

# Home building stats show continued increase in starts and completions despite pandemic

Press release

Statistics show the number of completed homes almost hit 50,000 in the last quarter – the highest number in over 20 years.



- Nearly 50,000 new homes built in the first 3 months of 2021 – the highest figure in over 20 years
- Home building in England continues to increase following government interventions as we build back better from the pandemic
- Houses make up 81% of all new builds versus flats – highest proportion since 2000-01

The number of homes being built continues to rise following a range of measures put in place by the government to support the industry during the pandemic, the latest housebuilding figures show.

There were 49,470 completed homes in the first quarter of 2021 – the highest figure in over 20 years and a 4% increase compared to the last 3 months of 2020. During the same period 46,010 homes were started, the highest number in nearly 15 years and a 7% increase on the previous quarter.

The figures also show an increase in housebuilding starts in London with 14,530 in the year to March 2021, an increase of 18% compared to the previous 12 months.

In addition, the figures highlight that in 2020-21 houses made up 81% of all new build dwellings – the highest proportion since 2000-01.

The figures further reflect the housing and construction industry's resilience following the measures the government has taken to keep building sites open during the pandemic.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

It is encouraging to see a continued rise in the number of new homes being built. The house building sector has shown extraordinary resilience and the government has continued to demonstrate its support for the industry throughout the pandemic.

By enabling construction sites to remain open and operate safely, builders have been able deliver the homes this country needs as we build back better from the pandemic.

The [statistics](#) were released on 30 June and can also be found via the [interactive dashboard](#).

Recent government support for home building includes:

- During the pandemic we have introduced a range of measures, such as allowing builders to seek more flexible construction site working hours with their local councils and extending certain planning permissions that would otherwise lapse, in order to keep the sector moving.
- We have set out an ambitious package of measures to ensure we build the right homes in the right places and level up opportunities across the country. This includes nearly £20 billion of investment in new housing as confirmed in the Spending Review, including over £12 billion of investment in affordable housing and our £7.1 billion National Home Building Fund.
- We are also taking measures to support home buyers including First Homes which helps local first-time buyers – many of whom will be key workers – onto the property ladder by offering homes at a discount of at least 30% compared to the market price. Furthermore, the 95% mortgage guarantee scheme helps first-time buyers secure a mortgage with just a 5% deposit.
- First-time buyers can find the right scheme for them via the [Own Your Home website](#) which provides a single gateway for all routes to home ownership.

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# 440,000 tax credits customers still to renew claims

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding 440,000 tax credits customers they have one month left to renew their tax credits claims ahead of the 31 July 2021 deadline.

More than 2.5 million annual tax credits review packs were posted to customers between late April and early June. Customers will have either received an 'auto-renewal' reminder or a 'reply required' notice. All 'reply required' customers must renew their claims or contact HMRC to notify them of any change in circumstances ahead of the deadline to continue receiving tax credits payments.

Renewing online is quick and easy. Customers can log into GOV.UK to check on the progress of their renewal, be reassured it is being processed and know when they will hear back from HMRC. Customers can also use the HMRC app on their smartphone to:

- renew their tax credits
- check their tax credits payments schedule
- find out how much they have earned for the year

Customers do not need to report any temporary falls in their working hours as a result of coronavirus. They will be treated as if they are working their normal hours for up to eight weeks after the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme closes. Any self-employed individuals, who have claimed a Self-Employment Income Support Scheme grant, will need to declare the grant payments. Search 'working out your income for tax credit/self-employment' on GOV.UK.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

We know how important tax credits are to our customers, so we've made it quicker and easier to renew claims online. There's no need to wait for the 31 July deadline – do it now by searching 'tax credits' on GOV.UK.

If there is a change in a customer's circumstances that could affect their tax credits claims, they must [report the changes to HMRC](#). These include changes to:

- living arrangements
- childcare
- working hours, or
- income (increase or decrease)

Post Office card accounts will close on 30 November 2021. HMRC is reminding any tax credits and Child Benefit customers who use this account to receive

their payments that they will need to notify HMRC of their new bank account details. HMRC is encouraging customers to act now so they do not miss any payments once their Post Office account closes. To find out how to open a bank account, visit [Citizens Advice](#).

HMRC is urging customers to be careful if they are contacted out of the blue by someone asking for money or personal information. There are a lot of scams around where fraudsters are calling, texting or emailing customers claiming to be from HMRC. If in doubt, customers are advised not to reply directly to anything suspicious, but to contact HMRC straight away – search GOV.UK for ‘HMRC scams’ for more information.

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## [Legal lifeline for people in need](#)

- New funding to support vulnerable people affected by pandemic
- Investment in free legal advice follows £5.4 million emergency grant last year
- More than 70 not-for-profit providers will benefit

An additional £2 million is being invested in the Community Justice Fund (CJF), which supports more than 70 not-for-profit organisations providing legal help to those who have lost their job, been caught in rent arrears, or built up debt as a result of Covid-19.

The extra money follows a £5.4 million government grant for the initiative last year. It will enable specialist organisations to further invest in technology to allow remote access to services through platforms such as Zoom and Teams, hire more staff and ensure their vital services remain available despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

The move will also ensure a greater number of people can access support to resolve their issues more quickly, and away from the courtroom – helping to alleviate pressure on the justice system.

