



English
House
Condition
Survey
2006
Headline
Report

**decent homes
and
decent places**



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Decent Homes
and Decent
Places

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Introduction

1. This summary report presents key findings from the 2006 English House Condition Survey and progress made since 1996 and 2001 towards improving living conditions in England.
2. The following key policy areas are addressed:
 - Decent homes (including the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System)
 - Disparities in living conditions
 - Energy efficiency
 - Quality of the local environment
 - Deprivation
3. The report focuses on indicators of progress related to key Government policies. Change is assessed using the longest period for which consistent data is available. The text identifies significant changes. Some caution is required in drawing additional conclusions from the detailed tables as some changes, particularly year on year differences, may not be statistically significant.
4. Headline findings are published as soon as they are available each year followed by more detailed results in the Annual Report which is published every summer.
5. The 2006 results relate to continuous fieldwork carried out between April 2005 and March 2007 and are presented as the mid-point position of April 2006. These results are based on a sample of 16,269 dwellings and 15,648 households. Technical details for the survey will be published in parallel with the Annual Report.

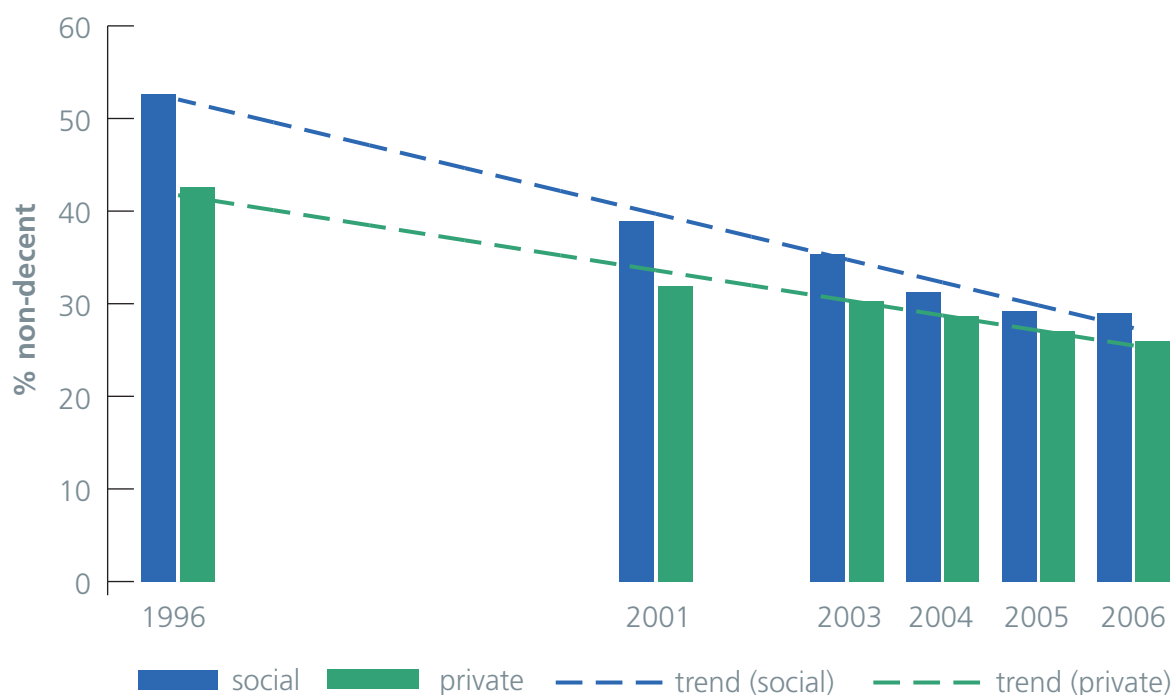
Decent Homes

6. The definition of what is a decent home has been updated. In April 2006 the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) came into force and replaced the fitness standard as the statutory element of the decent homes standard¹. This is the first time decent homes figures incorporating the HHSRS have been reported.
7. Information was collected through the survey on both fitness and the HHSRS for 2006 to enable the impact of the change in the definition of decent homes to be assessed. From 2007 reporting of decent homes will use the updated definition (incorporating the HHSRS) only.
8. There is insufficient data however to report change since 1996 (or 2001) on the updated definition of decent homes. Trends and assessment of progress are therefore based on decent homes incorporating fitness as the statutory standard, which provides consistency and comparability in the measure over time.

Progress since 1996

9. Since 1996 there has been a substantial reduction across all tenures in the proportion of homes failing the decent homes standard, under the original definition, Figure 1. Progress has been fastest in the social sector; the 10 percentage point gap between the social and private sectors that existed in 1996 is only 2 percentage points in 2006.

Figure 1: Non-decent homes by sector, 1996-2006 (using fitness definition).



Base: all dwellings

Note: Decent homes figures based on fitness as the statutory component – see annex table A1 for underlying data.

¹ See *A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation, June 2006 – Update* for more details.

Change to statutory component of the decent homes standard

10. The new HHSRS involves a systematic and comprehensive risk assessment of hazards that may be present in homes. It is therefore radically different in operation and focus to the Fitness Standard it replaced because this was focused on property condition and provision of amenities, rather than the impact of deficiencies in design or maintenance on the health and safety of the occupants.
11. The replacement of the Fitness Standard by the HHSRS as the statutory component of Decent Homes has led to an increase in the number defined to be non-decent on this criterion, Table 1. Around 900 thousand homes (4%) failed the statutory component under the previous Fitness Standard, compared to 4.8 million homes with Category 1 hazards now included in the updated definition of decent homes. Under the HHSRS some 4.8 million homes (22%) have “Category 1 hazards” present. A Category 1 hazard poses the most severely rated risk to a *potential* occupant who is most vulnerable to that hazard. (The property is not assessed on the basis of actual occupants).²
12. Some 4.2 million homes (24%) in the private sector have Category 1 hazards present, compared to 500 thousand (13%) in the social sector. The relative concentration of Category 1 hazards in the private sector is mainly related to the older age profile of its housing stock, with the risks often being related to original design and construction features.
13. The most common Category 1 hazards are excess cold (homes that are difficult and/or expensive to keep warm) and falls (particular falls on stairs where steep and/or winding staircases, lack of handrails, slippery steps and disrepair to stairs or steps are contributory factors to the likelihood of an accident occurring). Further information on the nature, prevalence, distribution and costs of tackling hazards will be provided in the Annual Report in summer 2008.

