



Department for
Communities and
Local Government



English Housing Survey

People's perception of their neighbourhood, 2015-16



Contents

Introduction and main findings

Chapter 1: People's perception of their neighbourhood

Chapter 2: Neighbourhood issues

Chapter 3: Perception of safety in the local area

Technical notes and glossary

Introduction and main findings

1. The English Housing Survey (EHS) is a national survey of people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England. In its current form, it was first run in 2008-09. Prior to then, the survey was run as two standalone surveys: the English House Condition Survey and the Survey of English Housing. It is one of the longest standing surveys in government, with 2017 marking the 50th anniversary since the first survey in 1967.
2. This report explores people's satisfaction with their local area, the extent to which they are affected by neighbourhood issues and antisocial behaviour, and their feelings of safety. The findings are drawn from information collected in the Neighbourhoods Module of the survey.
3. The full Neighbourhoods Module is only asked every few years, and prior to 2015-16, was included in 2010-11. Generally, the findings have not changed much over this five year period. Rather than referencing the 2010-11 data throughout, the report will highlight the aspects that have changed between 2010-11 and 2015-16. Data from both years can be found in the annex tables published alongside this report.
4. The report has three chapters. The first chapter analyses people's overall satisfaction with their neighbourhood, and their perceptions on whether the area has got better or worse over the preceding two years before the interview. Differences across social and demographic groups are also explored.
5. Chapter two examines the extent to which people are affected by neighbourhood problems. First, the focus is on the extent to which racial or religious harassment is considered an issue, before examining a wider range of neighbourhood issues and the extent to which they occur together.
6. The final chapter presents analysis of people's feelings of safety in their neighbourhood when walking outside alone, and how this differs across social and demographic groups.
7. Numerous factors influence people's overall satisfaction with their neighbourhood. It is not possible to look at all of these, or to control for all confounding influences, within the scope of this report. This report, instead, provides a starting point for further analysis of this complex area.

Main findings

Most people had positive views about their neighbourhood.

- Overall, 88% of people said that they were satisfied, 7% were dissatisfied and 5% were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied about their local area as a place to live.
- Meanwhile, 14% felt that the area in which they lived had got better over the last two years, a quarter felt it had got worse, and 61% felt it had not changed much.

-
- When asked about problems such as noise, troublesome teenagers, litter, vandalism, crime, drug use/dealing, burglary, drunk and rowdy behaviour, 31% said that their neighbourhood had none of those problems, 36% named one or two and 34% reported three or more.
 - The vast majority of people (95%) felt safe when walking around their neighbourhood during the day. A lower proportion – but still a majority (67%) – felt safe when walking alone in their neighbourhood at night.
 - The vast majority of people (95%) also said that racial or religious harassment was not a problem in their area, 1% felt that racial or religious harassment was a serious problem in their area, and 4% felt it was a problem, but not serious.

People's views about their neighbourhood were largely the same as 2010-11, nonetheless there were some changes in opinion over time.

- The proportion of people who said that racial or religious harassment was *not* a problem in their area increased from 94% in 2010-11 to 95% in 2015-16.
- The proportion of people who reported three or more neighbourhood issues decreased from 41% in 2010-11 to 34% in 2015-16.
- The percentage of people in London and the South who said that their area had got better in the last two years increased from 15% in 2010-11 to 17% in 2015-16.

Some people had less positive views on some aspects of their neighbourhood.

- Social renters, those who had lived at their address for ten years or more, from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds and people living in the North were more likely to be less satisfied with their area as a place to live.
- Those with more negative views on the changes to their area in the last two years included owner occupiers as well as those who had lived at their address for ten years or more, born in the UK or Republic of Ireland, from white ethnic backgrounds or from the North or Midlands.
- People in the social rented sector, those from BAME backgrounds as well as those born outside the UK or Republic of Ireland were more likely to report having three or more neighbourhood problems. Those who had live at their address for ten years or more were more likely to say that their area had some neighbourhood problems.
- People from BAME backgrounds and those born outside the UK or Republic of Ireland were more likely to perceive racial or religious harassment to be a problem in their neighbourhood.
- Social renters and people aged 75 and older were more likely to feel unsafe walking in their neighbourhood in the day or at night. In addition, people aged 16 to 24 (the youngest age group), lone parents and single women were also more likely to feel less safe in their neighbourhood at night.

