

# Empty homes in London

Data analysis

June 2026



**LONDON**ASSEMBLY

**Research Unit**

# Overview

This data analysis, produced by the London Assembly Research Unit, provides an overview of empty and second homes in London.

The information presented in the report is based on published data from a range of sources, including the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG) [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), published in November 2025 and revised in January 2026. It also draws on additional data from MHCLG on [vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004 to 2025](#) and [live tables on vacant stock](#). Finally, it includes some supplementary data from the Census 2021.

The Census 2021 and the annual Council Taxbase use different definitions and methodologies to calculate empty and second homes. It means that data between these sources **cannot** be compared. Council Taxbase data is released annually, allowing for trends to be compared over time. It is the primary source of data for this analysis. Where census data is used to supplement this, it is highlighted specifically and should not be compared to other datasets.

The analysis was undertaken in support of planned work by the London Assembly Housing Committee.

# About the Research Unit

The London Assembly Research Unit provides an impartial research and information service. We undertake research and analysis on key issues in London to inform the Assembly's work.

All of our publications are available at:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/london-assembly-research-unit-publications>

**This report was produced by Becka Storer.**

With thanks to Anita Zivkow, James Cotter and Tim Gallagher

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# 1 OVERVIEW

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## Overview

This section provides an introduction to empty homes in London. It presents data on the number of empty homes in the capital, exploring trends over time and in comparison to other regions of England. It also looks at how empty homes are geographically spread across London.

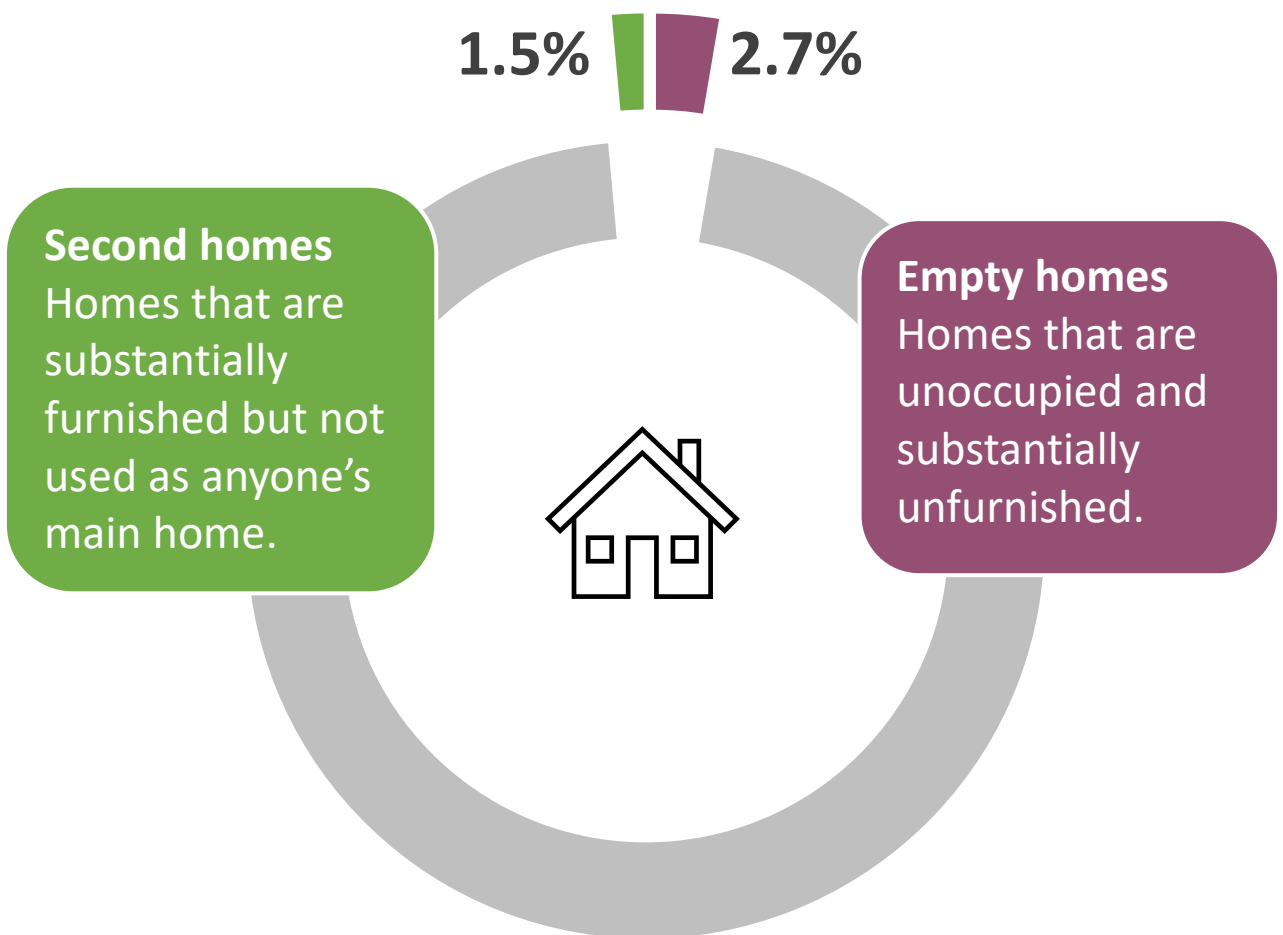
## Source information

The data in this section comes from MHCLG's [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), published in November 2025 and revised in January 2026. It also draws on additional data from MHCLG on [vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004 to 2025](#).

None of the data in this section uses estimates of empty homes from the Census 2021.

# 1 in 37 homes in London are empty ... and 1 in 67 are second homes

According to the Council Taxbase, in 2025 there were **105,138 empty homes** and **55,978 second homes** in London. This represents 2.7 per cent and 1.5 per cent of the total homes in London respectively.

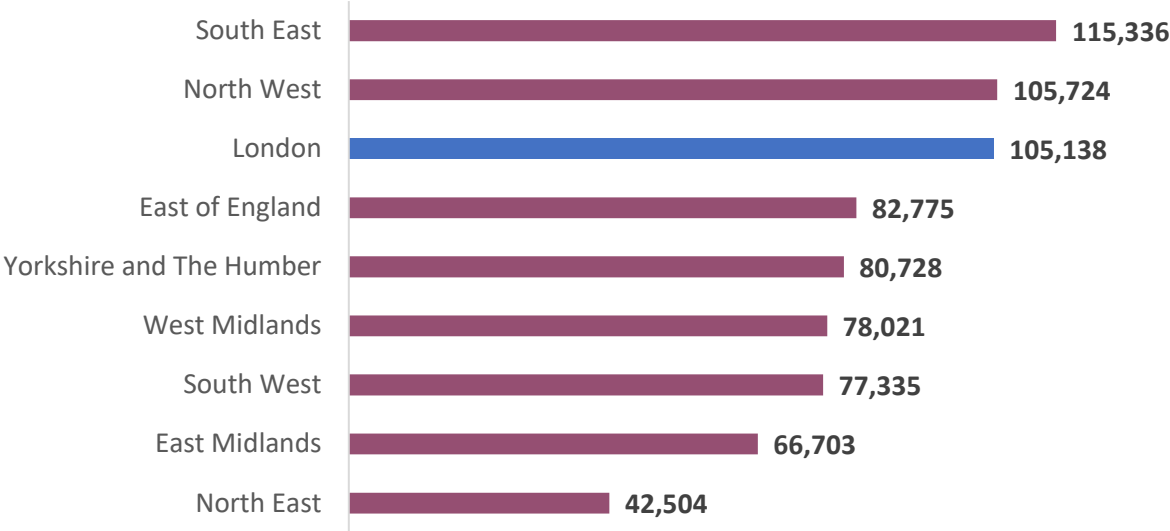


Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), November 2025 (revised in January 2026): local authority level data. The number of empty homes include all empty properties liable for council tax and properties that are empty but receive a council tax exemption. The number of empty homes is equivalent to table 1.18 and the exemption classes B,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L and Q in table 2.01. The total number of homes in London reflects the total number of dwellings on the valuation list (table 1.01). Definitions of empty and second homes for the purposes of the Council Taxbase from MHCLG, [Local authority Council Taxbase in England 2025 \(revised\)](#), accessed 18 May 2026.

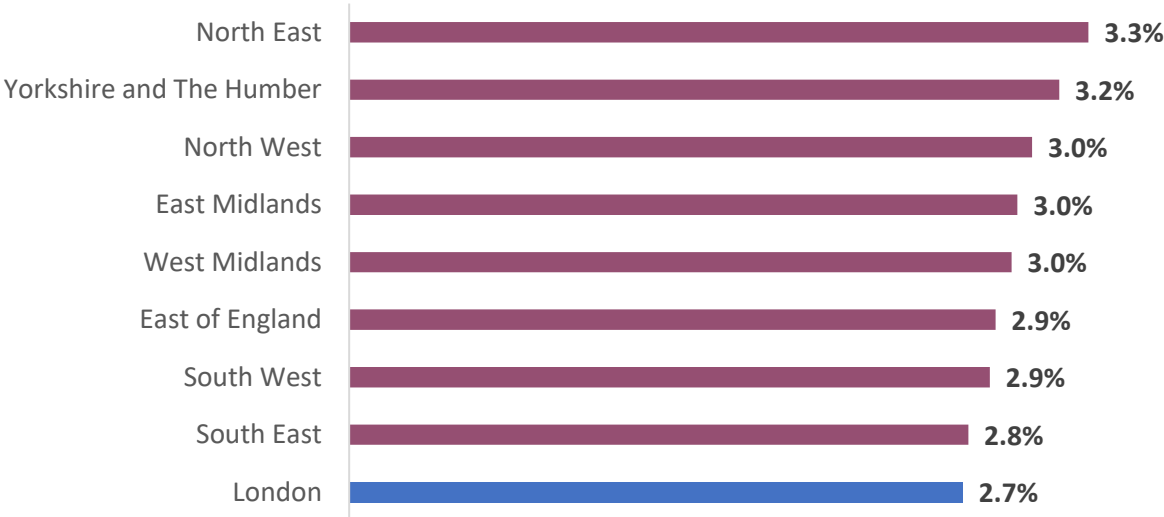
# London has the lowest rate of empty homes of any region in England

In 2025, London had the **third highest** total number of empty homes of all England’s regions, according to Council Taxbase data. However, due to the higher overall number of homes in London, this represented the **smallest percentage** of empty homes as a proportion of total homes (2.7 per cent).