Table 1: Homes not meeting the statutory component of the Decent Homes standard: Fitness and the Housing Health and Rating System (HHSRS), 2006.

| | fitness | HHSRS | fitness percentage: | HHSRS |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------|
| numbers ('000s): | | | | |
| owner occupied | 457 | 3,452 | 3.0 | 22.4 |
| private rented | 250 | 797 | 9.6 | 30.5 |
| private | 707 | 4,249 | 3.9 | 23.5 |
| local authority | 118 | 297 | 5.6 | 14.2 |
| RSL | 57 | 206 | 3.1 | 11.1 |
| social | 175 | 503 | 4.4 | 12.8 |
| all tenures | 882 | 4,752 | 4.0 | 21.6 |

Base: all dwellings

² This approach is based on the principle that a dwelling which is safe for the most vulnerable is safe for all. See Terms Used in the Report below for more detail and a link to more information on the HHSRS.

The Decent Homes standard (updated definition).

14. The incorporation of HHSRS Category 1 hazards into the definition of decent homes (as the criterion for meeting the current statutory minimum standard) has increased the number of non-decent homes. In 2006, 8.1 million homes (36.8%) are non-decent under the new definition. Some 6.8 million of these are in the private sector compared to 1.3 million in the social sector, Table 2.
15. Homes in the private sector are more likely to be non-decent than the social sector (38% compared to 34%), however it is the private rented sector where the greatest problems occur. Half (50%) of privately rented homes are non-decent. Homes in the RSL sector are in the best condition, where 29% fail the standard.
16. The number of non-decent homes under the updated definition is **not** comparable with previously published figures based on the original definition that incorporated fitness as the criterion for meeting the current statutory minimum standard. For 2006, some 5.9 million (27% of all) homes would be non-decent using fitness as the statutory minimum. However, using the updated version of the decent homes standard incorporating the HHSRS, this rises to 8.1 million non-decent homes – 37% of all homes, Table 2. This increase is the net outcome of the change in definition and does not indicate any deterioration of the housing stock. The housing stock as a whole has improved since 2005.

Table 2: Non-decent homes using the fitness and HHSRS definitions by tenure, 2006.

| | Non-decent homes | | Non-decent homes | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | fitness definition | HHSRS definition | fitness definition | HHSRS definition |
| numbers ('000s): | | | percentage: | |
| owner occupied | 3,704 | 5,473 | 24.0 | 35.4 |
| private rented | 1,055 | 1,298 | 40.4 | 49.7 |
| all private | 4,759 | 6,771 | 26.4 | 37.5 |
| LA | 695 | 801 | 33.3 | 38.4 |
| RSL | 436 | 530 | 23.6 | 28.7 |
| all social | 1,131 | 1,331 | 28.7 | 33.8 |
| all tenures | 5,890 | 8,102 | 26.8 | 36.8 |

Base: all dwellings

17. While the change in the definition to include the HHSRS has led to an overall increase of 2.2 million non-decent homes, there is relatively little change arising from the new definition in the social sector where the number of non-decent homes increases from 1.1 million (29%) to 1.3 million (34%).
18. The number of non-decent private sector homes increases from 4.8 million (26%) to 6.8 million (38%). Private sector homes are more likely to be older than social housing and therefore Category 1 hazards relating to falls and excess cold are more prevalent. Overall, private sector homes are now more likely to be non-decent than social sector homes.

Reasons for failing decent homes

19. Of the four criteria required for a home to be defined as decent the HHSRS-based statutory criterion is the most commonly failed, Table 3. Some 59% of non-decent homes (4.7 million) fail for this reason while around 51% (4.1 million) fail to provide adequate thermal comfort. One fifth of non-decent homes (1.7 million) fail the repair criterion and less than one in ten fail because of a lack of modern facilities and services. There is considerable overlap between homes failing on thermal comfort and those failing on HHSRS: some 42% of homes fail on both criteria. This is because excess cold is the most common Category 1 hazard.
20. However there are marked differences between the social and private sectors. In the private sector 63% of non-decent homes are assessed as having Category 1 hazards under the HHSRS compared to just 38% of social sector non-decent homes. Thermal comfort is the most commonly failed criterion accounting for 59% of social sector non-decent homes compared with 49% of private sector non-decent homes.

