

Housing Starts and Completions, 2021/22 to 2022/23

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Summary

Nationally, there was a small decrease in housing construction starts for England, down from 144,110 in 2021/22 to 172,350 in 2022/23. In total 79.7% of the national figure was allocated to the private sector in the 2022/23 financial year. In the Lancashire-12 area, 89.6% of the 4,900 starts were in the private sector, whilst in Lancashire-14, the private-sector accounted for 89.7% of the 5,630 starts.

Preston had a substantial 1,290 starts in 2022/2023, following 1,120, 720 and 640 starts in the preceding three years. The high figure is however imputed by DLUHC and should not be considered a reliable estimate. South Ribble, with 640 starts, also imputed, was in second place, Wyre was third with 560 and Chorley fourth with 500. All other districts in the Lancashire-12 area had fewer than 500 dwellings started. Pendle had least with 70.

The latest figure of 174,440 housing completions in England constitutes a small rise from the 2021/22 total of 171,160 and brings the total back to just under the 2019/20 figure of 175,330 completions. There was something of a slump in housebuilding in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic effect. The figures for Wyre show an impressive 610 completions in 2022/23 and the figure for Preston was imputed to be 1,210. The total 4,910 completions in the Lancashire-12 area were 15.3% more than in 2021/22.

Unfortunately, in the latest year, all of the figures for Preston were imputed. As the number of starts shown for Preston was so high, being 26.4% of the Lancashire-12 total, some doubt must be cast over the whole analysis for Lancashire.

The Lancashire Insight [Housing Dashboard](#) now has a slide devoted to housing starts and completions. This contains graphs of the time-series dating back to 1986/87, and it has a table showing the sum of the starts or completions for any specified discrete time period and for any combination of districts in the Lancashire-14 area, but with the proviso that there are some records missing between 1998 and 2011, which renders the sum of starts or completions over the whole time period somewhat unreliable for some of the districts, and as a consequence the county as a whole.

Introduction

Figures on [district housing starts and completions](#) are available from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on the GOV.UK website (table 253). These are derived from the house building quarterly returns made by district and unitary authorities, based on the number of new permanent dwellings started and completed within the quarter. Permanent dwellings in this instance are those deemed to have a life of over 60 years and include all types of new housing units in separate accommodation including houses, flats and maisonettes.

The rate of house building is affected by a variety of economic and developmental conditions such as the buoyancy of the housing market, affordability of dwellings and willingness of the construction industry to invest in site acquisition and development. Development related factors include the amount of suitable land with planning permission being brought forward, and for larger sites, requirement for necessary roads and infrastructure to be provided before development is permitted. Government initiatives may be presented to help stimulate housing construction where the market has begun to stagnate, and there is seemingly a constant need to increase the number of new homes being built.

Housing starts

In the 1988/89 financial year, there was a peak of 215,540 dwellings commenced in England. This was followed by a strong decline until 2008/09 (88,130 starts). Afterwards there was a recovery and although the latest figure of 172,350 starts represents an improvement on the 2008/09 low-point, there were a couple of years of decline with the Covid-19 pandemic playing its part in the previous year.

Table 1 details the total number of dwelling construction starts and percentage breakdown by sector for the past three financial years. Nationally, there was a small decrease in housing construction starts within England, down from 144,110 in 2021/22 to 172,350 in 2022/23. The latest number of starts nationally was 23,830 (16.0%) more than in 2019/20. In total, 80.1% of the national figure was allocated to the private sector. In the Lancashire-12 area, 89.6% of the 4,900 starts were in the private sector, whilst in Lancashire-14, the private-sector accounted for 89.7% of the 5,630 starts.

Preston had a substantial 1,290 starts in 2022/2023, following 1,120, 720 and 640 starts in the preceding three years. The high figure is however imputed by DLUHC and should not be considered a reliable estimate. South Ribble was second with 640 imputed starts, Wyre third with an officially reported 560 and Chorley fourth with 500. All other districts in the Lancashire-12 area had fewer than 500 dwellings started. Pendle had least with 70. The districts which had considerably more starts in the latest year than the previous included Chorley (290 more), Preston (170 more), Blackburn with Darwen (110 more) and West Lancashire (100 more). Eight of the Lancashire-14 authorities had fewer starts than in 2021/22 including Wyre, where there were 180 fewer starts.