## Number of empty homes by region, 2025



## Number of empty homes as proportion of total homes by region, 2025



Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), November 2025 (revised in January 2026): local authority level data. The number of empty homes include all empty properties liable for council tax and properties that are empty but receive a council tax exemption. The number of empty homes is equivalent to table 1.18 and the exemption classes B,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K,L and Q in table 2.01. The total number of homes in London reflects the total number of dwellings on the valuation list (table 1.01).

# But the number of empty homes in London in 2025 increased at a greater rate than in any other region

In all regions of England except the North East, the number of empty dwellings increased between 2024 to 2025.

London saw the **largest percentage increase between 2024 and 2025**, with the total number of empty homes increasing by **12 per cent** from 93,602 to 105,138 in the last year.

**Percentage change in empty homes by region, 2024 to 2025**



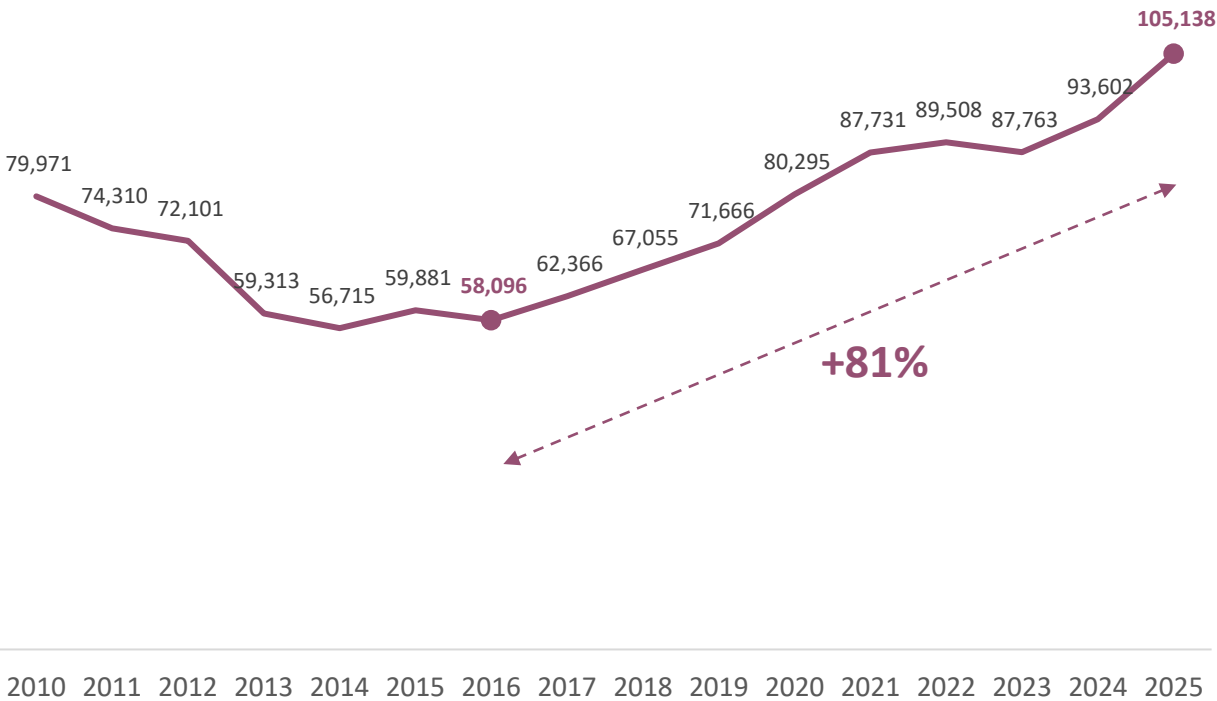
Source: MHCLG, [Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004](#), November 2025. The number of empty homes include all empty properties liable for council tax and properties that are empty but receive a council tax exemption

# The number of empty homes in London has risen by 81 per cent since 2016

The increase in the number of empty homes in the past year is part of a wider trend, with the number of empty dwellings in London steadily increasing over the past decade. Prior to this, the number of empty homes in London had steadily decreased from 86,733 in 2004 to 56,715 in 2014.

Since 2016, the number of empty homes in London has risen by **81 per cent** from **58,096** in 2016 to **105,138** in 2025.

## Number of empty homes in London

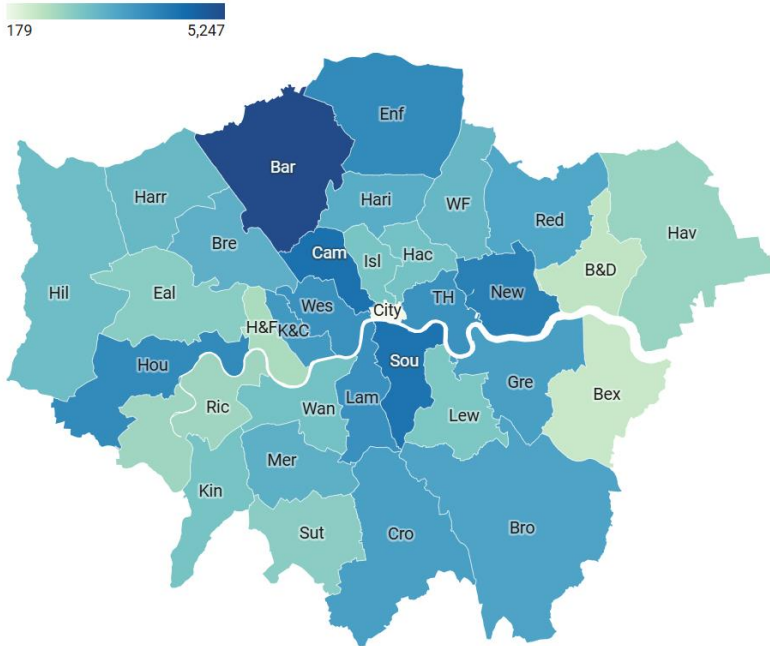


Source: MHCLG, [Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004](#), November 2025. The number of empty homes include all empty properties liable for council tax and properties that are empty but receive a council tax exemption.

# The number of empty homes varies across boroughs

MHCLG publishes data on the location of empty homes that are liable for council tax. Empty homes are not distributed evenly across London. In 2025, some boroughs reported higher total numbers of empty homes and a greater prevalence of empty homes than others.

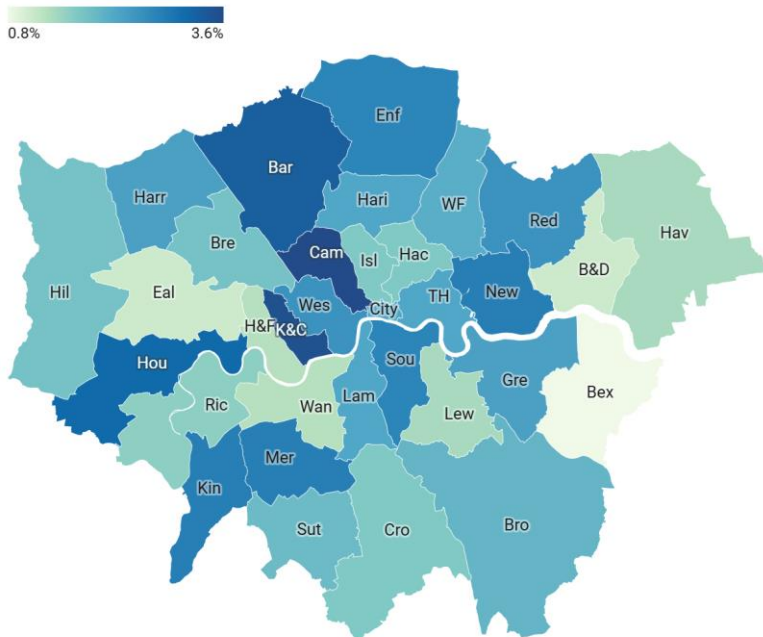
## Number of empty homes in 2025 by borough



### Boroughs with most empty homes in 2025

1. Barnet (5,247)
2. Camden (4,146)
3. Southwark (4,100)
4. Newham (3,755)
5. Enfield (3,482)

## Proportion of total homes that were empty in 2025



### Boroughs with highest proportion of total homes that were empty

1. Camden (3.6%)
2. Kensington and Chelsea (3.5%)
3. Barnet (3.3%)
4. Hounslow (3.1%)
5. Newham (2.8%)

Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), November 2025(revised in January 2026), table 1.18. Only empty homes liable for council tax are included in this data; it does not reflect homes with council tax exemptions. Total number of homes reflects the number on the valuation list, taken from table 1.01

# 2 LONG-TERM EMPTY HOMES

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## Overview

This section explores data on empty homes by the length of time they have been unoccupied. Firstly, it looks at trends in “long-term” empty homes, defined as dwellings empty for six months or more. Then it digs into homes that have been empty for even longer periods – one year, five years, and ten years. Finally, it looks at data on the empty homes premium.