Table 3: Reasons for failing decent homes (updated definition), 2006.

| | serious hazard under the HHSRS | repair | modern facilities and services | thermal comfort | all non-decent |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| numbers ('000s): | | | | | |
| owner occupied | 3,452 | 1,117 | 277 | 2,569 | 5,473 |
| private rented | 797 | 374 | 110 | 749 | 1,298 |
| all private | 4,249 | 1,491 | 387 | 3,318 | 6,771 |
| LA | 297 | 141 | 118 | 452 | 801 |
| RSL | 206 | 74 | 45 | 329 | 530 |
| all social | 503 | 215 | 163 | 781 | 1,331 |
| all tenures | 4,752 | 1,706 | 550 | 4,099 | 8,102 |
| percentage: | | | | | |
| owner occupied | 63.1 | 20.4 | 5.1 | 46.9 | 100.0 |
| private rented | 61.4 | 28.8 | 8.5 | 57.7 | 100.0 |
| all private | 62.8 | 22.0 | 5.7 | 49.0 | 100.0 |
| LA | 37.1 | 17.6 | 14.7 | 56.4 | 100.0 |
| RSL | 38.9 | 14.0 | 8.5 | 62.1 | 100.0 |
| all social | 37.8 | 16.2 | 12.2 | 58.7 | 100.0 |
| all tenures | 58.7 | 21.1 | 6.8 | 50.6 | 100.0 |

Base: all non-decent homes

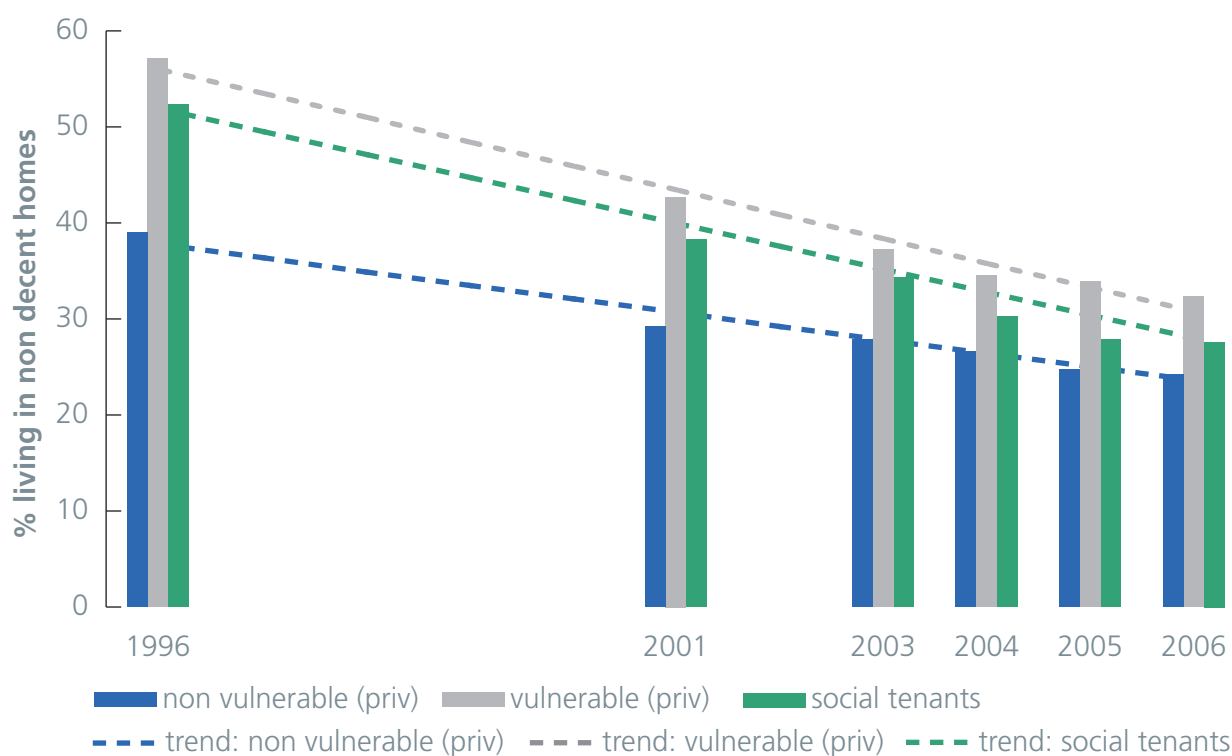
Note: homes may fail on more than one criterion therefore percentages will sum to more than 100%

Disparities in Decent Homes

Progress in reducing disparities since 1996

21. Under the original definition of decent homes (that is, incorporating the Fitness Standard as the statutory minimum) 68% of vulnerable households are living in decent homes in 2006, a considerable improvement compared with 43% in 1996 (see Annex Table A2).
22. Using this definition, since 1996, there has been a reduction across all tenures in the proportion of households living in non decent homes. The proportion of social sector tenants and private vulnerable households has fallen by an average of 2.5 percentage points each year compared to 1.5 percentage points for other (i.e. non-vulnerable) private sector households, Figure 2. This reduced the disparities in housing conditions between poorer and more affluent households. In 2006, 28% of social tenants and 32% of private sector vulnerable households were living in non-decent homes, compared to 24% of non-vulnerable private sector households under this definition of the standard.

Figure 2: Disparity between PSA7 – related and other households living in non-decent homes, 1996 – 2006.



Base: all households

Note: Decent homes figures based on fitness as the statutory component. The bars represent the survey estimate for each sector the trend and the disparity between groups is modelled using all available results for the period – see Annex Table A5.

Private sector vulnerable households, 2006

23. Using the updated definition of decent homes incorporating the HHSRS, in 2006 3.2 million 'vulnerable' households³ live in the private sector and of these 1.8 million (57%) live in decent homes., Table 4. Those vulnerable households who are private tenants tend to be living in worse housing conditions compared to their counterparts in the owner occupied sector; just 42% of vulnerable private tenants live in decent homes compared to 62% of vulnerable owner occupiers, (see Annex table A3).

Table 4: Private sector vulnerable households living in non-decent homes (using HHSRS as the statutory standard), 2006.

| | decent | non-decent | all homes | decent percentage: | non-decent | all homes |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| numbers ('000s): | | | | | | |
| non vulnerable private | 9,182 | 5,124 | 14,306 | 64.2 | 35.8 | 100.0 |
| vulnerable private | 1,827 | 1,362 | 3,189 | 57.3 | 42.7 | 100.0 |
| social | 2,504 | 1,220 | 3,724 | 67.2 | 32.8 | 100.0 |
| all households | 13,513 | 7,706 | 21,219 | 63.7 | 36.3 | 100.0 |

Base: all private sector vulnerable, private sector non-vulnerable and social sector households

Note: Decent Homes incorporating the HHSRS as the statutory component.