Acknowledgements and further queries

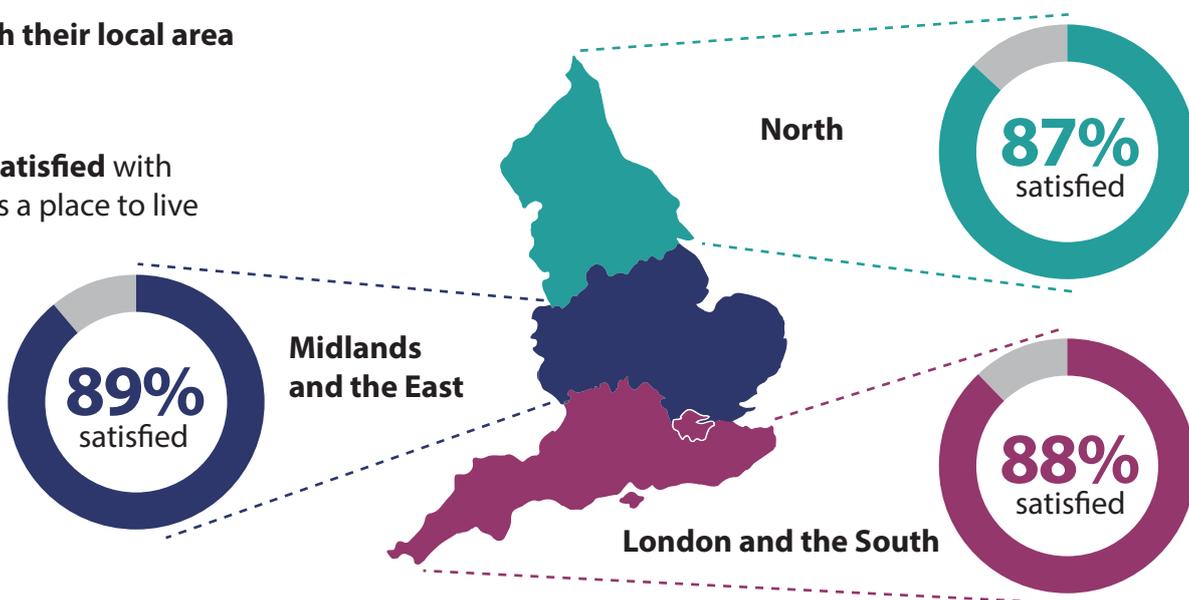
8. Each year the English Housing Survey relies on the contributions of a large number of people and organisations. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) would particularly like to thank the following people and organisations, without whom the 2015-16 survey and this report, would not have been possible: all the households who gave up their time to take part in the survey, NatCen Social Research, the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and CADS Housing Surveys.
9. This report was produced by Sarah Frankenburg at NatCen Social Research in collaboration with DCLG.
10. If you have any queries about this report, would like any further information or have suggestions for analyses you would like to see included in future EHS reports, please contact ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk.
11. The responsible analyst for this report is: Reannan Rottier, Housing and Planning Analysis Division, DCLG. Contact via ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk

People's Perception Of Their Neighbourhood

Satisfaction with their local area

88%

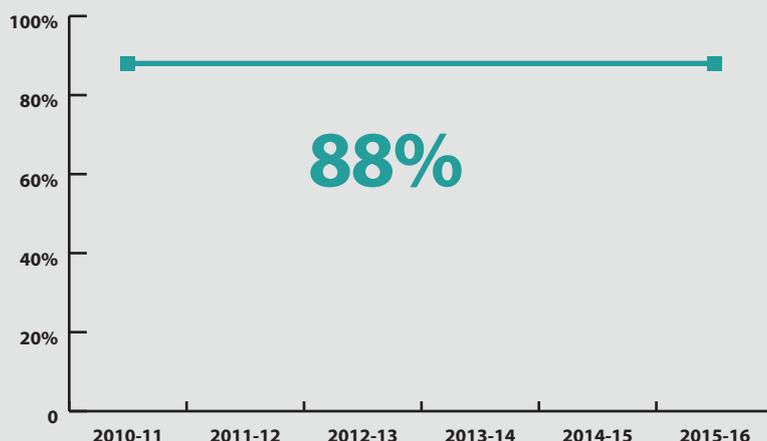
of people were **satisfied** with their local area as a place to live



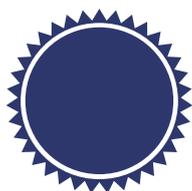
Change in satisfaction



There has been **no change** in people's satisfaction with their local area in the last 5 years



Feeling safe



95%

of people felt safe walking outside in their neighbourhood on their own in **the day time**



67%

of people felt safe walking outside in their neighbourhood on their own **at night**

Views about changes in the area

Most people thought their local area had **got better or not changed** in the last 2 years



14%
got **better**

61%
no change

25%
got **worse**

The percentages have not changed in the **last 5 years**

Chapter 1

People's perception of their neighbourhood

- 1.1 As part of the EHS interview the household reference person (HRP¹) or their partner are asked about their perception of their neighbourhood, including how satisfied they are overall with their local area as a place to live, and how the area has changed over the last two years.
- 1.2 Numerous factors influence people's overall satisfaction with their neighbourhood. It is not possible to look at all of these, or to control for all confounding influences, within the scope of this report. This report, instead, provides a starting point for further analysis of this complex area.

People's overall satisfaction with their local area

- 1.3 In 2015-16, most people were satisfied with their area as a place to live. Overall, 88% said that they were satisfied, 7% were dissatisfied and 5% were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, Annex Table 1.1.
- 1.4 People's satisfaction with their local area was related to the region in which they lived, the length of time they had lived at the address and other household and personal characteristics².

Region

- 1.5 In 2015-16, a slightly higher proportion of people in London and the South (88%) and the Midlands (89%) reported being satisfied with their area than in the North (87%), Annex Table 1.1.
- 1.6 There was no significant difference between the proportion of people in London and the South and those in the Midlands reporting satisfaction with their area.

¹ The HRP is the 'householder' in whose name the accommodation is owned or rented. See the glossary for further information.