## Source information

The data in this section comes primarily from the [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), published by MHCLG in November 2025 and revised in January 2026. Additional information comes from MHCLG data on [vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004 to 2025](#).

None of the data in this section uses estimates of empty homes from the Census 2021.

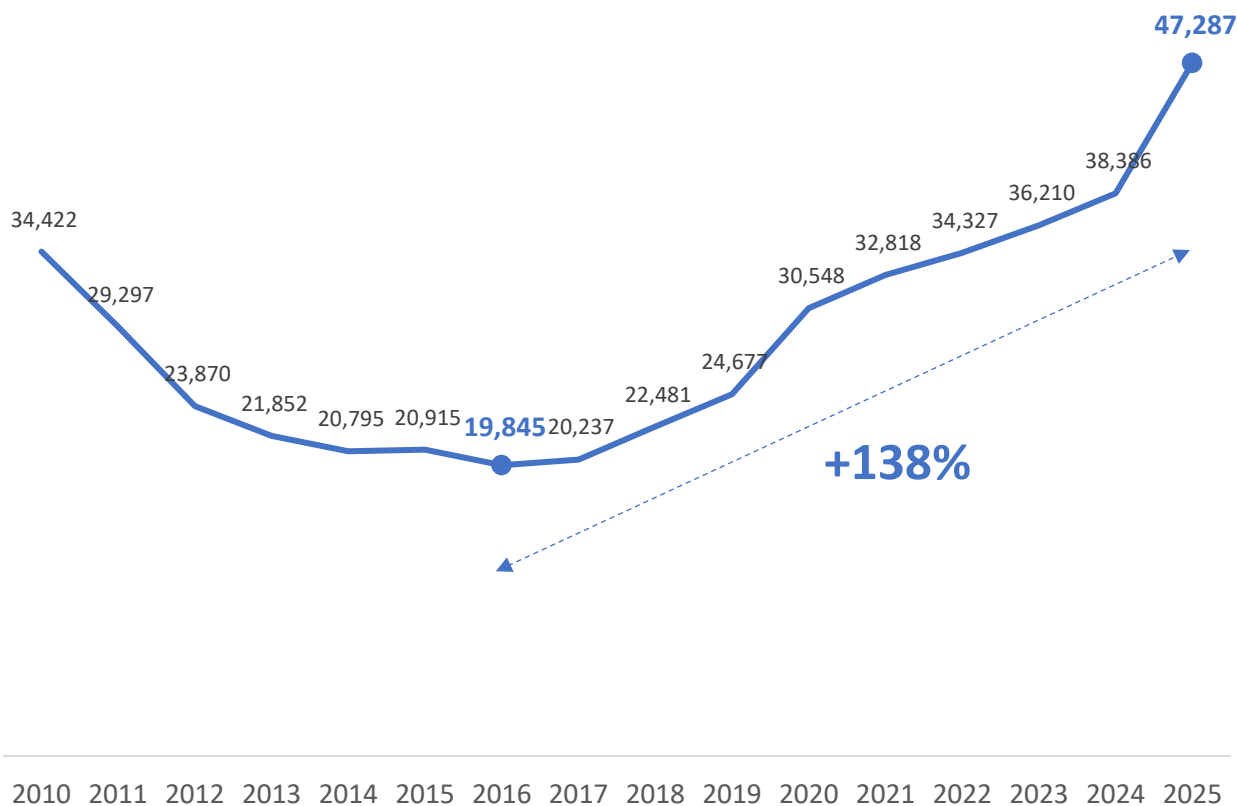
# The number of long-term empty homes in London has increased by 138 per cent since 2016

MHCLG releases statistics on long-term empty homes that are liable for council tax, which it defines as dwellings that have been empty for more than six months.

Since 2016, the number of long-term empty homes in London has increased by **138 per cent** from **19,845** to **47,287**.

From 2024 to 2025, the number of long-term empty properties in London increased by **23 per cent**, the second largest single-year increase in this period.

## Long-term empty homes in London

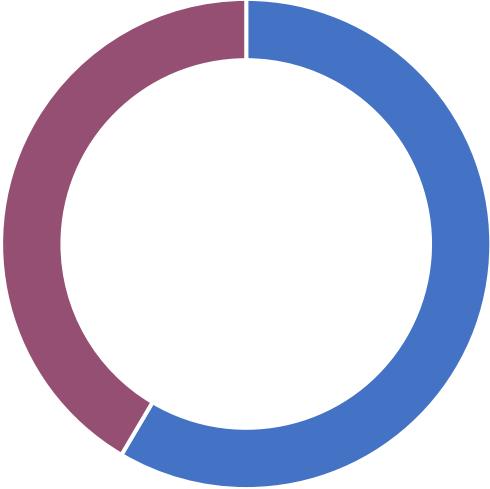


MHCLG, [Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004](#), November 2025. Long-term empty homes are defined as properties liable for council tax that have been empty for more than six months and that are not subject to Empty Homes Discount class D or empty due to specific flooding events. Empty homes figures do not include the 23,326 empty homes in London in 2025 that were exempt from council tax.

# 59 per cent of empty homes in London have been empty for more than six months

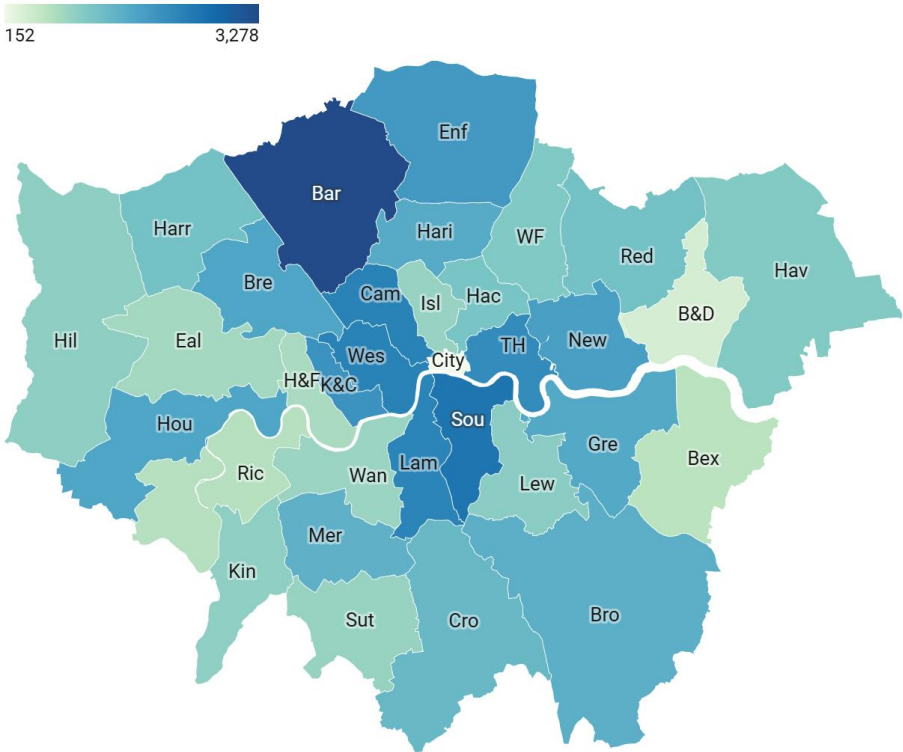
Of the 81,812 empty homes in London in 2025 that are not exempt from council tax, **47,864 (59 per cent)** have been empty for more than six months.

**33,948 (41%)**  
empty for six  
months or  
less



**47,864,**  
**(59%)**  
empty for  
more than  
six months

## Number of homes empty for more than six months by borough, 2025



The number of long-term empty homes varies across boroughs, from a high of 3,278 in Barnet to a low of 414 in Barking and Dagenham (excluding City of London).

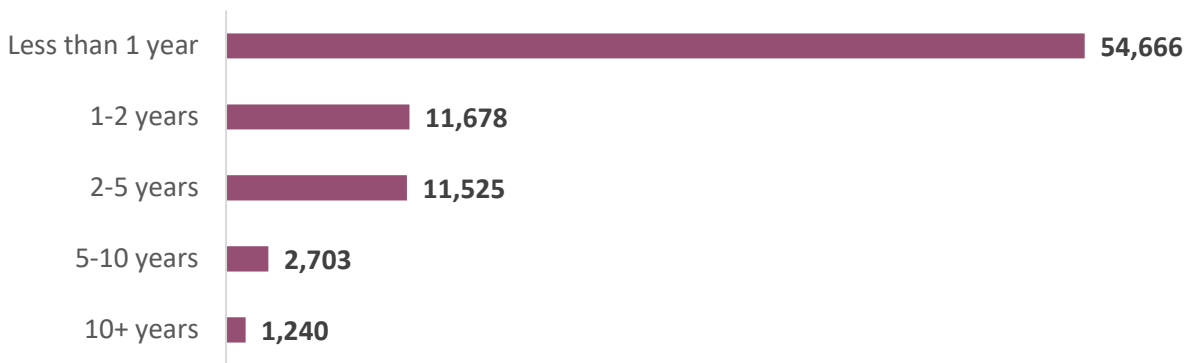
Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), Table 1.19, November 2025 (revised in January 2026). Empty homes figures do not include the 23,326 empty homes in London in 2025 that were exempt from council tax.