³ Vulnerable households are households in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits.

Energy efficiency

24. The energy efficiency of homes has been steadily improving over the last decade – the average energy efficiency (SAP) rating has improved by 7 points from 42 in 1996 to 49 in 2006, Table 5. Social sector homes are substantially more energy efficient than private homes. The social sector has an average rating of 57 compared to 47 in the private sector. In addition, the social sector has improved at a faster rate since 1996 than the private sector.

Table 5: Energy Efficiency, average SAP rating by tenure, 1996 – 2006.

| | 1996 | 2001 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| private sector | 40.7 | 44.1 | 44.9 | 45.6 | 46.1 | 46.8 |
| social sector | 46.8 | 51.9 | 53.9 | 55.3 | 56.9 | 57.4 |
| all tenures | 42.1 | 45.7 | 46.6 | 47.4 | 48.1 | 48.7 |

Base: all dwellings

25. In 2006, over two thirds of homes (70%) have an energy performance rating of band D or E according to the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) bands⁴, Table 6. Less than 10% of homes (1.7 million) achieve an energy rating of band C or higher. A fifth of homes (3.7 million) are in the most energy inefficient bands (F or G) although less than 5% of homes (900 thousand) are in band G.
26. Social sector homes tend to be much more energy efficient than those in the private sector. Some 65% (2.6 million) are in bands D or higher, compared to 36% of privately rented and only 32% of owner occupied homes.

Table 6: Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) bands by tenure, 2006.

| | whole stock | | owner occupied | | private rented | | social sector | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| | number (000s) | % | number (000s) | % | number (000s) | % | number (000s) | % |
| band B (81-91) | 47 | 0.2 | 5 | 0.0 | 8 | 0.3 | 34 | 0.9 |
| band C (69-80) | 1,699 | 7.7 | 634 | 4.1 | 256 | 9.8 | 809 | 20.6 |
| band D (55-68) | 6,683 | 30.4 | 4,265 | 27.6 | 691 | 26.4 | 1,727 | 43.9 |
| band E (39-54) | 8,995 | 40.9 | 6,942 | 45.0 | 963 | 36.9 | 1,091 | 27.7 |
| band F (21-38) | 3,657 | 16.6 | 2,993 | 19.4 | 446 | 17.1 | 218 | 5.5 |
| band G (1-20) | 909 | 4.1 | 603 | 3.9 | 248 | 9.5 | 58 | 1.5 |
| Total | 21,989 | 100.0 | 15,442 | 100.0 | 2,611 | 100.0 | 3,936 | 100.0 |

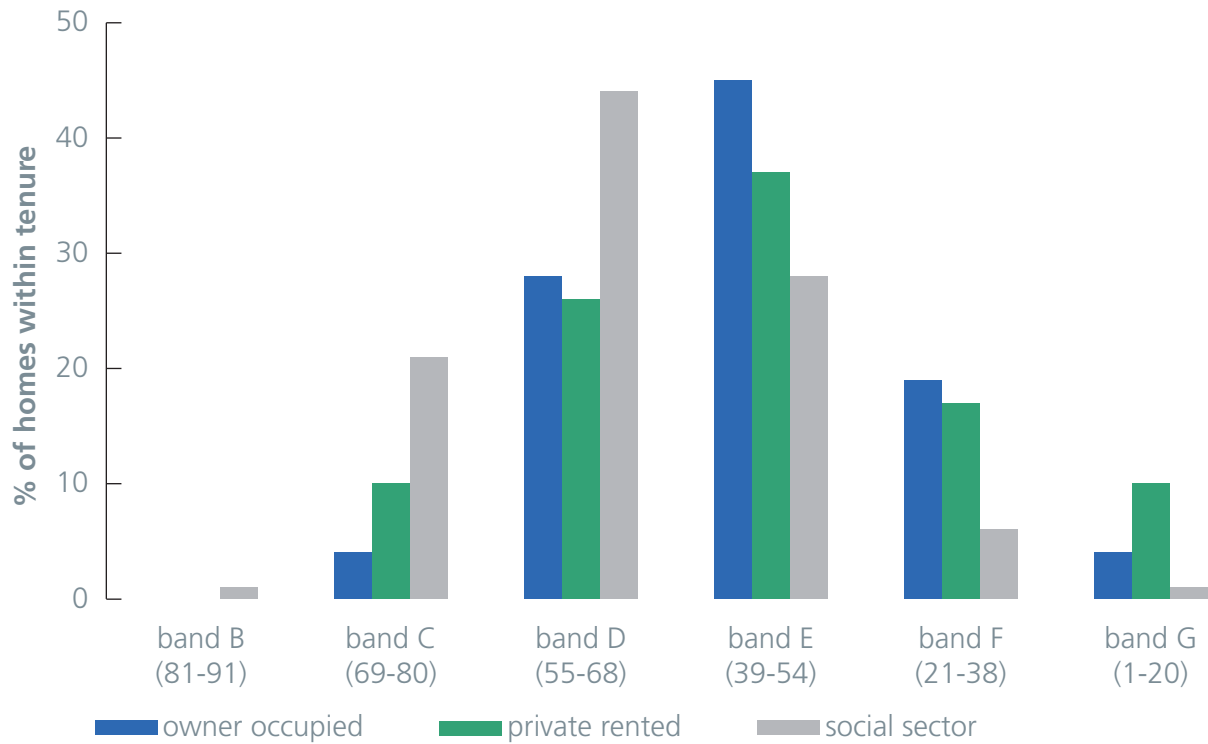
Base: all dwellings

Note: EPC bands are based on SAP ratings which are shown in brackets.

