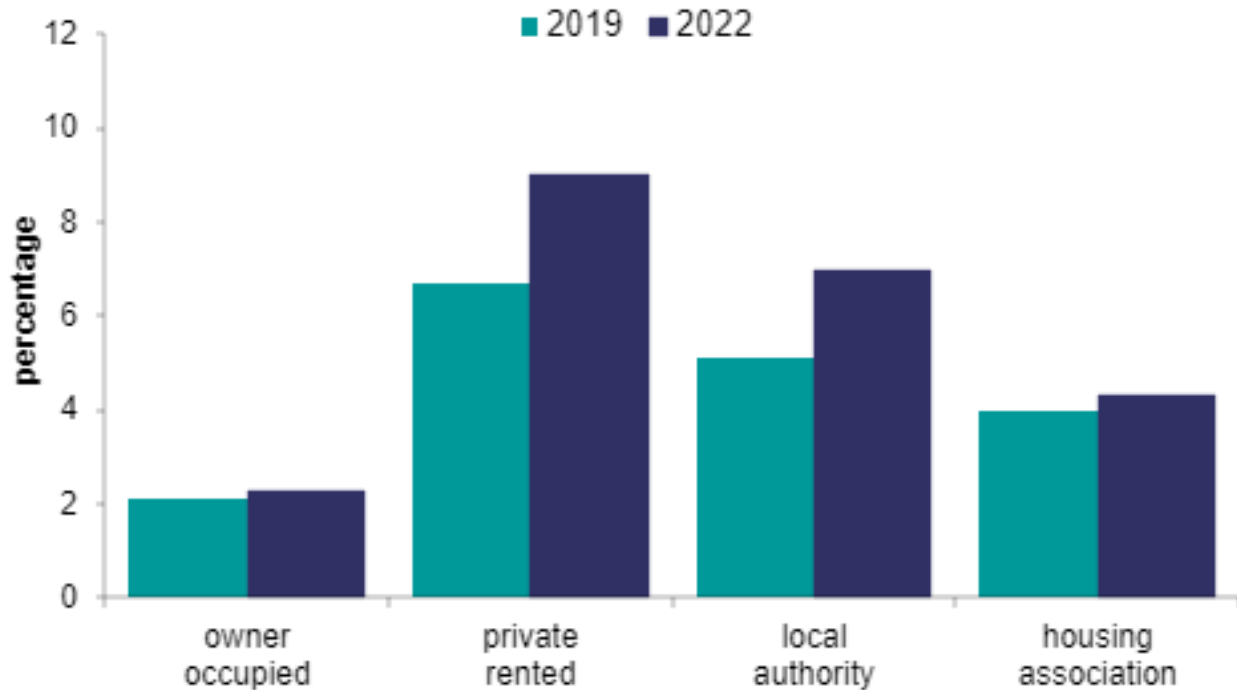
- The English Housing Survey (EHS) is a tool used to measure statistics on housing in England. It is collected each year.
- One of the topics covered by the EHS is decency, and we use this to measure how landlords are performing across the country.
- Since the DHS was introduced in 2001, the number of non-decent properties has declined significantly in the social rented sector supported by policy initiatives such as the Decent Homes Programme and measures on energy efficiency.
- In 2022-2023, 10.4% of social rented properties were considered non-decent.
- The social rented sector has the lowest levels of non-decency across all tenures.





The National Picture

Prevalence of damp and mould



- Between 2019 and 2022, the private rented sector (PRS) had the highest rates of damp and mould in properties.
- In the social rented sector (SRS), local authority homes are more likely to have damp and mould than housing association homes.
- The level of damp and mould increased across all tenures between 2019 and 2022.



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The National Picture

Our data tells us quite a lot about why a home may be non-decent but it is harder to work out the drivers

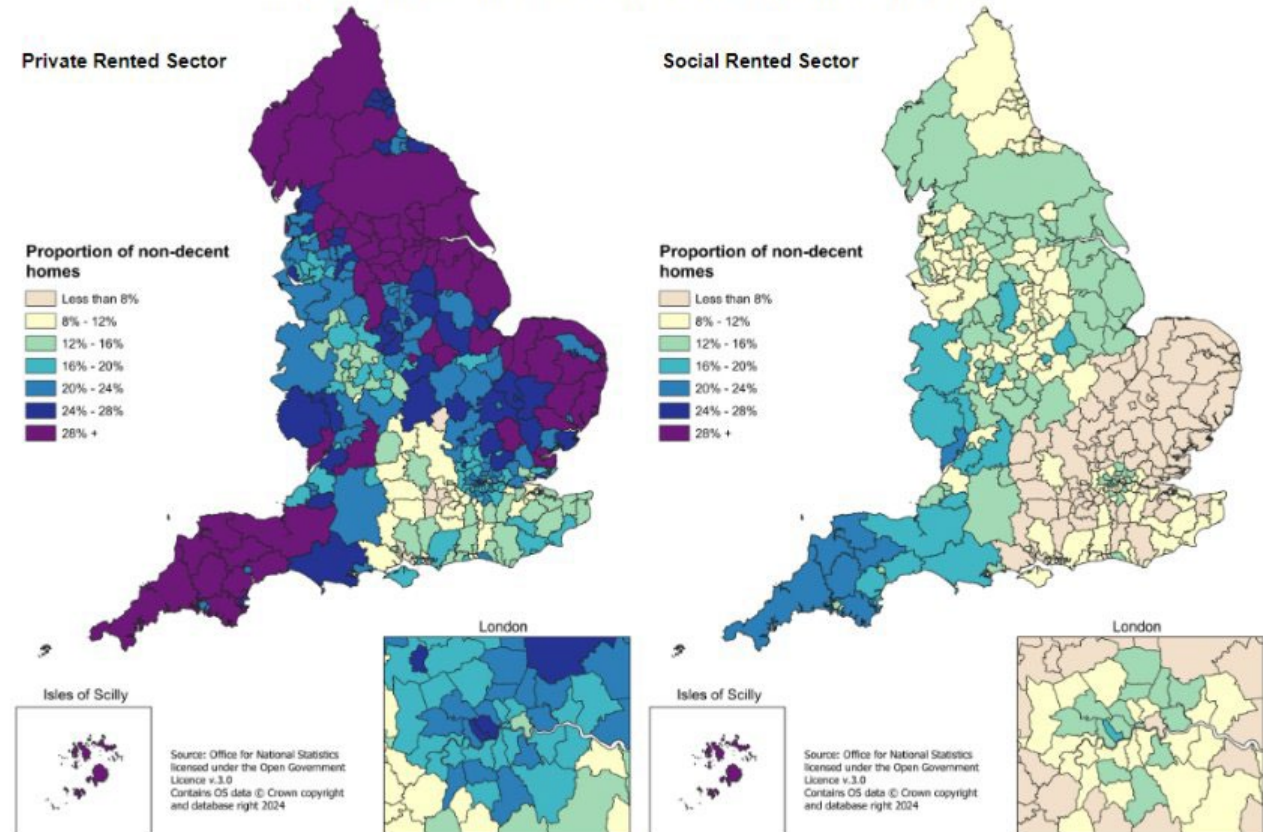
The number of non-decent homes has fallen over the last 20 years.