² Satisfaction with the local area is related to, among other things, the general condition of the area. As some tenure, ethnic minority, and social class groups are more prevalent in certain areas, the condition of the area may confound the effect of these factors on satisfaction. To check this, analysis of EHS interviewers' ratings of the general condition of the neighbourhood was undertaken. This analysis found that the condition of the area was not a confounding factor in the relationship between people's satisfaction with their area and ethnicity or tenure but that it was a confounding factor in the relationship between satisfaction and social class (as measured by the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification). Social class is therefore not examined in this section.

Length of time at the current address

- 1.7 People who had lived at their address longer were more likely to be dissatisfied with the local area than newer residents. In 2015-16, 5% of those who had been resident at their current address for less than two years were dissatisfied with their area. For those who had lived at their current address for ten years or more, this figure was 8%, Annex Table 1.2.

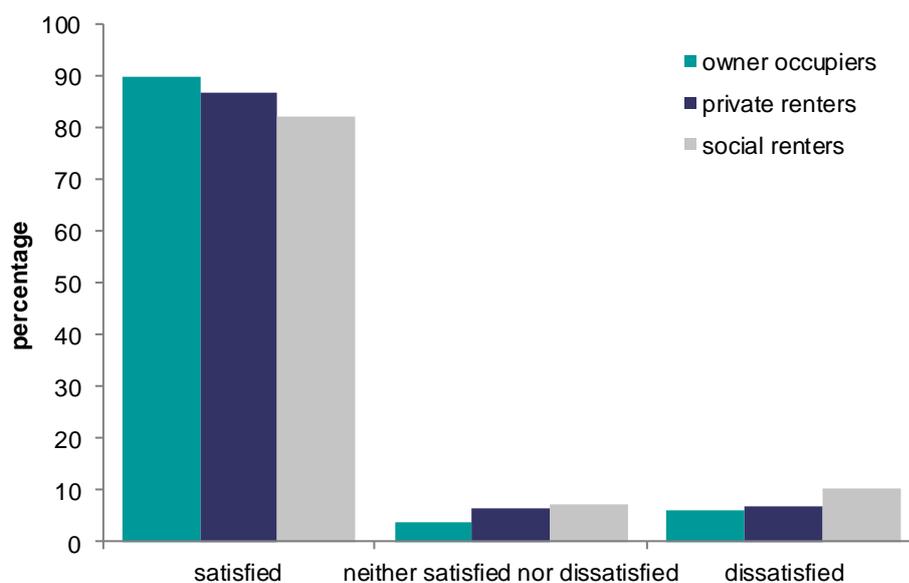
Ethnicity

- 1.8 On the whole, people from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds were less likely to be satisfied, and more likely to be dissatisfied with their area than white people. In 2015-16, 84% of BAME people were satisfied with their area, and 9% were dissatisfied, compared with 88% satisfied and 7% dissatisfied among white people, Live Table FA5211.

Tenure

- 1.9 Owner occupiers were more likely to be satisfied with the local area than renters. Of owners occupiers, 90% were satisfied with their area, compared with 87% of private renters and 82% of social renters, Live Table FA5212.
- 1.10 While owner occupiers had the highest proportion reporting satisfaction with the area, those who owned their home outright were more likely to be satisfied than those buying with a mortgage. Of outright owners, 91% were satisfied, compared with 88% of those buying with a mortgage.
- 1.11 Social renters were more likely to be dissatisfied with their area than private renters and owner occupiers. Of all social renters, 10% were dissatisfied with their area. For owner occupiers this figure was 6% and for private renters 7% (the difference between owner occupiers and private renters was not significant).

Figure 1.1: Satisfaction with local area, by tenure, 2015-16



Base: all households

Note: underlying data are presented in Live Table FA5212.

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Whether the area has got better or worse over the last two years

- 1.12 Respondents were asked whether they felt the area in which they lived had got better, got worse, or not changed much over the last two years.
- 1.13 Some 14% of people felt that the area had got better over the last two years, a quarter (25%) felt it had got worse, and 61% felt it had not changed much. These proportions have not changed much since 2010-11, Annex Table 1.3.
- 1.14 As with people's satisfaction with their local area, views about changes in the neighbourhood were related to where people lived, the length of time they had lived at there and other personal characteristics³.

Region

- 1.15 In 2015-16, a slightly higher proportion of people living in London and the South said they felt the area had got better over the last two years, compared with those in the North and the Midlands (17% compared with 14% and 10% respectively).

³ As in the examination of variation in satisfaction with the area by subgroup (see footnote 2), the interviewer's rating of the local area was analysed to check whether the condition of the local area had acted as a confounding factor. This analysis found that the condition of the area had not acted as a confounding factor.