⁴ An Energy Performance certificate is a key component of a Home Information Pack (HIP). The certificate provides a (SAP-based) rating for the home, showing its energy efficiency on a scale from A-G (where A is the most efficient and G the least efficient). Under the European Union directive 2002/91/EC all housing (and other buildings) is required to have an Energy Performance Certificate by 2009. See <http://www.homeinformationpacks.gov.uk/> for more information.

27. Owner occupied homes are therefore least likely to be in the more energy efficient bands (D or higher) compared with the private and social rented sectors. Some 45% of owner occupied homes fall within Band E, Figure 3. However one in ten private rented homes are in the least energy efficient band G, a greater proportion than in other tenures.

Figure 3: Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) bands by tenure, 2006.



Base: all owner occupied, private rented and social sector dwellings

Poor Quality Environments

28. In 2006 3.4 million (16% of) households live in areas with substantial problems, Table 7. There has been no significant change in the proportion of households living in poor quality environments or for the three component types of problem that comprise this indicator.⁵
29. Some 2.2 million households (10%) live with problems associated with the upkeep, management and misuse of the surrounding public and private buildings or space ('upkeep'), and this remains the most common of the three types of problems. Around 8% of households live with substantial problems relating to traffic in the immediate environment of their home and just 2% live in areas with problems associated with abandonment or non-residential use of property ('utilisation').

Table 7: Type of poor quality environments, 2003 – 2006.

| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| number (000s): | | | | |
| 'upkeep' | 2,101 | 2,115 | 2,279 | 2,210 |
| 'traffic' | 1,596 | 1,473 | 1,560 | 1,607 |
| 'utilisation' | 453 | 389 | 395 | 365 |
| poor quality environments | 3,291 | 3,226 | 3,409 | 3,374 |
| percentage: | | | | |
| 'upkeep' | 10.1 | 10.1 | 10.8 | 10.4 |
| 'traffic' | 7.7 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 7.6 |
| 'utilisation' | 2.2 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.7 |
| poor quality environments | 15.9 | 15.4 | 16.1 | 15.9 |

Base: all households

⁵ See 'Terms Used in this Report' for a more detailed explanation of 'poor quality environments'.

Deprivation

Progress since 1996

30. Since 1996 there has been a substantial improvement in housing conditions in deprived areas (using the original definition of decent homes incorporating fitness, and the 88 districts in receipt of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) up to 2006). The number of social sector non-decent homes has reduced by 720 thousand since 1996 and 340 thousand since 2001 (accounting for 67% of overall progress in the social sector), Table 8.

Table 8: Non-decent homes in 88 Neighbourhood Renewal Fund districts by tenure, 1996 – 2006.

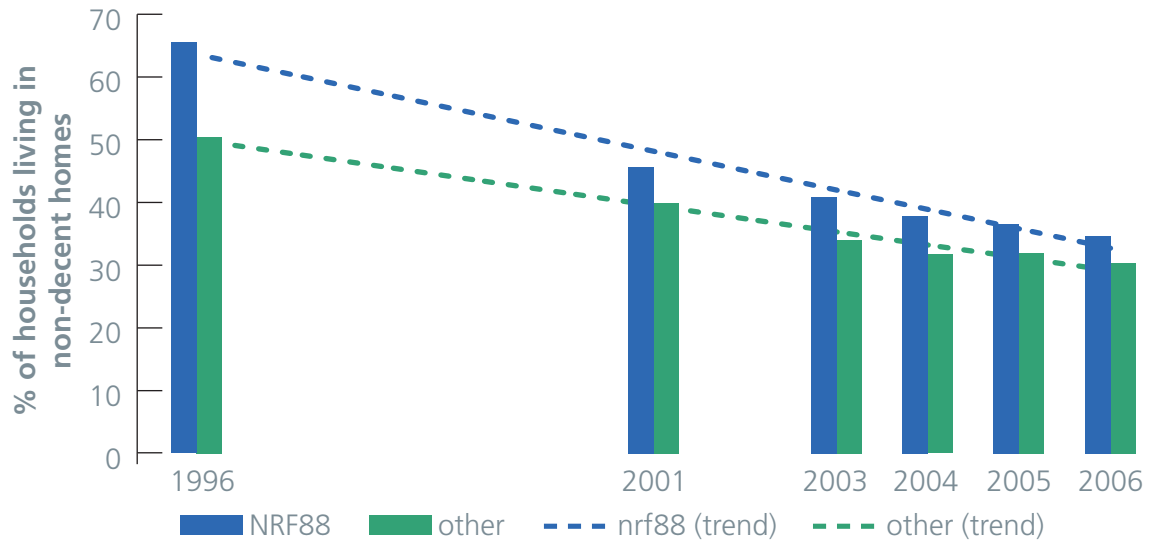
| | | private sector | | social sector | |
|-----------------------|------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| | | NRF 88 districts | other districts | NRF 88 districts | other districts |
| number (000s): | | | | | |
| 1996 | decent | 3,042 | 6,102 | 1,149 | 944 |
| | non-decent | 2,790 | 3,991 | 1,362 | 956 |
| 2001 | decent | 4,075 | 7,479 | 1,417 | 1,172 |
| | non-decent | 2,383 | 3,034 | 988 | 659 |
| 2003 | decent | 4,262 | 7,888 | 1,446 | 1,193 |
| | non-decent | 2,182 | 3,073 | 849 | 590 |
| 2004 | decent | 4,397 | 8,157 | 1,532 | 1,216 |
| | non-decent | 2,102 | 2,958 | 747 | 506 |
| 2005 | decent | 4,455 | 8,518 | 1,486 | 1,334 |
| | non-decent | 1,915 | 2,909 | 683 | 479 |
| 2006 | decent | 4,739 | 8,555 | 1,471 | 1,334 |
| | non-decent | 1,937 | 2,821 | 645 | 486 |
| percentage: | | | | | |
| 1996 | decent | 52.2 | 60.5 | 45.8 | 49.7 |
| | non-decent | 47.8 | 39.5 | 54.2 | 50.3 |
| 2001 | decent | 63.1 | 71.1 | 58.9 | 64.0 |
| | non-decent | 36.9 | 28.9 | 41.1 | 36.0 |
| 2003 | decent | 66.1 | 72.0 | 63.0 | 66.9 |
| | non-decent | 33.9 | 28.0 | 37.0 | 33.1 |
| 2004 | decent | 67.7 | 73.4 | 67.2 | 70.6 |
| | non-decent | 32.3 | 26.6 | 32.8 | 29.4 |
| 2005 | decent | 69.9 | 74.5 | 68.5 | 73.6 |
| | non-decent | 30.1 | 25.5 | 31.5 | 26.4 |
| 2006 | decent | 71.0 | 75.2 | 69.5 | 73.3 |
| | non-decent | 29.0 | 24.8 | 30.5 | 26.7 |