Dwellings are more likely to be non-decent if they are old, energy inefficient (big link), a flat, or in a rural setting.

In the social rented sector, the highest levels of non-decency are in the South West and Welsh borders.

It is, however, harder to work out what may be **driving** these correlations and what policy response is most effective to address them.

Proportion of Non-Decent Homes by Local Authority, 2020



Housing Quality & Standards

Your landlord's responsibilities



The Decent Homes Standard

The current Decent Home Standard has been in place since 2006

Overview of the DHS

- The Decent Homes Standard was first published in 2001 and updated again in 2006.
- The DHS sets the minimum standard to which all socially rented properties (housing association-owned and local authority-owned) are to be held to. **It is one of our greatest regulatory tools in addressing the poor-quality housing conditions!**
- There are four criteria that make up the DHS (see table opposite).
- In 2006 the DHS was updated, introducing the requirement for homes to be free from the most dangerous ‘category 1’ hazards, assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The HHSRS does not set a minimum standard, but instead assesses and categorises hazards in residential premises by seriousness.
- In November, the Deputy Prime Minister committed to consulting on a new DHS. The consultation will launch in early 2025 and you are welcome to provide your views.

The four criteria that make up the DHS

- A Criterion A – It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing**
 - HHSRS - Free from category 1 hazards
- B Criterion B – It is in a reasonable state of repair**
 - No key building components are old and in poor condition
 - No more than one other key building component is old and in poor condition
- C Criterion C – It has reasonably modern facilities and services**
 - Lacks no more than 2 of a list of facilities, including reasonably modern kitchen (<20 years old) and bathroom (<30 years old)
- D Criterion D – It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort**
 - Has both effective insulation and efficient heating (link with MEES)

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

How we measure dangerous
health and safety hazards in the
home



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The Housing Health and Safety Rating System

The health and safety risk assessment tool

Background

- **It's used to work out the risk of harm in all homes**, rented or not rented.
- **It covers a range of 29 health and safety hazards**, which are set out in regulations, eg Damp and Mould, Fire, Structural Collapse.
- **It rates the seriousness of hazards** by generating a score that falls into two categories, category 1 and category 2.
- **LAs must take enforcement action if they identify a category 1 hazard.** They have a power to enforce category 2 hazards.
- **Social housing must be free from category 1 hazards** to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Review

- **We were told the HHSRS is complex and out of date**, but people did not want it replaced due to its link between housing and health and the assessment of properties on their merits.
- **We therefore reviewed it.** A sounding board (landlords, tenants, experts etc.) monitored the review's outcomes.
- **The review was designed to make it work better.** Outputs included a refined assessment process and means of scoring hazards, new statutory and non-statutory guidance, and a revised assessment of fire in tall buildings. It does not change the hazard categories, change enforcement or update its underlying data.

Next steps

- **A report on the review is at:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-health-and-safety-rating-system-hhsrs-review-outcomes-and-next-steps>.
- **New regulations are needed,** government will consider the outcomes of the HHSRS review before taking a decision on whether to bring forward changes. This is in line with wider recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry Report.

Electrical Safety in Social Housing

New requirements for landlords



Electrical Safety in Social Housing

Exploring new requirements for social landlords

Background

- **Faulty and poorly maintained electrical installations and equipment** in the home cause fires, injuries and deaths.
- **Private landlords already have to test electrics.** Since 2020 they have had to inspect and test their electrical installations at least once every five years.
- **A consultation looked at the same requirements for social housing** as well as requiring social landlords to inspect and test appliances they provide.

Consultation

- **The consultation looked at two main things:**
 - Checks on electrical installations for social housing at least every five years; and
 - In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment on all electrical appliances provided by social landlords as part of a tenancy (sometimes known as 'PAT testing').

Next steps

- **The government is considering the outcomes of the consultation and will set out next steps in due course.**
- We would need to take new regulations through Parliament to bring changes into force.

Discussion

Any questions?



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Stay updated

How you can follow our progress

- Thank you for joining us in today's session
- We will launch a consultation on the Decent Homes Standard early next year. It'll be published on gov.uk and we'd love to hear from you!
- You can contact the department at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-the-ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government> or via the QR code below



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