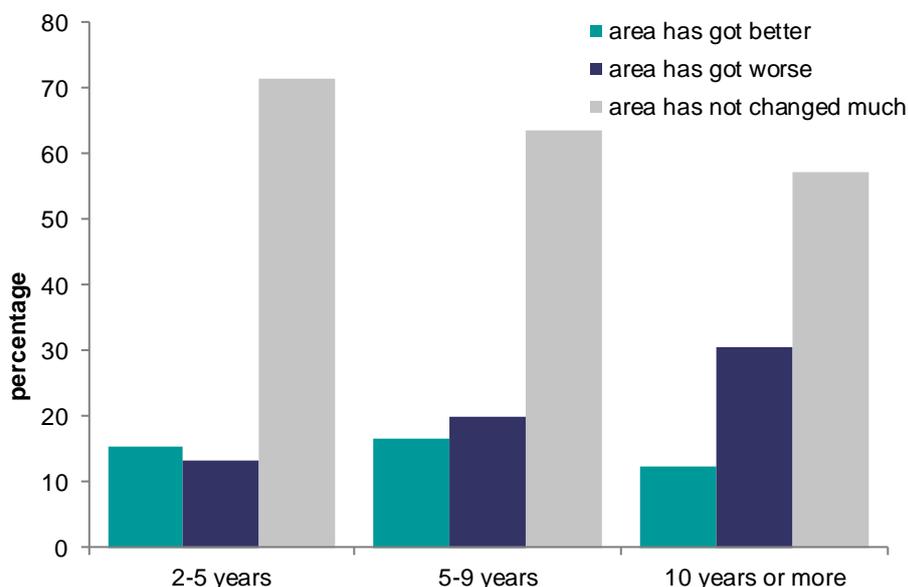
1.16 The proportion of those in London and the South who felt the area had got better had increased slightly since 2010-11 (from 15% to 17%). No such increase was observed in the Midlands or the North, Annex Table 1.3.

Length of time at address

1.17 People who had lived at their current home for ten years or more were more likely to say the area had got worse in the last two years than those who had lived there for shorter periods of time. Of households who had lived at their current address for ten years or more, 30% said that the area had got worse in the last two years, compared with 20% of those who had lived there for between five and under ten years, Annex Table 1.4.

1.18 Those who had lived at their current address for less than five years were less likely to report that the area had changed over the last two years than those who had lived there for longer. Of those that had lived at their current address for less than five years, 71% reported that the area had not changed much, compared with 64% of those resident between five and under ten years and 57% of those who had lived there for ten years or more.

Figure 1.2: Whether the area has changed in the last two years, by length of residence, 2015-16



Base: all households who have lived at their current address for at least two years

Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 1.4

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Country of birth⁴

- 1.19 Of the people born in the UK or the Republic of Ireland (ROI), 13% thought the area had got better, compared with 19% of those born elsewhere in the European Union (EU), and 25% of those born elsewhere in the world, Annex Table 1.5.
- 1.20 Similarly, those born in the UK or ROI were more likely to say the area had got worse; 25% compared with 14% of those born elsewhere in the EU and 21% of those born elsewhere in the world.

Ethnicity

- 1.21 In 2015-16, white people were less likely to say that the area had got better than people from BAME backgrounds. Of white people, 13% felt the area had got better, compared with 23% of all those from BAME backgrounds, Live Table FA5342.

Socio-economic group

- 1.22 There were few differences in the proportions of people reporting change in the area across socio-economic group. The main difference was that people in the higher managerial and professional occupations were the least likely to say that the area had got worse over the last two years. In 2015-16, 20% of people in higher managerial and professional occupations said that the area had got worse in the last two years. For those in other socio-economic categories, this figure was between 23% and 27%, Annex Table 1.6.

Tenure

- 1.23 Owner occupiers were more likely than other people to say that the area has got worse over the last two years. Of all owner occupiers, 26% said that the area had got worse compared with 24% among social renters and 18% for private renters, Live Table FA5342.
- 1.24 Owner occupiers were also less likely to say that the area had got better over the last two years (13% in 2015-16) compared with social renters (19%).

⁴ The relationship between country of birth and perception of change over the last two years may be influenced by the length of residence at the address. It is beyond the scope of this report to investigate this.

Chapter 2

Neighbourhood issues

- 2.1 This chapter explores people's perceptions of neighbourhood issues. At the interview, the household reference person or their partner were presented with a series of neighbourhood issues and asked whether each of those was a serious problem in their area, a problem but not a serious one, or not a problem in their area⁵.
- 2.2 Since the 2010-11 report covered findings on all the neighbourhood issues in full, this report focuses on analysis of racial and religious harassment. The other problems are then covered by examining whether they tend to occur together in an area or not.
- 2.3 Experience and perception of neighbourhood issues is, of course, a complex area, and other characteristics or experiences beyond those covered in this report may influence people's views on this topic. Similarly, other social, demographic or economic characteristics are likely to interact or act as confounding influences. It is not possible to explore all of the potential contributing factors, or to control for all the confounding influences, within the scope of this report. Instead, this report provides a starting point for further analysis of this complex area.
- 2.4 Detailed information on the prevalence of the other problems is presented in the Live Tables published alongside this report.

Racial or religious harassment

- 2.5 In 2015-16, 95% of people said that racial or religious harassment was not a problem in their area, 1% of people felt that racial or religious harassment was a serious problem in their area, and 4% felt it was a problem, but not serious. The proportion saying that racial or religious harassment was not a problem in their area has increased slightly but statistically significantly since 2010-11, when the figure was 94%.
- 2.6 People's perception of racial or religious harassment in their local area was related to the region in which they lived and their personal characteristics.

⁵ The issues included: noisy neighbours or loud parties, troublesome teenagers, litter or rubbish lying around, vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage to property, general level of crime, racial or religious harassment, people using or dealing in drugs, fear of being burgled, and people being drunk or rowdy in public.