Base: all dwellings in NRF88 and other districts

Note: Decent Homes incorporating fitness as the statutory element

31. Since 1996, there has also been a substantial improvement in the proportion of private sector vulnerable households living in decent homes. For those living in the most deprived areas this has occurred at a faster rate; in 1996 there was a gap of 15 percentage points between the most deprived areas and other districts; however in 2006 the gap is only 4 percentage points, Figure 4. Therefore the gap between the NRF88 and other districts is narrowing.

Figure 4: Private sector vulnerable households living in non-decent homes by NRF88 and other areas, 1996 – 2006.



Base: all private sector vulnerable households

Note: the bars represent the survey estimate for the NRF88 and other areas. The trend and the disparity between groups are modelled using all available results for the period.

Living conditions in 2006

32. In the 91 districts⁶ which are or have been supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), 38% of homes are non-decent compared to 36% of homes in other areas (using the updated version of the decent homes definition incorporating HHSRS). Households living in these districts are also more likely to be living in poor quality environments, 20% compared to 13% elsewhere.

33. In the social sector 36% of homes are non-decent in the 91 most deprived districts compared to 31% of homes elsewhere, Table 9.

⁶ From 2006 the group of LAs receiving Neighbourhood Renewal Fund allocations has been revised. See the 'Terms used in this Report' section for further details.

Table 9: Non-decent homes (using the updated version with the HHSRS) in the NRF91 by tenure.

| | private sector | | social sector | |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | NRF districts | other districts | NRF districts | other districts |
| number (000s): | | | | |
| decent | 4,176 | 7,106 | 1,381 | 1,224 |
| non-decent | 2,690 | 4,081 | 783 | 548 |
| percentage: | | | | |
| decent | 60.8 | 63.5 | 63.8 | 69.1 |
| non-decent | 39.2 | 36.5 | 36.2 | 30.9 |

Base: all dwellings in NRF91 and other districts

Note: The NRF91 include LAs previously in receipt of funding as well as those in the revised group of 86.

34. Of the 3.2 million vulnerable households living in the private sector, 1.5 million (46%) live in the NRF 91 district. Vulnerable households living in these districts are no more likely to live in non-decent homes than vulnerable households living elsewhere (using the updated version of the decent homes standard that incorporates the HHSRS).

Annex

Table A1: Decent homes (using fitness as the statutory component) by housing tenure, 1996 – 2006.

| | | owner occupied | private rented | all private | LA | RSL | all social | all tenures |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|-------|---------------|----------------|
| number (000s): | | | | | | | | |
| 1996 | decent | 8,392 | 752 | 9,144 | 1,600 | 493 | 2,092 | 11,236 |
| | non-decent | 5,535 | 1,246 | 6,781 | 1,869 | 448 | 2,318 | 9,099 |
| 2001 | decent | 10,483 | 1,072 | 11,554 | 1,637 | 952 | 2,589 | 14,143 |
| | non-decent | 4,316 | 1,101 | 5,416 | 1,174 | 472 | 1,647 | 7,063 |
| 2003 | decent | 10,982 | 1,149 | 12,131 | 1,482 | 1,154 | 2,636 | 14,767 |
| | non-decent | 4,219 | 1,056 | 5,275 | 975 | 467 | 1,442 | 6,717 |
| 2004 | decent | 11,213 | 1,340 | 12,554 | 1,519 | 1,228 | 2,748 | 15,301 |
| | non-decent | 4,066 | 994 | 5,060 | 816 | 437 | 1,252 | 6,312 |
| 2005 | decent | 11,509 | 1,464 | 12,974 | 1,437 | 1,384 | 2,821 | 15,794 |
| | non-decent | 3,822 | 1,003 | 4,825 | 729 | 433 | 1,162 | 5,987 |
| 2006 | decent | 11,738 | 1,556 | 13,294 | 1,391 | 1,414 | 2,805 | 16,099 |
| | non-decent | 3,704 | 1,055 | 4,759 | 695 | 436 | 1,131 | 5,890 |
| percentage: | | | | | | | | |
| 1996 | decent | 60.3 | 37.6 | 57.4 | 46.1 | 52.4 | 47.4 | 55.3 |
| | non-decent | 39.7 | 62.4 | 42.6 | 53.9 | 47.6 | 52.6 | 44.7 |
| 2001 | decent | 70.8 | 49.3 | 68.1 | 58.2 | 66.8 | 61.1 | 66.7 |
| | non-decent | 29.2 | 50.7 | 31.9 | 41.8 | 33.2 | 38.9 | 33.3 |
| 2003 | decent | 72.2 | 52.1 | 69.7 | 60.3 | 71.2 | 64.6 | 68.7 |
| | non-decent | 27.8 | 47.9 | 30.3 | 39.7 | 28.8 | 35.4 | 31.3 |
| 2004 | decent | 73.4 | 57.4 | 71.3 | 65.1 | 73.8 | 68.7 | 70.8 |
| | non-decent | 26.6 | 42.6 | 28.7 | 34.9 | 26.2 | 31.3 | 29.2 |
| 2005 | decent | 75.1 | 59.4 | 72.9 | 66.3 | 76.2 | 70.8 | 72.5 |
| | non-decent | 24.9 | 40.6 | 27.1 | 33.7 | 23.8 | 29.2 | 27.5 |
| 2005 | decent | 76.0 | 59.6 | 73.6 | 66.7 | 76.4 | 71.3 | 73.2 |
| | non-decent | 24.0 | 40.4 | 26.4 | 33.3 | 23.6 | 28.7 | 26.8 |