# A third of empty dwellings in London have been empty for more than a year

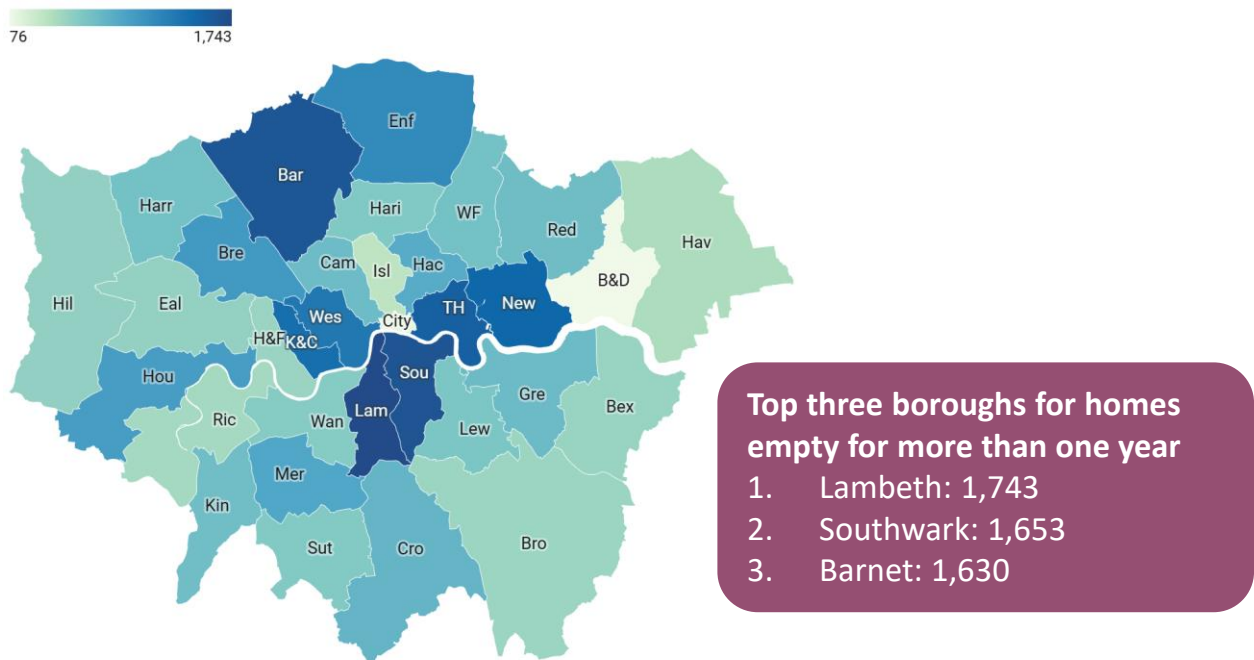
The Council Taxbase also publishes data on the length of time a home has been empty. Of the 81,812 empty dwellings in London that were not exempt from council tax, **one-third** had been empty for **more than one year** in 2025.

**Five per cent**, equivalent to **3,943** dwellings in London had been empty and substantially unfurnished for over five years, with **1,240** of these empty for over ten years.

## Empty dwellings in London by length of time empty, 2025



## Number of homes empty for more than one year by borough, 2025



Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), Tables 5.08, 5.12, 5.16, 5.17, 5.23, 5.24, 5.30, 5.31, and 5.38, November 2025 (revised in January 2026). Caution should be taken with the 1-2 and 2-5 year data as some authorities reported that they were unable to split the number of dwellings empty for between 1 and 2 years so have included these dwellings in the 2 to 5 years category. Empty home figures do not include the 23,326 empty homes that are exempt from council tax.

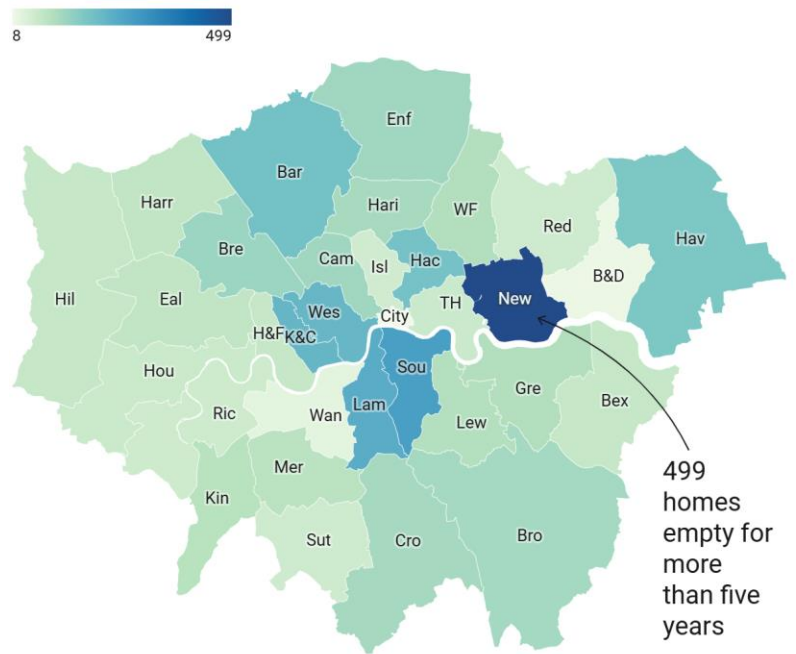
# Of the 1,240 properties in London empty for more than 10 years, 32 per cent are in Newham

Homes that have been empty for **over five years** are concentrated in inner London boroughs, with the highest levels in Newham, followed by Southwark and Lambeth.

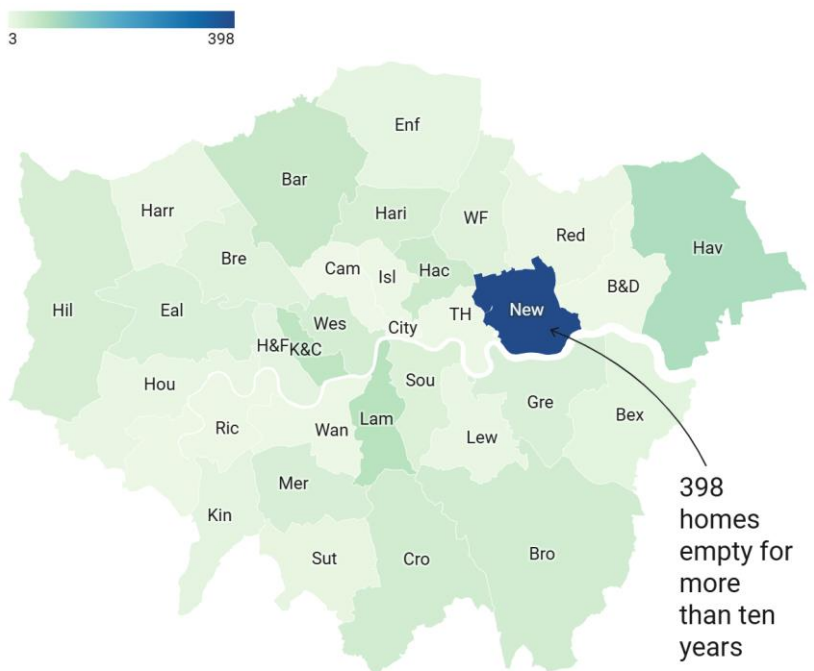
Homes that have been empty for **over ten years** were significantly concentrated in one borough, with **398** homes empty for over ten years located in Newham. This was **almost five times** the number of these types of homes in the next highest borough (Havering, 81).

Of the 1,240 homes in London empty for more than ten years, **32 per cent** are located in Newham.

**Number of homes empty for more than five years, 2025**



**Number of homes empty for more than 10 years, 2025**



Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), Tables 5.24, 5.30, 5.31, and 5.38, November 2025 (revised in January 2026). Empty home figures do not include the 23,326 empty homes that are exempt from council tax.

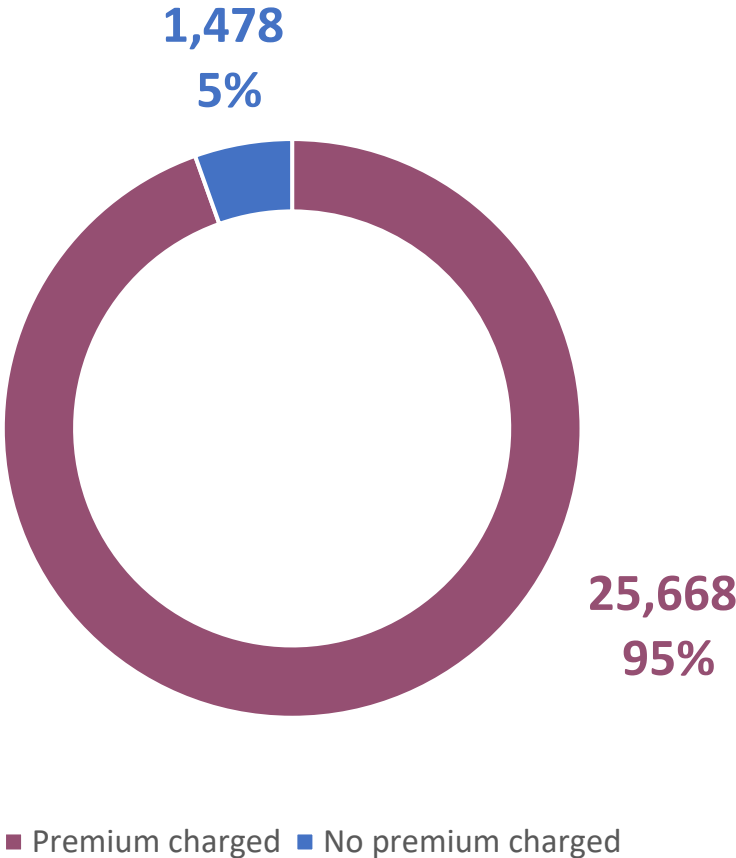
# Most homes empty for over a year were charged the empty homes premium in 2025

Local authorities can charge higher rates of council tax on properties that have been “unoccupied and substantially unfurnished” for more than a year.<sup>1</sup> This is known as the empty homes premium. Additional premiums can be applied for homes empty for more than five and ten years. There are a number of exemptions from the premium.