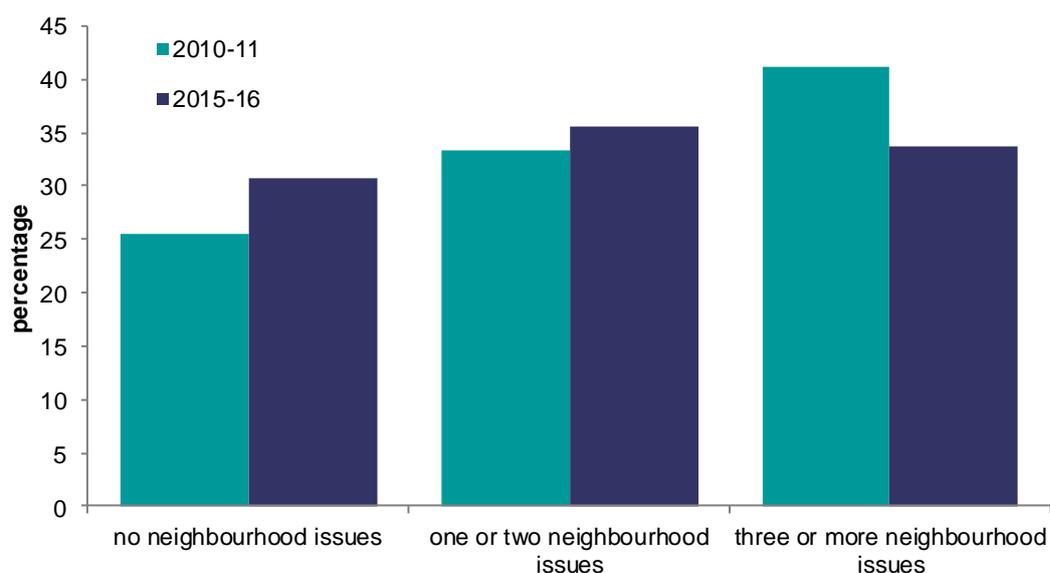
-
- 2.7 There was a small but significant difference in the proportion of people in London and the South who reported that racial or religious harassment was a problem in their neighbourhood (5%) compared with those in the Midlands and East (3%). No other geographical differences were found, Annex Table 2.1.
- 2.8 Generally, white people were less likely to report that racial or religious harassment was a problem in their area compared with people of other ethnicities. In 2015-16, 4% of white people felt that racial or religious harassment was a problem in the area. The corresponding figure for BAME people was 13%, Live Table FA5321.
- 2.9 In 2015-16, 95% of those born in the UK or the Republic of Ireland (ROI) felt racial or religious harassment was not a problem, compared with 92% of those born elsewhere in the European Union (EU) and 90% of those born elsewhere in the world. This difference between those born elsewhere in the EU and those born outside the EU was not statistically significant, Annex Table 2.2.

Other neighbourhood issues

- 2.10 The remaining neighbourhood issues were explored as a group to assess the extent to which they tended to occur together. About a third (34%) of people identified three or more problems in the area, 36% named one or two problems, and 31% reported no issues with the local area, Annex Table 2.3.⁶
- 2.11 Since 2010-11, the proportion of people who reported three or more neighbourhood issues decreased from 41% in 2010-11 to 34% in 2015-16, while the proportion reporting no neighbourhood issues increased from 25% to 31%. Meanwhile, the proportion with one or two issues increased from 33% to 36%.
- 2.12 As with the findings reported so far, people's views about the issues in their local area were related to their personal attributes.

⁶ Problems assessed by peoples as serious as well as those deemed to be problems but not serious were all included in the analysis.

Figure 2.1: Number of neighbourhood issues, 2010-11 and 2015-16



Base: all households

Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.3

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Length of time at address

2.13 People who had lived at their current address for less than two years were more likely to report no neighbourhood issues compared with those who had lived at their address for a longer period. Between 28% and 30% of people who had lived at their current address for two or more years reported no problems; the corresponding percentage for those who had been at their address for less than two years was 41%, Annex Table 2.4.

2.14 The proportion of households who had lived at their current address for less than two years who reported no neighbourhood issues increased from 32% in 2010-11 to 41% in 2015-16.

Country of birth

2.15 Those born in the UK or the ROI were less likely to report having three or more neighbourhood problems (33%) than those born elsewhere in the EU (38%) or outside the EU (39%), Annex Table 2.5.

Ethnicity

2.16 White people were more likely to report having no neighbourhood issues, and less likely to report having three or more neighbourhood issues than BAME people. In 2015-16, 32% of white people reported no neighbourhood issues, compared with 23% of BAME people. At the other end of the scale, 32% of white people also said that they had three or more neighbourhood issues, while the figures for BAME people was 45%, Annex Table 2.6.