Base: all dwellings

Note: homes figures based on fitness as the statutory component

Table A2: Private sector vulnerable households by decent homes (using fitness as the statutory component), 1996 – 2006.

| | | owner occupied | private rented | all private | owner occupied | private rented | all private |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| number (000s): | | percentage: | | | | | |
| 1996 | decent | 880 | 196 | 1,076 | 48.6 | 28.0 | 42.9 |
| | non-decent | 929 | 504 | 1,433 | 51.4 | 72.0 | 57.1 |
| 2001 | decent | 1,285 | 256 | 1,542 | 62.1 | 41.2 | 57.3 |
| | non-decent | 784 | 366 | 1,151 | 37.9 | 58.8 | 42.7 |
| 2003 | decent | 1,506 | 277 | 1,783 | 67.6 | 45.3 | 62.8 |
| | non-decent | 722 | 335 | 1,056 | 32.4 | 54.7 | 37.2 |
| 2004 | decent | 1,617 | 347 | 1,963 | 70.1 | 50.3 | 65.5 |
| | non-decent | 691 | 342 | 1,033 | 29.9 | 49.7 | 34.5 |
| 2005 | decent | 1,697 | 387 | 2,084 | 70.5 | 51.7 | 66.1 |
| | non-decent | 709 | 362 | 1,071 | 29.5 | 48.3 | 33.9 |
| 2006 | decent | 1,767 | 378 | 2,145 | 72.4 | 52.9 | 68.0 |
| | non-decent | 675 | 336 | 1,012 | 27.6 | 47.1 | 32.0 |

Base: all private sector households

Note: homes figures based on fitness as the statutory component

Table A3: Private sector vulnerable households by decent homes – using the HHSRS definition, 2006.

| | decent | non-decent | all homes |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| number (000s): | | | |
| owner occupied | 1,516 | 932 | 2,448 |
| private rented | 311 | 430 | 742 |
| all private | 1,827 | 1,362 | 3,190 |
| percentage: | | | |
| owner occupied | 61.9 | 38.1 | 100.0 |
| private rented | 42.0 | 58.0 | 100.0 |
| all private | 57.3 | 42.7 | 100.0 |

Base: All private sector households

Note: homes figures based on HHSRS as the statutory component

Table A4: PSA7-related households in non-decent homes, comparison of fitness and HHSRS definitions, 2006.

| | Non-decent homes | | all households |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | fitness definition | HHSRS definition | |
| non vulnerable private | 3,457 | 5,124 | 14,306 |
| vulnerable private | 1,029 | 1,362 | 3,189 |
| social | 1,023 | 1,220 | 3,724 |
| all households | 5,508 | 7,706 | 21,220 |
| non vulnerable | 24.2 | 35.8 | 100.0 |
| vulnerable | 32.3 | 42.7 | 100.0 |
| social | 27.5 | 32.8 | 100.0 |
| all households | 26.0 | 36.3 | 100.0 |

Base: All households

Table A5: PSA7-related households in non-decent homes – disparity from non-vulnerable private sector households, 1996 to 2006.

| | percentage of group living in non decent homes | | | | | | difference from non vulnerable | | ratio to non vulnerable | | difference from 1996 to 1996 | | annual rate of progress |
|--|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| | 1996 | 2001 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 1996 | 2006 | 1996 | 2006 | 2006 | 2006 | 1996-2006 |
| | survey estimates: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| non vulnerable private households | 39.0 | 29.2 | 27.8 | 26.6 | 24.7 | 24.2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| vulnerable private households | 57.1 | 42.7 | 37.2 | 34.5 | 33.9 | 32.3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| social tenants | 52.3 | 38.3 | 34.2 | 30.3 | 27.9 | 27.6 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| modeled results: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| non vulnerable private households | 37.8 | 30.7 | 27.8 | 26.4 | 25.0 | 23.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.00 | 1.00 | -14.2 | 0.62 | -1.4 |
| vulnerable private households | 56.1 | 43.5 | 38.4 | 35.8 | 33.3 | 30.8 | 18.3 | 7.2 | 1.49 | 1.31 | -25.4 | 0.55 | -2.5 |
| social tenants | 52.0 | 40.0 | 35.2 | 32.8 | 30.4 | 28.0 | 14.2 | 4.4 | 1.38 | 1.19 | -24.1 | 0.54 | -2.4 |

Notes:

1) 'Survey estimates' provide the actual survey findings for each year. Because each year's estimate is subject to a degree of error related to sampling, design and measurement aspects of the survey, results across the whole period are modelled to arrive at robust conclusions on disparities that are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. 'Model results' are derived from the output of the model. Further details of the analysis to assess trends in observed disparities are provided in the Technical Report for the EHCS.