In 2025, **all 33 London boroughs applied the premium.**

Of the **27,146** homes in London empty for over a year in 2025, **25,668 (95 per cent)** were charged the empty homes premium.

## Proportion of homes empty for more than a year in London charged the empty homes premium, 2025



Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), November 2025 (revised in January 2026).

<sup>1</sup> MHCLG, [Guidance on the implementation of the council tax premiums on long-term empty homes and second homes](#), 1 May 2026

# 3 CHARACTERISTICS OF EMPTY HOMES

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## Overview

This section explores data on some of the characteristics of London's empty homes, to build a picture of the kind of homes that are empty. It looks at the Council Tax brackets of empty homes, the types of dwellings that are empty, and empty homes by bedroom size.

## Source information

The data in this section comes from the 2025 Council Taxbase and Census 2021. Data on empty homes by accommodation type and bedroom size comes from the Census 2021. As such, it is not comparable to Council Taxbase data in the rest of this analysis.

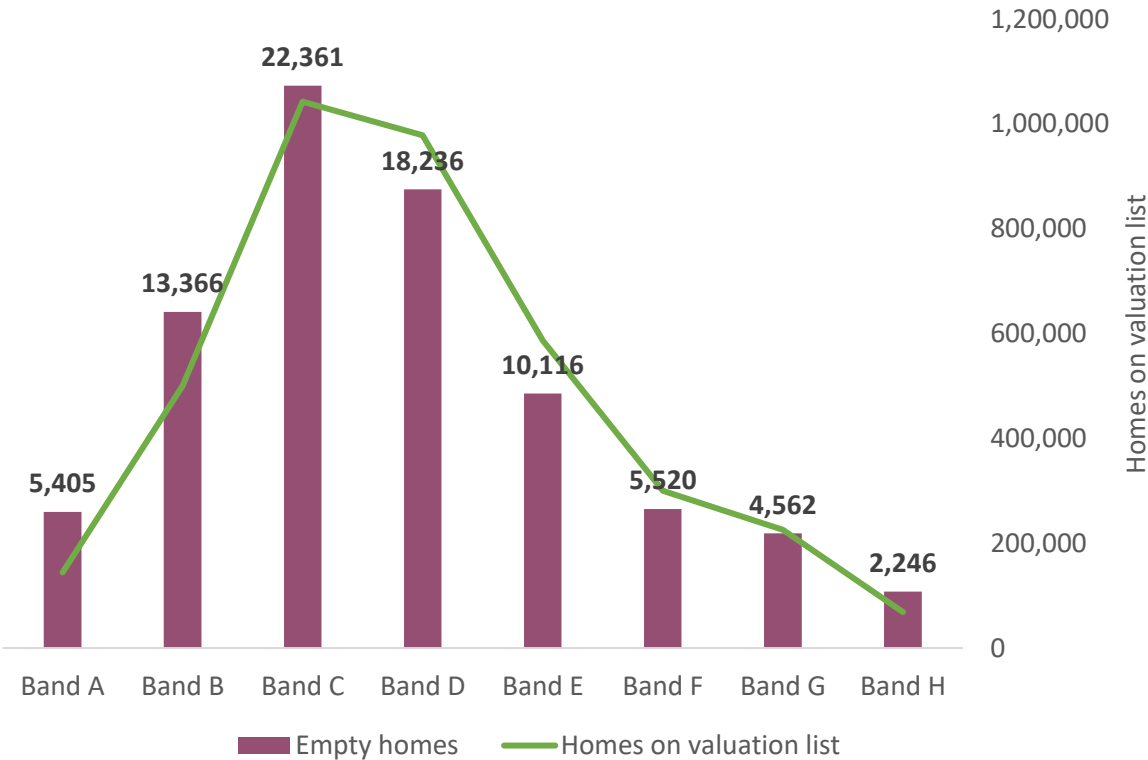
# Most empty homes in London are in Council Tax bands C and D

Council Tax bands (A-H) determine residential property taxes, based on 1991 property values. Band A represents properties with the lowest value in 1991, and Band H represents those with the highest value.

**Most empty homes in London are in bands C and D**, in line with the number of overall homes in London in these bands. The smallest number of empty homes are in Band H, typically the largest, most expensive properties.

However, in proportion to the number of overall homes in London in each band, homes in Bands A, B and H are more likely to be empty than homes in middle bands. For example, **3.7 per cent** of Band A properties and **3.3 per cent** of Band H properties are empty, compared to **1.7 per cent** of Band E properties.

**Number of empty homes in by Council Tax band, 2025**

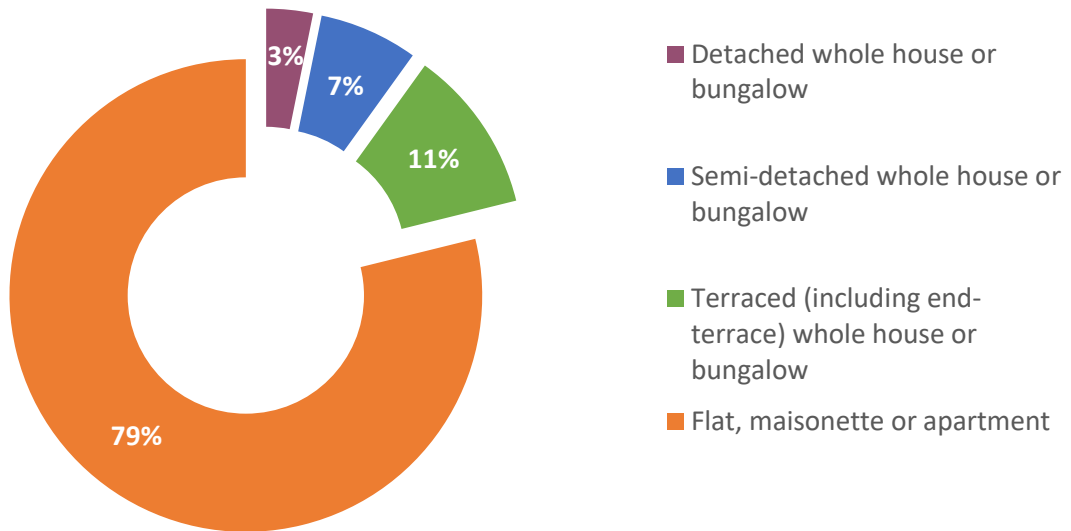


Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), November 2025 (revised in January 2026). Empty home figures do not include the 23,326 empty homes that are exempt from council tax.

# 79 per cent of empty homes in London are flats or maisonettes

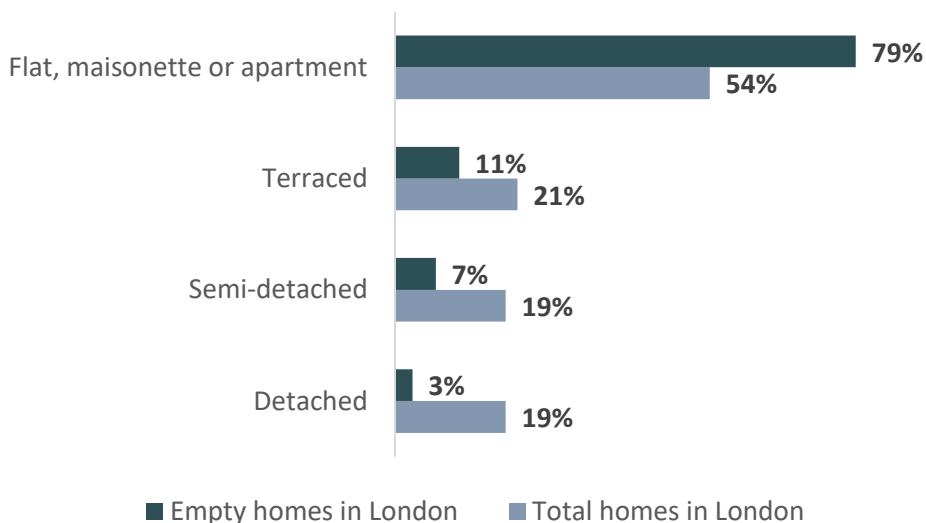
The Census 2021 categorised empty dwellings by type of accommodation. The vast majority (**79 per cent**) of empty dwellings in London were flats, maisonettes or apartments. A much smaller percentage were homes or bungalows (**21 per cent**).

## Empty dwellings by accommodation type, 2021



Compared to the number of overall homes in London of different types, flats were over-represented in empty homes. Flats made up 54 per cent of total homes in London but 79 per cent of empty homes. In contrast, terraced, semi-detached and detached houses all made up a smaller percentage of empty homes than total homes in London.

## Percentage of empty dwellings by accommodation type, 2021

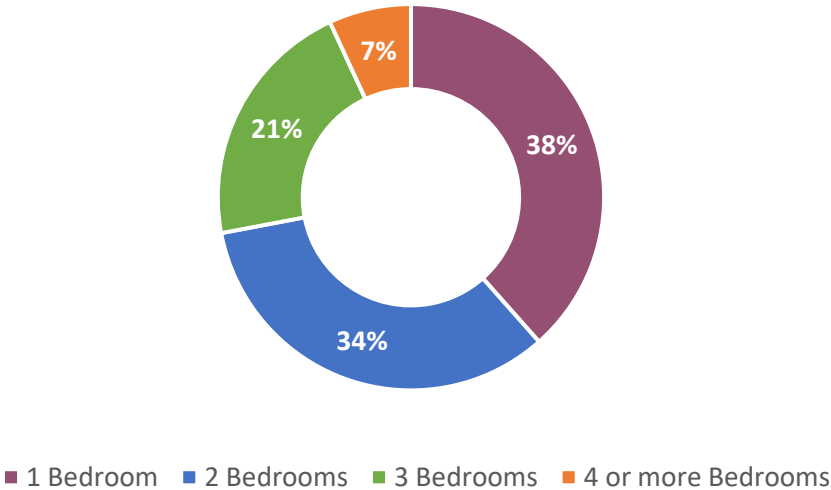


Source: ONS, [Number of vacant dwellings and second homes \(with no usual residents\)](#), 27 October 2023. Data on total homes to calculate percentages is taken from [Census 2021 data](#). Less than one per cent of homes in empty homes in London were caravans or temporary structures.