Socio-economic group

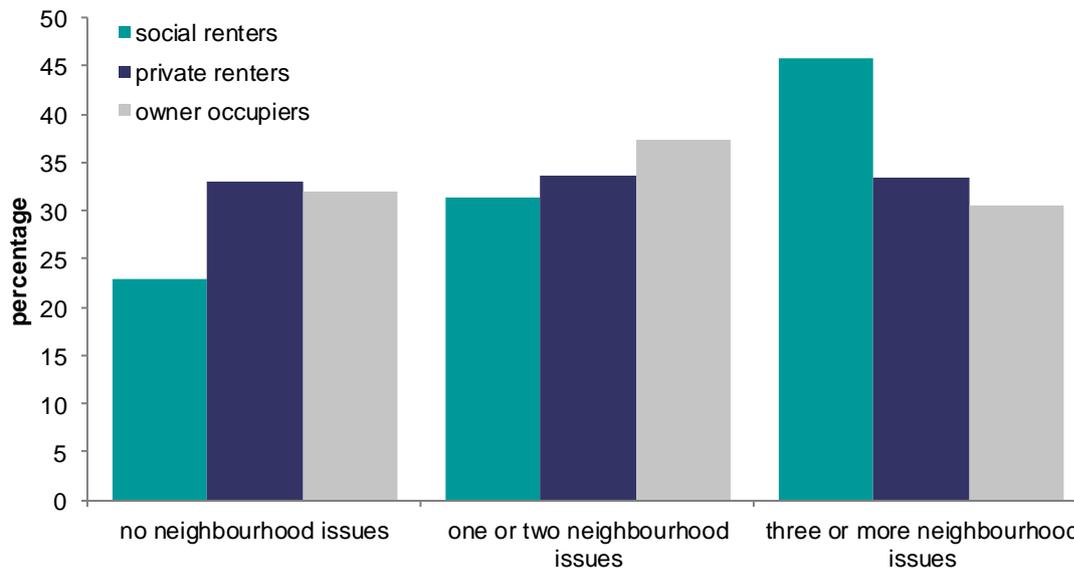
2.17 In 2015-16, people in higher managerial and professional occupations were more likely to report no neighbourhood issues (34%) compared with those in lower managerial and professional (29%), semi-routine (28%) or routine occupations (30%), Annex Table 2.7.

Tenure

2.18 Compared with private renters and owner occupiers, social renters were more likely to report three or more neighbourhood issues, and less likely to report none. In 2015-16, 46% of social renters reported three or more neighbourhood issues compared with 31% of owner occupiers and 33% of private renters. Meanwhile, 23% reported having no neighbourhood problems while 32% of owner occupiers and 33% of private renters reported no issues, Annex Table 2.8.

2.19 Among social renters, those renting from a local authority were more likely (50%) to report three or more neighbourhood issues than those renting from a housing association (43%).

Figure 2.2: Number of neighbourhood issues, by tenure, 2015-16



Base: all households

Note: underlying data are presented in Annex Table 2.8

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Chapter 3

Perception of safety in the local area

2.20 This chapter explores perceptions of safety in the local area. At their interview, the household reference person or their partner were asked how safe they typically felt when walking around their neighbourhood alone both during the day and at night. These responses were analysed to identify any differences across tenure and social or demographic groups⁷.

Feelings of safety

3.1 The vast majority of people felt safe when walking alone in their local neighbourhood during the day. In 2015-16, 95% of people felt either fairly safe or very safe when walking around the neighbourhood during the day, Live Table FA5362.

3.2 A lower proportion, but still a majority, felt safe when walking alone in their neighbourhood at night. When describing their feelings of safety in the neighbourhood at night, 67% said they felt very (33%) or fairly (34%) safe. Meanwhile, 16% of people said they felt unsafe (13% a bit unsafe and 3% very unsafe). In addition, 7% of people said they did not go out alone at night because they felt unsafe, Live Table FA5363.

3.3 Feelings of safety varied across social and demographic groups, as did the likelihood that people did not go out because they felt unsafe. The groups feeling comparatively less safe during the day also tended to feel less safe during the night.

Age

3.4 Older people were less likely to feel safe walking around their neighbourhood alone in the day than younger people. Among those aged 75 and over, 88% reported feeling safe in the neighbourhood during the day. The corresponding figures for the other age groups were between 95% and 96%, Live Table FA5362.

3.5 Of those aged 75 and over, 40% felt safe walking alone around their neighbourhood at night, compared with 64% of those aged between 65 and 74, 73% of those aged between 55 and 64 and between 25 and 44, and 74% of those aged between 45 and 54, Live Table FA5363.

⁷ Respondents were also asked how safe they felt when they were at home on their own. Findings from this question are available in the Live Tables, published alongside this report.

-
- 3.6 In addition, 15% of those aged 75 and over and 8% of those aged between 65 and 74 did not go out alone at night because they felt unsafe; the corresponding figures for the younger age groups ranged between 4% and 6%.
- 3.7 The youngest group also felt comparatively less safe at night. Among those aged 16 to 24, 27% felt unsafe at night. For those aged 25 to 44 this figure was 19%, and for those aged 45 to 54, 17%.