2) The estimates and model results show a narrowing of both the 'absolute' and 'relative' gap between social tenants and private sector vulnerable households on the one hand and other (private sector) households on the other. A narrowing of the absolute gap (indicated by the difference in proportions in 1996 and 2006) can be expected simply because there has been a substantial reduction in the proportion of all households living in non decent homes. However there is also a significant narrowing of the relative gap as measured by the ratio of the proportions of each group living in non decent homes. So for example the proportion of private sector vulnerable households living in non decent homes was 49% greater than that for non vulnerable households in 1996 but only 31% greater in 2006.

Terms Used in the Report

A number of terms are used without detailed definition in the text. These are:

Decent home: is one that meets the following four criteria:

- a) It meets the current **statutory minimum** standard for housing. From April 2006 the fitness standard was replaced by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). Currently, there is insufficient data to report change since 1996 on decent homes incorporating the HHSRS. Trends and assessment of progress are therefore based on decent homes incorporating fitness as the statutory standard, which provides consistency in the measure.
- b) It is in a reasonable state of **repair** (related to the age and condition of a range of building components including walls, roofs, windows, doors, chimneys, electrics and heating systems).
- c) It has reasonably **modern facilities and services** (related to the age, size and layout/location of the kitchen, bathroom and WC and any common areas for blocks of flats, and to noise insulation).
- d) It provides a reasonable degree of **thermal comfort** (related to insulation and heating efficiency).

The detailed definition for each of these criteria is included in *A Decent Home: Definition and guidance for implementation*, Communities and Local Government, June 2006.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS): The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a new risk assessment tool used to assess potential risks to the health and safety of occupants in residential properties in England and Wales. It replaced the Fitness Standard in April 2006.

The purpose of the HHSRS assessment is not to set a standard but to generate objective information in order to determine and inform enforcement decisions. There are 29 categories of hazard, each of which is separately rated, based on the risk to the potential occupant who is most vulnerable to that hazard. The individual hazard scores are grouped into 10 bands where the highest bands (A-C representing scores of 1000 or more) are considered to pose Category 1 hazards. Local authorities have a duty to act where Category 1 hazards are present. Local authorities may take into account the vulnerability of the actual occupant in determining the best course of action.

For the purposes of the decent homes standard, homes posing a Category 1 hazard are non-decent on its criterion that a home must meet the statutory minimum requirements.

The EHCS is not able to replicate the HHSRS assessment in full as part of a large scale survey. Its assessment employs a mix of hazards that are directly assessed by surveyors in the field and others that are indirectly assessed from detailed related information collected.

Not all hazards are covered by the EHCS but it is expected that those included account for more than 95% of all Category 1 hazards. More details of how the HHSRS is measured by the EHCS will be available in the 2006 EHCS Technical Report.

An overview and links to more detailed guidance on the HHSRS are available from:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/hhsrs>

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF): aims to enable England's most deprived authorities, in collaboration with their Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), to narrow the gap between deprived areas and the rest of the country in terms of increased employment and improved economic performance, reduced crime, better educational attainment, improved health, better housing and cleaner, safer, greener public spaces.

From 2001 to 2006 88 local authorities received NRF however the method of allocating the NRF was revised in 2006 to incorporate the Indices of Deprivation 2004. This process resulted in a few local authority districts no longer receiving NRF and a few being provided with it for the first time.

For the purposes of reporting progress in deprived areas in the EHCS the NRF88 average has been replaced with the new 91 local authority district average. This accounts for the 3 new areas that have been in receipt of NRF from April 2006.

This figure of 91 still includes data for 5 authorities that no longer receive NRF because the impact of the funding received up to now might only manifest itself in changes in the data over the next two years.

Poor Quality Environments: this measure is based on the professional surveyors' assessments of problems in the immediate environment of the home. In all sixteen specific environmental problems (separately assessed by the surveyors) are grouped together (through content and factor analysis – see the EHCS Technical Report for more details) into three types of problems related to:

- a) '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);
- b) '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);
- c) '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).

The overall assessment (providing the estimate of 3.4 million households living in poor quality environments) is based on whether the home has any of the three types of problems.

SAP: is the energy cost rating as determined by the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) and is used to monitor the energy efficiency of homes. It 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 inefficient) to 100 (highly efficient with 100 representing zero energy cost).

The method for calculating SAP was comprehensively updated in 2005. SAP data based on the 2005 methodology was first published in the 2005 EHCS Headline Report (January 2007). Any data published before that was based on the SAP 2001 methodology and is therefore inconsistent.

Vulnerable households: are households in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits.

The definition of vulnerable households for April 2005 to March 2007 was households in receipt of: income support, housing benefit, attendance allowance, disability living allowance, industrial injuries disablement benefit, war disablement pension, pension credit, child tax credit and working tax credit. For child tax credit and working tax credit the household is only considered vulnerable if the household has a relevant income of less than £15,050.

The focus of the report is on vulnerable households in the private housing sector where choice and achievable standards are constrained by resources available to the household. This focus reflects the Government target to increase the proportion of private sector vulnerable households living in decent homes.

The survey has not been able to include two benefits listed in the decent homes guidance (*A Decent Home – the definition and guidance for implementation*, Communities and Local Government, June 2006), council tax benefit and income based job seekers allowance. Any households in receipt of either of these two benefits only will therefore be excluded from the survey's estimate of vulnerable households.

However the great majority of households in receipt of either of these two benefits will also be in receipt of other listed benefits and therefore likely to be included in current estimates.