# 72 per cent of empty homes in London are one- or two-bedroom properties

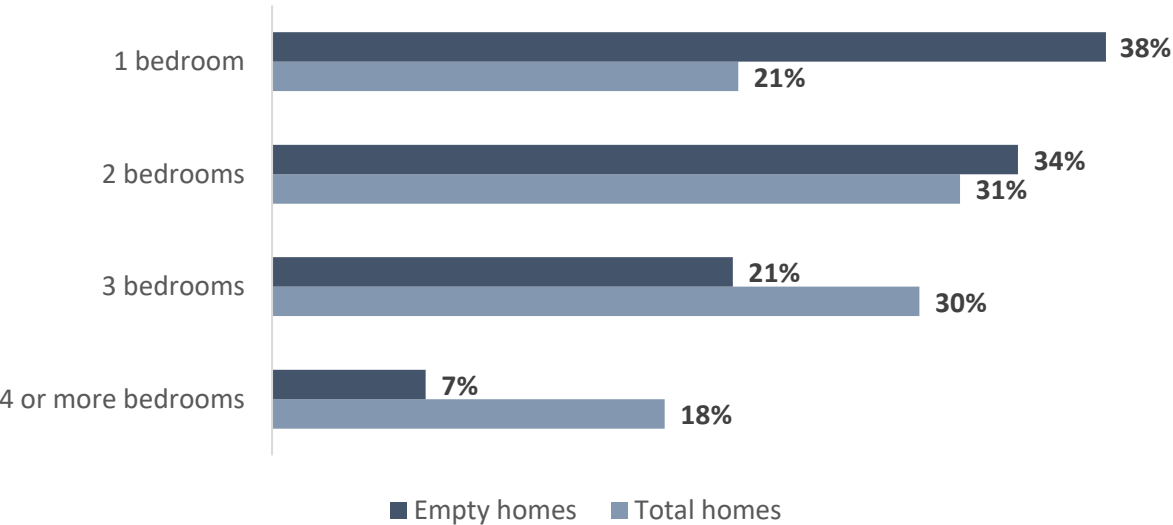
The Census 2021 also collected data about the bedroom size of empty homes. The majority of empty homes in London were one- or two-bed properties (**72 per cent**). A smaller proportion (**7 per cent**) had four or more bedrooms.

## Empty homes by bedroom size, 2021



One-bedroom properties in London are significantly over-represented in empty homes, making up 38 per cent of empty homes and 21 per cent of total homes. In contrast, homes with four or more bedrooms made up 18 per cent of total homes and 7 per cent of empty homes.

## Percentage of empty homes by bedroom size, 2021



Source: ONS, [Number of vacant dwellings and second homes \(with no usual residents\)](#), 27 October 2023. Data on total homes to calculate percentages taken from [Census 2021 data](#). There were 16,345 empty homes that had no recorded bedroom size, these have been excluded from percentage calculations.

# 4 SECOND HOMES

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## Overview

This section presents data on second homes in London, including the locations of second homes across London, the trend in overall numbers of second homes over time, and the percentage of second homes charged the second homes premium.

## Source information

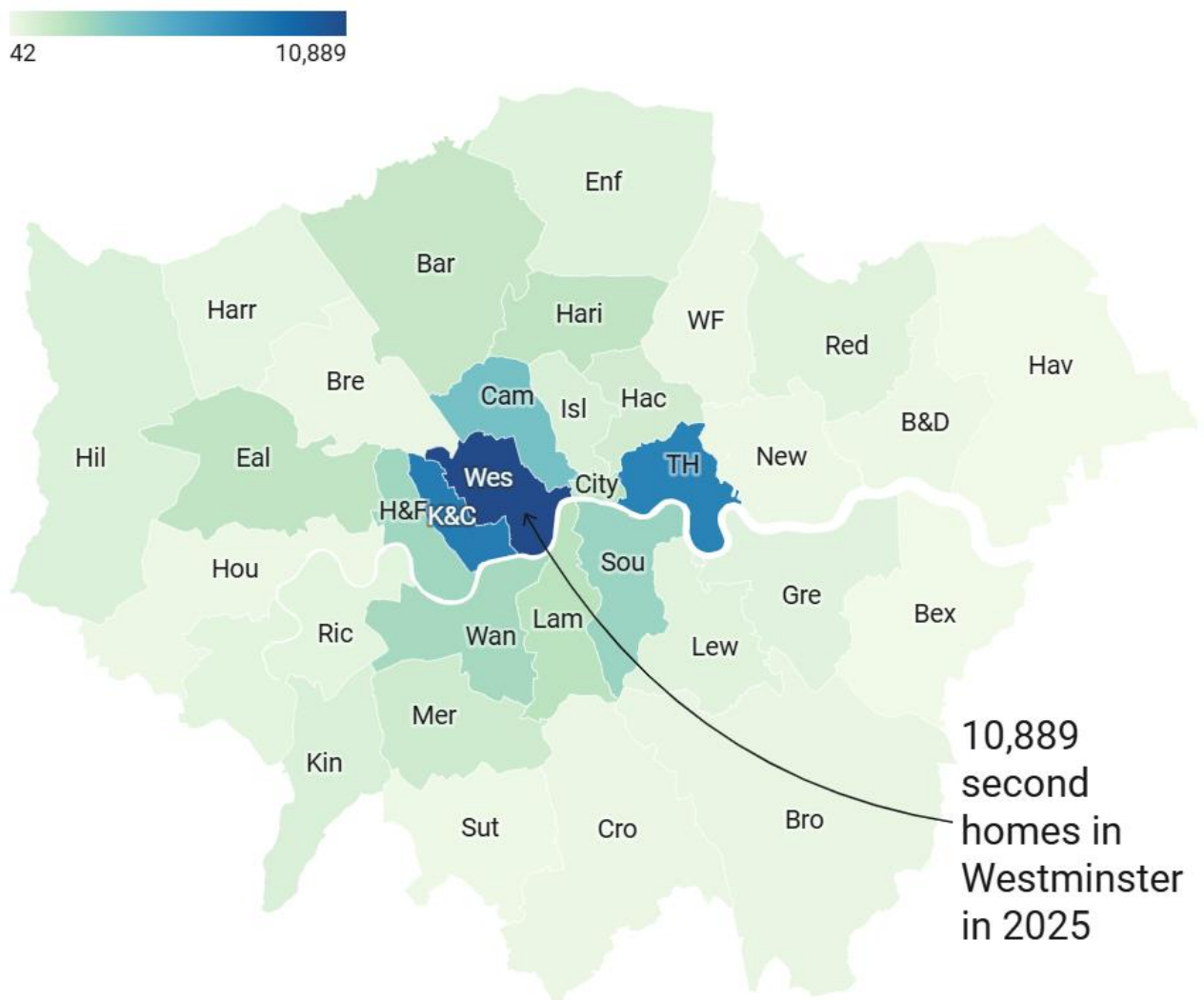
The data in this section comes from the [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), published by MHCLG in November 2025 and revised in January 2026.

# There were 55,978 second homes in London in 2025

A second home is a property that is furnished but does not have anyone living in it as their main home.

According to the Council Tax database, there were **55,978 second homes in London** in 2025. Second homes in London are concentrated in inner London, especially in the boroughs of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea and Tower Hamlets.

## Second homes in London, 2025

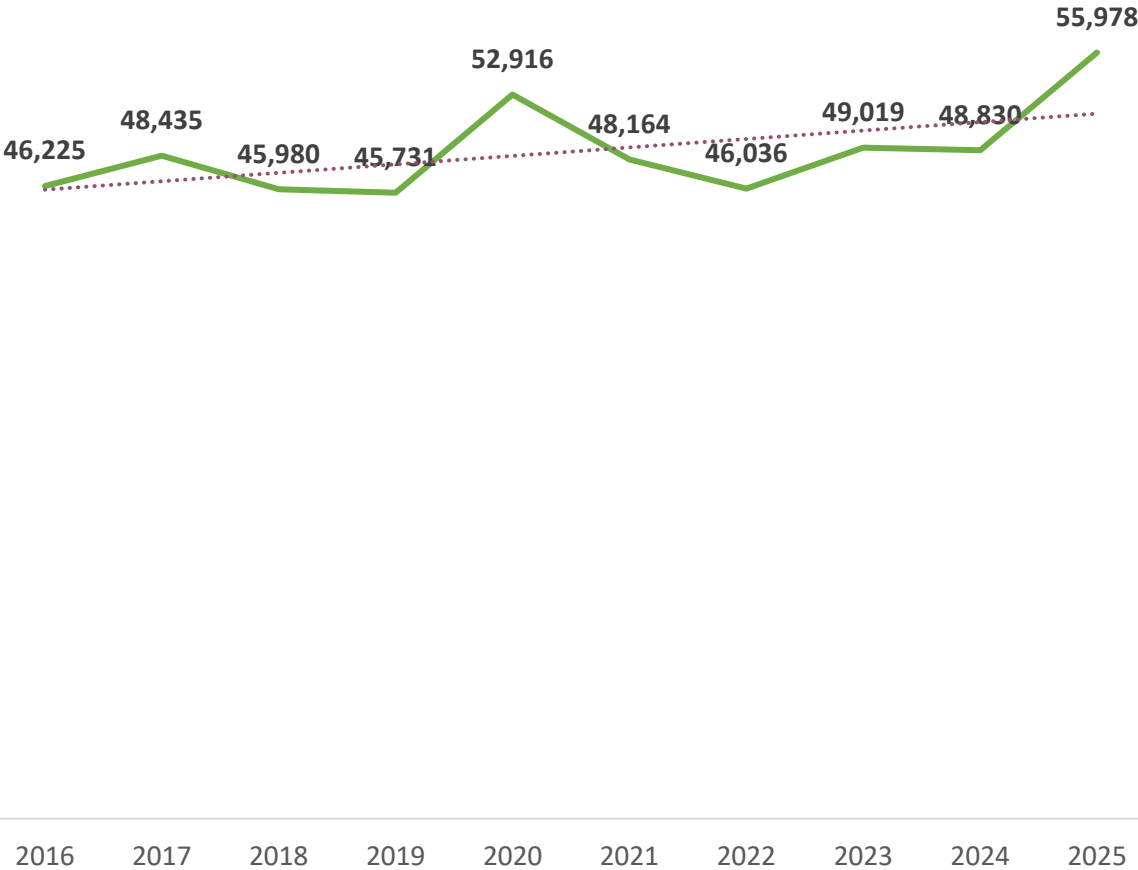


Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), Table 1.11, November 2025 (revised in January 2026).