Household type

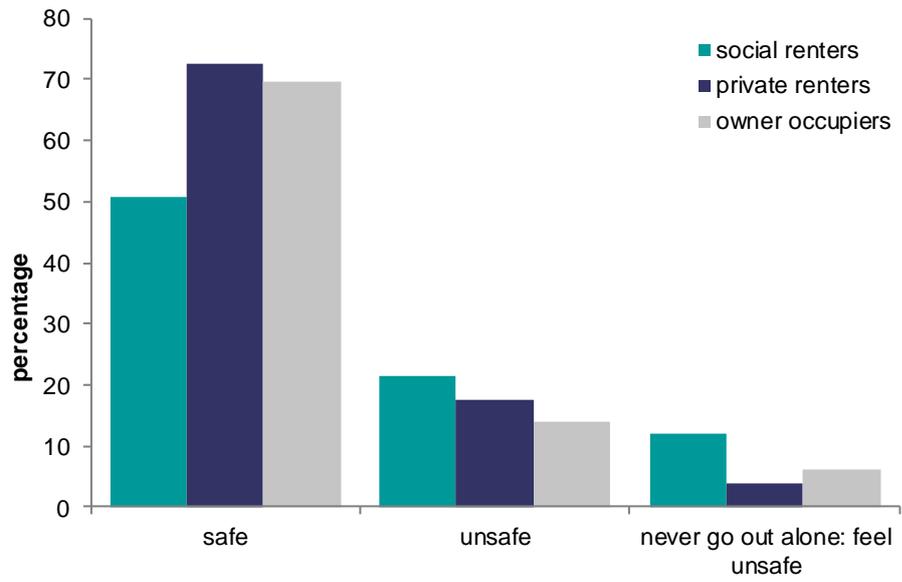
- 3.8 Lone parents with dependent children and women living alone generally felt the least safe walking alone in their local neighbourhood at night. Of all lone parents with dependent children, 28% said they felt unsafe walking around their neighbourhood alone at night. A further 8% of this group said they do not go out alone at night as they feel unsafe, Live Table FA5363.
- 3.9 Of women living alone, 14% said they did not go out alone at night as they felt unsafe, compared with between 4% and 8% of other types of household. Female single person households tended to contain a higher proportion of older people than male single person households, which is likely to account, at least in part, for the differences by household type.

Tenure

- 3.10 Social renters were the least likely to feel safe when walking in their neighbourhood at night, the most likely to feel unsafe, and the most likely to report not going out due to feeling unsafe than any other tenure type. When considering going out alone at night, 51% of social renters said they felt safe (compared with 70% of owner occupiers and 73% of private renters), 21% said they felt unsafe (compared with 18% of private renters and 14% of owners), and 12% said they don't go out because they do not feel safe (compared with 4% of private renters and 6% of owners), Live Table FA5363.⁸
- 3.11 The relationship between people's feelings of safety during the day and tenure follow a similar pattern. Of all social renters, 89% felt safe walking around their neighbourhood during the day, compared with 96% of both owner occupiers and private renters, Live Table FA5362.
- 3.12 The higher proportion of social renters feeling unsafe may be related to the fact that the sector houses more vulnerable groups. A more in-depth analysis exploring the relationship between tenure and feelings of safety in the neighbourhood is beyond the scope of this report.

⁸ The proportion of owner occupiers who said they do not go out at night because they feel unsafe was slightly higher than private renters (6% compared with 4%). This is perhaps due to the owner occupied sector typically housing a higher proportion of older people than the private rented sector.

Figure 3.1: Feeling of safety at night, by tenure, 2015-16



Base: all households

Notes:

1) figures don't add up to 100% as those who didn't go out for other reasons have been excluded

2) underlying data are presented in Live table FA5363

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

Technical notes and glossary

Technical notes

1. Results on households for this report are presented for '2015-16' and are based on fieldwork carried out between April 2015 and March 2016 on a sample of 13,468 households. Throughout the report, this is referred to as the 'full household sample'.
2. Where the numbers of cases in the sample are too small for any inference to be drawn about the national picture, the cell contents are replaced with a "u". This happens where the cell count is less than 5. When percentages are based on a row or column total with unweighted total sample size of less than 30, the figures are italicised. Figures in italics are therefore based on a small sample size and should be treated as indicative only.
3. **Where comparative statements have been made in the text, these have been significance tested to a 95% confidence level.** This means we are 95% confident that the statements we are making are true.
4. Additional annex tables, including the data underlying the figures and charts, are published on the website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey> alongside many supplementary tables, which are updated each year (in the summer) but are too numerous to include in our reports. Further information on the technical details of the survey, and information and past reports on the Survey of English Housing and the English House Condition Survey, can also be accessed via this link.

Weighting methodology

5. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) revised the weighting process on the English Housing Survey (EHS) going forward from 2015-16. The aim of the revision was to improve the stability of year-on-year estimates including household numbers. This new approach to weighting was approved by 'external' experts on the EHS Technical Advisory Group.
6. The improved weighting methodology was necessary because the initial weighted household counts increased considerably between 2014-15 and 2015-16 (by 361,583 additional households, 344,921 of which were in the private rented sector). The provisional 'grossed' dwelling and household estimates showed that, between 2014-15 and 2015-16, there were two additional households for every one additional dwelling (the number of dwellings increased by 180,814).

This appeared implausible when compared with an expected household growth of up to 200,000 per year as indicated by the Household Projections⁹.