Justice Minister, Lord Wolfson QC, said:

We have made supporting vulnerable people a priority throughout the pandemic and I’m delighted this extra funding will ensure more of them get the expert help they need.

Through close partnership with the legal advice sector such as this, this government is ensuring no-one is left to face their problems alone.

The CJF is a joint initiative between leading social justice organisations

including Advice UK, Law Centres Network, Citizens Advice, the AB Charitable Trust, Indigo Trust, and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

The new funding will be allocated over the next 12 months, providing timely support for the sector which has seen demand for its services increase over the pandemic.

Clare Carter, Interim Chief Executive of the Access to Justice Foundation, lead partner of the Community Justice Fund, said:

Specialist not-for-profit legal advice agencies have been a lifeline to people in need of expert legal advice during the pandemic.

“The sector has worked tirelessly to support the increasing number of people in need of help, whilst facing severe financial, resource and service-delivery challenges.

Through our work with the Community Justice Fund, we know that these services are still operating under immense pressure as the impact of the pandemic continues to be felt and more people seek affordable, good-quality legal advice.

We would like to thank the Ministry of Justice for this significant contribution to the Community Justice Fund, which will enable us to provide further funding and support to the sector at this time of great need.

## Notes to editors

- [Emergency funding to support most vulnerable in society during pandemic – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)
- Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, MOJ and DCMS provided £5.4 million to not-for-profit providers of specialist legal advice, through the COVID-19 Specialist Advice Services Scheme (CSASS) grant.
- The funding comprised of £2.8 million from HMT, via DCMS, and £2.6 million from MOJ’s budget. We awarded £3 million to law centres, via the Law Centres Network (LCN), and £2.4 million to specialist legal advice organisations through the Community Justice Fund (CJF), The CJF is a joint initiative between leading social justice organisations including Advice UK, Law Centres Network, Citizens Advice, the AB Charitable Trust, Indigo Trust, and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.
- The CJF is administered by the Access to Justice Foundation (ATJF) and it is designed to provide support to not-for-profit specialist legal advice organisations.

- The CSASS grant has helped organisations prevent closure and remain operational to provide specialist legal advice services following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The grant also helped organisations to procure equipment to enable, and adapt to, remote service delivery; and to increase capacity to meet the demand for legal advice services.

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## [UN Human Rights Council 47: Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions](#)

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## [Reappointments to the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody](#)

News story

The Secretary of State has announced the reappointment of 5 Public Appointees.



The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, in consultation with the Home Office and Department of Health and Social Care, has reappointed 5 members to the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody.

Deborah Coles, Professor Seena Fazel, Professor Jennifer Shaw, and Jenny Talbot OBE have been reappointed for a second term of 2 years from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023.

John Wadham has been reappointed for a second term of 6 months from 1 July 2021 to 31 December 2021.

The Ministerial Council on Deaths in Custody is jointly sponsored by the Ministry of Justice, the Department of Health and Social Care, and the Home Office. The Council consists of three tiers:

- Ministerial Board on Deaths in Custody
- Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody (IAPDC)
- Practitioner and Stakeholder Group

The role of IAPDC, an advisory non-departmental public body, is to provide independent advice and expertise to the Ministerial Board. It provides guidance on policy and best practice across sectors and makes recommendations to Ministers and operational services. The IAPDC's aim is to bring about a continuing and sustained reduction in the number and rate of deaths in all forms of state custody in England and Wales.

## **Biographies**

- Deborah Coles is the Executive Director of the influential human rights charity INQUEST that works on state related deaths, she champions various social justice and equality issues. Deborah undertakes policy, research, media and consultancy work on the strategic issues raised by contentious deaths, in particular those in state care or raising concerns about state or corporate accountability. She is an advisor to Women In Prison and a trustee of Clean Break Theatre Company.
- Seena Fazel is a Professor of Forensic Psychiatry at the University of Oxford, a Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow in Clinical Science, and honorary consultant forensic psychiatrist for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust. He works clinically in a local prison. His main

research interests are on suicidal behaviour in prisoners, mental health of prisoners, and risk assessment in criminal justice and mental health.

- Jennifer Shaw is Professor of Forensic Psychiatry, University of Manchester and Honorary Consultant Psychiatrist Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust. Her research interests include suicide primarily within the criminal justice system, homicide and the mental health of prisoners. She has over 30 years experience working clinically in the NHS.
- Jenny Talbot OBE has worked extensively to improve outcomes for people with learning disabilities and neurodiversity within the criminal justice system, including with the Prison Reform Trust, where she directed the innovative 'Care not Custody' programme. Under the auspices of the Open Society Foundations, Jenny coordinates a small international group of disability advocates working to promote fair access to justice for people with disabilities. In January 2021 she was appointed Independent Chair of the National Women's Prison Health and Social Care Review, a partnership between HMPPS and NHSE/I.
- John Wadham is a human rights lawyer and currently chair of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) set up by the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture, which brings together 21 statutory bodies monitoring detention in all forms of state custody in the UK. He is also the Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

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