# Second homes in London have increased by 21 per cent since 2016

The number of second homes in London has fluctuated over the past ten years, peaking in 2020 and again in 2025. From 2016 to 2025, the number of second homes in London **increased by 21 per cent** from **46,225** in 2016 to **55,978** in 2025.

## Second homes in London

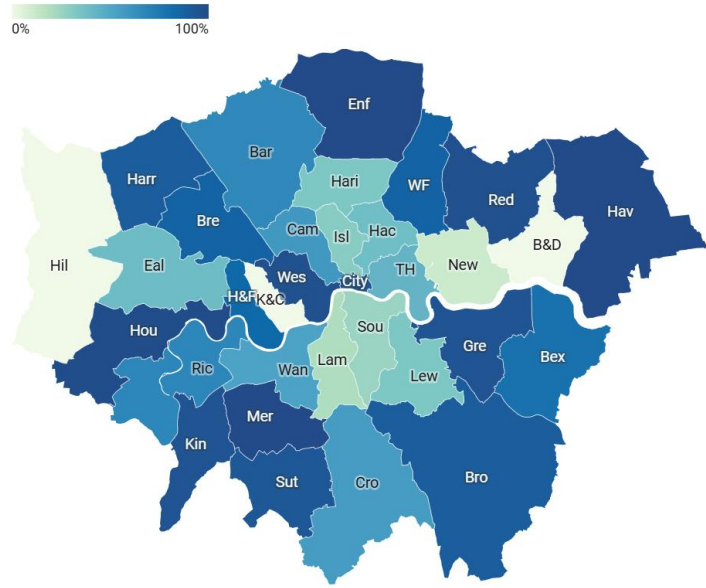


Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase statistics](#): 2016 to 2025. Spreadsheet: Council Tax base local authority level data, Table 1.11.

# 55 per cent of second homes in London were charged the second homes premium in 2025

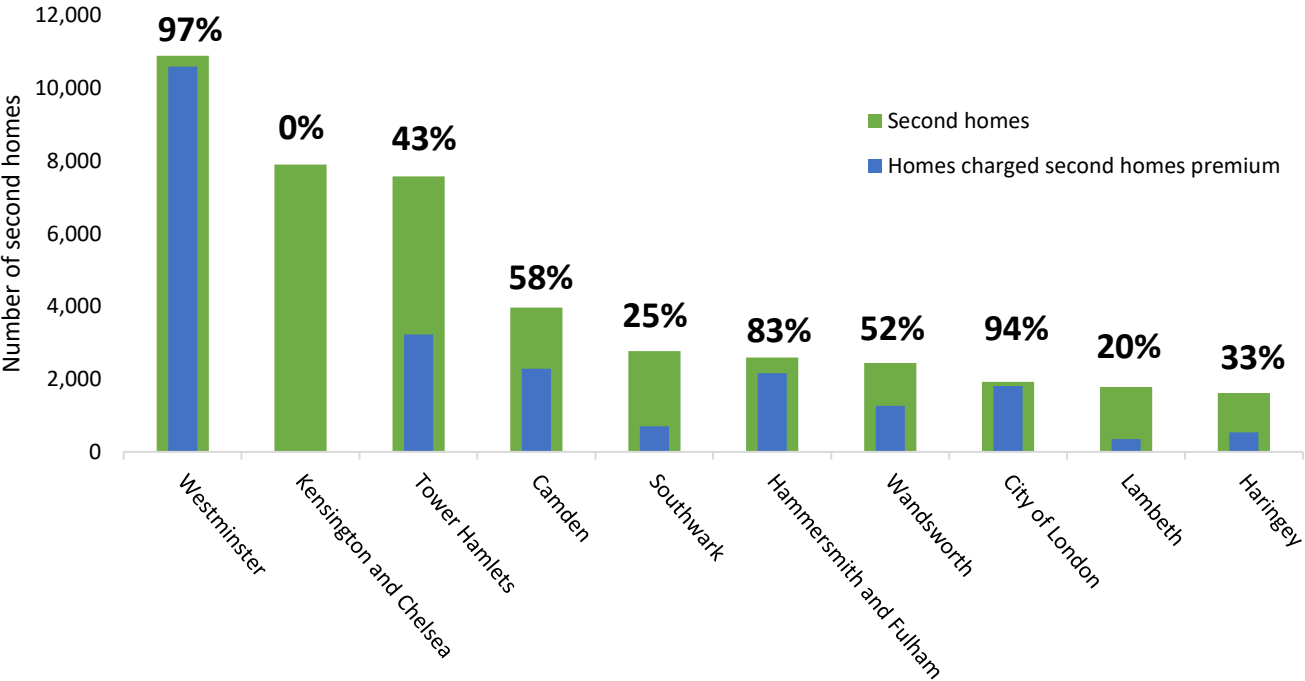
Since 1 April 2025, councils in England can charge a Council Tax premium of up to 100 per cent on second homes on top of the 100 per cent Council Tax bill.

## Percentage of homes charged second home premium by borough, 2025



Of the 55,978 second homes in London in 2025, 30,786 (55 per cent) were charged the second homes premium. This proportion differed between boroughs from 100 per cent in Enfield, Merton and Havering to 0 per cent in Kensington and Chelsea, Hillingdon and Barking and Dagenham.

## Percentage of homes charged second home premium in boroughs with highest overall number of second homes, 2025



Source: MHCLG, [Council Taxbase 2025 in England](#), tables 1.11 and 1.14, November 2025 (revised in January 2026).

# 5 LOCAL AUTHORITY OWNED EMPTY HOMES

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## Overview

This section explores data on local authority owned empty homes. This includes the proportion of empty homes owned by local authorities, trends in the number of local authority owned empty homes over time, and the length of time local authority homes are typically empty for.

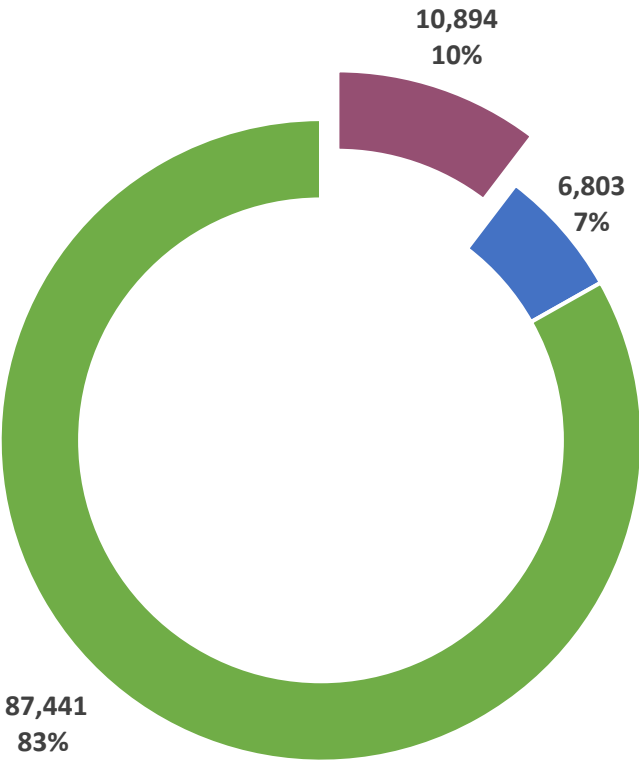
## Source information

The data in this section comes from MHCLG's [live tables on vacant stock](#).

# Housing owned by local authorities makes up 10 per cent of overall empty homes in London

Approximately 10 per cent of empty dwellings in London in 2025 were local authority owned, while a further 7 per cent were general needs properties owned by Private Registered Providers of social housing (PRPs).