7. NatCen (the current EHS contractor) investigated and advised that some of the year-on-year variation in the initial weighted household counts was due to sampling variation in the data used in the weighting. The household weights are dependent on estimates of 'dwelling-to-household' ratios, which are subject to sampling variation. (This differs from the weighted dwelling counts that are controlled to 'external' DCLG estimates of dwellings by tenure and region.)
8. 'Dwelling-to-household' ratios vary by tenure and by year, Table T.1. In 2015-16, the average ratio increased from 1.0062 to 1.0129, resulting in a large increase in the grossed household counts between 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Table T.1: Dwelling-to-household ratio by tenure, 2013-14 to 2015-16

| <i>all households</i> | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| | 2013-14 | 2014-15 | 2015-16 (before revision) |
| owner occupiers | 1.0039 | 1.0013 | 1.0013 |
| private rented | 1.0600 | 1.0239 | 1.0670 |
| local authority | 1.0092 | 1.0103 | 1.0053 |
| housing association | 1.0091 | 1.0033 | 1.0079 |
| total | 1.0139 | 1.0062 | 1.0129 |

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

9. To reduce the year-on-year variation, the dwelling-to-household ratio was re-calculated by smoothing across two years of the EHS (2015-16 and 2014-15). The revised (smoothed) weights were used for producing the published EHS findings¹⁰. Smoothing across two years was preferred to smoothing across more years because the EHS sample uses a two year cycle whereby England is divided into 1,808 primary sampling units (PSUs) and interviewing takes places in the same 904 PSUs every other year.
10. When smoothed across two survey years, the average dwelling-to-household ratio reduced from 1.0129 to 1.0096, Table T.2. To assess the stability of the new methodology in producing less variable ratios across years, the 2014-15 ratio was also re-calculated using the same methodology (i.e. smoothing over 2 years: 2013-14 and 2014-15). As can be seen in the table below, the ratio appears quite stable (1.0100 in 2014-15 compared with 1.0096 in 2015-16).

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/household-projections>

¹⁰ Both the household and the dwelling weights were revised because the dwelling-to-household ratio also has a minor role in the computation of the latter. The impact of the revision of the dwelling weights was very small.

Table T.2: Dwelling-to-household ratio by tenure, 2013-14 to 2015-16

| <i>all households</i> | 2014-15 | 2015-16 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| owner occupiers | 1.0012 | 1.0022 |
| private rented | 1.0467 | 1.0425 |
| local authority | 1.0087 | 1.0102 |
| housing association | 1.0049 | 1.0059 |
| total | 1.0096 | 1.0100 |

Source: English Housing Survey, full household sample

11. This new approach to weighting was approved by external experts on the EHS Technical Advisory Group. It is considered to be the most robust and practical solution to the year-on-year inconsistencies observed in the household estimates. We expect to continue to smooth the weights in future waves of the EHS. The EHS team at DCLG, with NatCen and the EHS Technical Advisory Group, will review the further options to improve the weighting methodology. If you would like to share your views on the EHS weighting strategy, please contact: ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

12. More detail on the EHS methodology can be found in the technical report¹¹.

Glossary

Ethnicity: Classification according to respondents' own perceived ethnic group.

Ethnic minority background is used throughout the report to refer to those respondents who do not identify as White.

The classification of ethnic group used in the EHS is consistent with the 2011 Census. Respondents are classified as White if they answer one of the following four options:

1. English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any Other White background

Otherwise, they are classified as being from an ethnic minority background.

Household type: The main classification of household type uses the following categories; some categories may be split or combined in different tables:

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey-technical-advice>

-
- couple no dependent child(ren)
 - couple with dependent child(ren)
 - couple with dependent and independent child(ren)
 - couple with independent child(ren)
 - lone parent with dependent child(ren)
 - lone parent with dependent and independent child(ren)
 - lone parent with independent child(ren)
 - two or more families
 - lone person sharing with other lone persons
 - one male
 - one female

Region: A three region classification is used to present geographical findings, as follows:

- **North:** North East; North West; and Yorkshire and the Humber
- **Midlands and East:** East Midlands; West Midlands; and East
- **London and South:** London; South East; and South West

Socio-economic groups: The EHS uses the eight-class version of the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC). The eight classes are:

- Higher managerial and professional occupations
- Lower managerial and professional occupations
- Intermediate occupations (clerical, sales, service)
- Small employers and own account workers
- Lower supervisory and technical occupations
- Semi-routine occupations
- Routine occupations
- Never worked or long-term unemployed.

No EHS respondent is assigned to the last class because the survey does not collect enough information to code to someone as never worked or long-term unemployed.

Tenure: In this report, households are typically grouped into three broad categories known as tenures: owner occupiers, social renters and private renters. The tenure defines the conditions under which the home is occupied, whether it is owned or rented, and if rented, who the landlord is and on what financial and legal terms the let is agreed.

- **owner occupiers:** households in accommodation which they either own outright, are buying with a mortgage or as part of a shared ownership scheme.
- **social renters:** this category includes households renting from Local Authorities (including Arms' Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and Housing

Action Trusts) and Housing Associations, Local Housing Companies, co-operatives and charitable trusts.

A significant number of Housing Association tenants wrongly report that they are Local Authority tenants. The most common reason for this is that their home used to be owned by the Local Authority, and although ownership was transferred to a Housing Association, the tenant still reports that their landlord is the Local Authority. There are also some Local Authority tenants who wrongly report that they are Housing Association tenants. Data from the EHS for 2008-09 onwards incorporate a correction for the great majority of such cases in order to provide a reasonably accurate split of the social rented category.

- **private renters:** this sector covers all other tenants including all whose accommodation is tied to their job. It also includes people living rent-free (for example, people living in a flat belonging to a relative).

In accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 the United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, signifying that they are fully compliant with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Crown copyright, 2017

Copyright in the typographical arrangement rests with the Crown.

You may re-use this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/> or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/dclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000
Email: ehs@communities.gsi.gov.uk

For all our latest news and updates follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/CommunitiesUK>

July 2017

ISBN: 978-1-4098-5082-3