## Proportion of empty homes that are owned by local authorities and Private Registered Providers of social housing (general needs), 2025



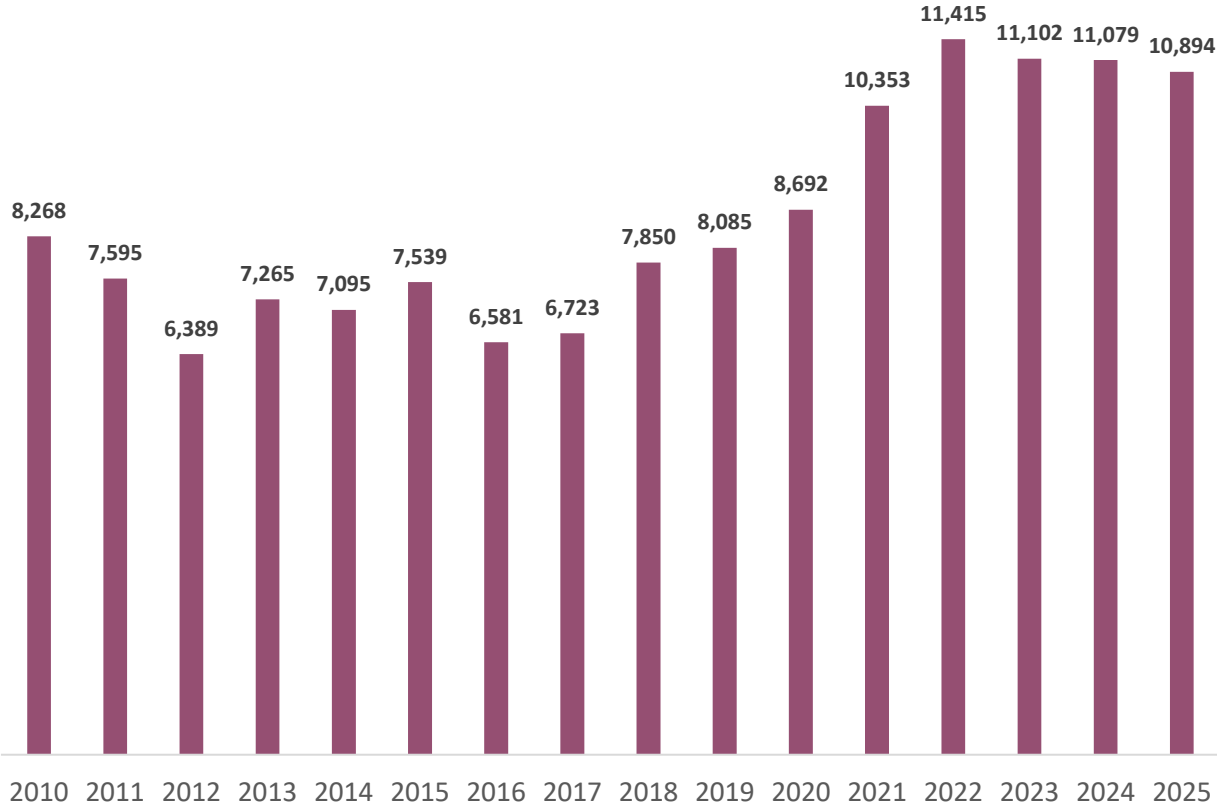
- Local authority owned empty homes
- General needs empty homes owned by Private Registered Providers of social housing
- Other

Source: [Table 615: vacant dwellings by local authority district: England, from 2004](#), November 2025. Figures for PRP owned empty homes do not include supported housing and/or housing for older people (this represented just over 15 per cent of all PRP rental stock nationally in 2014) or housing owned by PRPs with less than 1,000 units. The 'Other' category is calculated by subtracting LA vacants and PRP vacants from all vacants.

# The number of local authority owned empty homes in London has increased by 66 per cent since 2016

Over the past ten years, the number of local authority owned empty homes has increased **by 66 per cent** from **6,581** in 2016 to **10,894** in 2025. However, the number of local authority owned empty homes has been slightly decreasing each year since 2022.

## Local authority owned empty homes

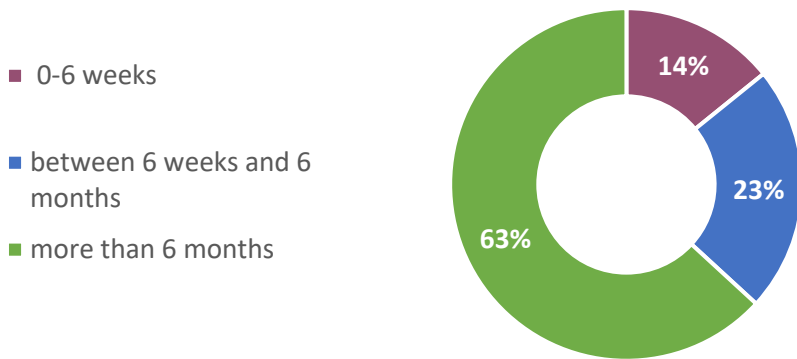


Source: [Table 612: local authority vacant dwellings, England, from 1980](#), November 2025.

# The number of HRA dwellings empty for more than six months increased by 91 per cent from 2016 to 2025

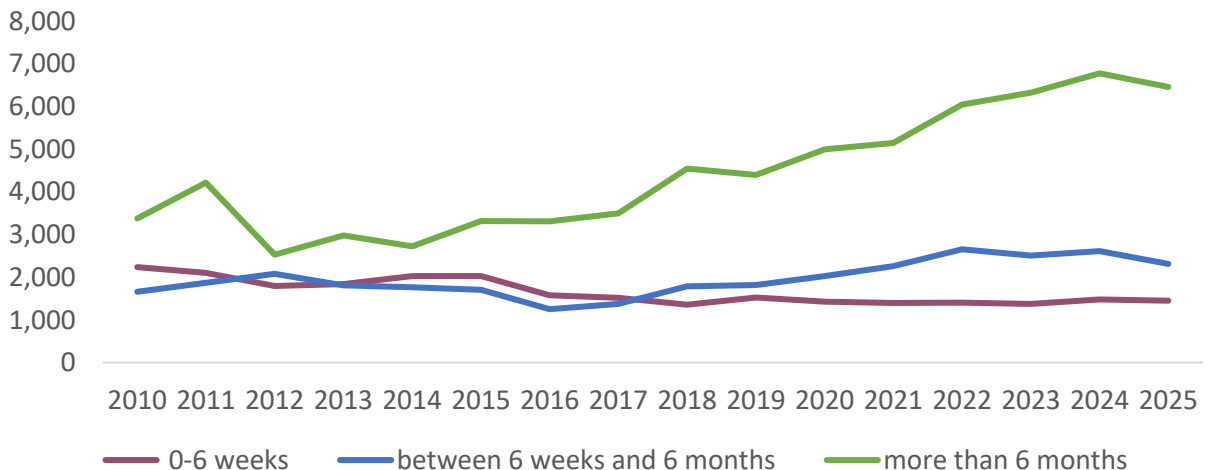
Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs) are ring-fenced accounts used to manage income and expenditure for local authority owned housing. Any local authority that owns 200 or more social dwellings is required to account for these dwellings within an HRA.<sup>1</sup> MHCLG publishes data on the number of HRA dwellings that are empty by the length of time unoccupied. In 2025, the majority (63 per cent) of empty HRA dwellings had been empty for more than six months.

## Empty HRA dwellings by length of time empty, 2025 (%)



Since 2010, the number of HRA dwellings empty for 6 weeks to 6 months has increased by **39 per cent** from **1,661** to **2,313**. The number of HRA dwellings empty for more than 6 months has increased by **91 per cent** from **3,373** to **6,454**.

## HRA dwellings by length of time empty over time



Source: MHCLG, [Table 612: local authority vacant dwellings, England, from 1980](#), November 2025.

<sup>1</sup> HRA housing accounts for over 99 per cent of local authority dwelling stock nationally. MHCLG, [Local Authority Housing Statistics: Technical notes 2024-25](#), accessed 18 May 2026.

# Other formats and languages

If you, or someone you know needs this report in large print or braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on: 020 7983 4100 or email [assembly.translations@london.gov.uk](mailto:assembly.translations@london.gov.uk)

## Chinese

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## Vietnamese

Nếu ông (bà) muốn nội dung văn bản này được dịch sang tiếng Việt, xin vui lòng liên hệ với chúng tôi bằng điện thoại, thư hoặc thư điện tử theo địa chỉ ở trên.

## Greek

*Εάν επιθυμείτε περίληψη αυτού του κειμένου στην γλώσσα σας, παρακαλώ καλέστε τον αριθμό ή επικοινωνήστε μαζί μας στην ανωτέρω ταχυδρομική ή την ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση.*

## Turkish

Bu belgenin kendi dilinize çevrilmiş bir özetini okumak isterseniz, lütfen yukarıdaki telefon numarasını arayın, veya posta ya da e-posta adresi aracılığıyla bizimle temasa geçin.

## Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਦਾ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਅਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ ਉਪਰ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਡਾਕ ਜਾਂ ਈਮੇਲ ਪਤੇ 'ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

## Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज का सारांश अपनी भाषा में चाहिए तो उपर दिये हुए नंबर पर फोन करें या उपर दिये गये डाक पते या ई मेल पते पर हम से संपर्क करें।

## Bengali

আপনি যদি এই দপিলের একটা সারাংশ নিজের ভাষায় পেতে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে ফো করবেন অথবা উল্লেখিত ডাক ঠিকানায় বা ই-মেইল ঠিকানায় আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করবেন।

## Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کا خلاصہ اپنی زبان میں درکار ہو تو، براہ کرم نمبر پر فون کریں یا منکورہ بالا ڈاک کے پتے یا ای میل پتے پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

## Arabic

إذا كنت أنت أو أحد معارفك بحاجة إلى هذا التقرير مطبوعاً بخط كبير أو بطريقة برايل، أو ترغب في الحصول على الملخص والنتائج الرئيسية بلغة أخرى، فيرجى التواصل معنا على:

020 7983 4100 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني

[assembly.translations@london.gov.uk](mailto:assembly.translations@london.gov.uk)

## Gujarati

જો તમારે આ દસ્તાવેજનો સાર તમારી ભાષામાં જોઈતો હોય તો ઉપર આપેલ નંબર પર ફોન કરો અથવા ઉપર આપેલ ટપાલ અથવા ઈ-મેઈલ સરનામા પર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો.

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