Table 1: Dwellings Started, 2020/21 to 2022/23

Year	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	Dwellings started	% Private Enterprise	Dwellings started	% Private Enterprise	Dwellings started	% Private Enterprise
Burnley	200*	100.0	150*	100.0	110	90.9
Chorley	210	90.5	210	95.2	500	100.0
Fylde	430	97.7	420*	90.5	330	90.9
Hyndburn	70*	71.4	240*	62.5	190*	78.9
Lancaster	190	94.7	190	89.5	200	95.0
Pendle	220	50.0	130	100.0	70	100.0
Preston	720	83.3	1,120*	79.5	1,290*	92.2
Ribble Valley	370	86.5	470	76.6	370	89.2
Rossendale	140	42.9	250	84.0	180	100.0

Year	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
South Ribble	380*	94.7	680	88.2	640*	81.3
West Lancashire	440	86.4	360	83.3	460	76.1
Wyre	570	84.2	740	56.8	560	92.9
Lancashire-12	3,930	85.0	4,960	79.6	4,900	89.6
Blackburn with Darwen	370	97.3	480	93.8	590	100.0
Blackpool	80	100.0	90	100.0	140*	50.0
Lancashire-14	4,380	86.3	5,530	81.2	5,630	89.7
England	141,670	78.6	174,110	80.1	172,350	79.7

*Figures contain imputed data

Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk); Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; Live Table 253 House building: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, 2022-23.

Private enterprise accounts for most construction starts and 100% of the totals in four Lancashire authorities in 2022/23. However this may represent an under-estimation of the activity of registered social landlords. Starts in particular may be recorded as being commenced by the private sector, but elements of the development relating to [section 106 agreements](#) for affordable housing might only be transferred out of private enterprise towards the end of site construction. Housing Associations accounted for 19.3% of the national starts total in 2022/23, with just 1.1% allocated to local authorities. Housing Association starts were much lower in the Lancashire-12 area at 10.2%. There were a few allocations to local authority housing starts within the Lancashire-14 area with 70 in Blackpool and 10 each in Chorley and South Ribble, making the rate for Lancashire-14 around 1.6%. In the previous year there were no local authority housing allocations in the Lancashire-14 area at all.

Housing completions

Housing completions show the number of gross additions to the dwelling stock, but do not account for change of use or demolitions. Please see our [Net additional dwellings](#) article for more details. The rate of completions is dependent upon a number of factors such as the availability of suitable development plots, housing demand and affordability of the housing market. The rate of construction can vary according to site conditions: smaller developments may be complete within the same year of commencement but more complex sites take longer or stall following a technical start to construction. Completion is taken from when a dwelling is deemed ready for occupation and following issue of a certificate of completion. In some cases, this may not be issued even after occupation has taken place, due to omission or some other technicality.

Table 2: Dwellings Completed, 2020/21 to 2022/23

Year	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
	Dwellings completed	% Private Enterprise	Dwellings completed	% Private Enterprise	Dwellings completed	% Private Enterprise
Burnley	50*	100.0	170*	100.0	150	80.0
Chorley	320	90.6	230	87.0	370	94.6
Fylde	340	97.1	440*	93.2	420	85.7

Year	2020/21		2021/22		2022/23	
Hyndburn	70*	85.7	180*	55.6	240	50.0
Lancaster	230	100.0	220	86.4	130	84.6
Pendle	170	82.4	140	100.0	160	75.0
Preston	630	87.3	660*	89.4	1,210*	76.9
Ribble Valley	470	89.4	480	83.3	490	81.6
Rossendale	70	57.1	100	60.0	200	70.0
South Ribble	260*	96.2	420	90.5	500*	88.0
West Lancashire	430	95.3	510	84.3	430	86.0
Wyre	450	95.6	720	80.6	610	80.3
Lancashire-12	3,490	91.7	4,260	85.4	4,910	80.7
Blackburn with Darwen	370	83.8	400	87.5	480	100.0
Blackpool	140	71.4	140	71.4	160*	87.5
Lancashire-14	4,000	90.3	4,800	85.2	5,550	82.5
England	154,660	82.2	171,160	81.2	174,440	79.8

*Figures contain imputed data.

Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk); Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities; [Live Table 253](#) House building: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, 2022/23.

Housing completions nationally were at their highest in the early 1980s. Over more recent years, they fluctuated between 141,290 in 2008/09, and down to a low of 107,980 in 2012/13. The latest figure of 174,440 housing completions in England constitutes a small rise from the 2021/22 total of 171,160 and brings the total back to just under the 2019/20 figure of 175,330 completions. There was something of a slump in housebuilding in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic effect.

The figures for Preston show an impressive 1,210 (imputed) completions in 2022/23 which combined with 630 in 2020/21 and 660 (imputed) in 2021/22 gives a three-year total of 2,500. The three-year total was also high in Wyre with 1,780 completions, Ribble Valley with 1,440, West Lancashire with 1,370 and Fylde with 1,200. In contrast, the most recent results show fewer than 200 completions in Burnley, Lancaster, Pendle and Blackpool, although Blackpool's results are imputed by DLUHC.

Housing Associations accounted for 19.1%, of the national completions total in 2022/23, with just 1.1% allocated to local authorities. Housing Association completions were lower in the Lancashire-12 area at 14.5%. There were only 10 (rounded figure) allocations to local authority housing completions within the Lancashire-12 area, and we cannot tell to which districts these apply but together with the 10 in Blackpool they amount to only around 0.4% of all Lancashire-14 completions.

Housing starts and completions since 1987/88

The Lancashire Insight [Housing Dashboard](#) now has a slide devoted to housing starts and completions. This contains graphs of the time-series dating back to 1986/87, and it has a table showing the sum of the starts or completions for any specified discrete time period and for any

combination of districts in the Lancashire-14 area, but with the proviso that there are some records missing between 1998 and 2011, which renders the sum of starts or completions over the whole time period somewhat unreliable for some of the districts. The number of missing records, if there any during the time period selected, are shown for affected districts in a separate table, while the degree to which particular districts are affected is indicated by the boldness of the cell's background colour in the main table. Although there are not many records missing for the private enterprise starts and completions, missing figures from the other sectors prevents a valid total for all sectors being provided. The knock-on effect is that a county total is not given for specific years, even if just one constituent local authority has a missing record.

The time-series graphs (one shows composite levels for the three sectors for all selected districts, the other shows individual total district figures for selected districts separately) can be enlarged, use the pop-up icon that appears above the top right corner of the graph and displays the text 'Focus mode'. The slider control can be used to set a time period between any two years, or the dates it displays can be changed using the calendar month selector, which appears if you click on the numerical dates. This redraws the graphs and re-calculates the totals shown in the tables. Both of the graphs can also be used to select a specific year by clicking exactly on a data point, but in the lower graph a district will not appear if any of the sector records are missing for that year.

The 'Total' figure that appears in the main table showing district figures, and which appears first in the Lancashire-12 and Lancashire-14 tables is calculated from the three housing sectors. This figure is less affected by missing records, but may inflate the actual totals through rounding errors.

There are no missing records from the 2011/12 period onwards, but in that year there were imputed figures given for Chorley and Hyndburn. In the periods 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 there were some imputed figures affecting authorities within Lancashire. In the first, second and fourth periods all of the figures for South Ribble were imputed, making them unreliable estimates. In the first three periods the figures for all sectors other than the private sector were imputed in Hyndburn, together with local authority housing starts in 2022/23. As the private sector is by far the largest, this impacts the reliability much less. In the 2020/21 and 2021/22 periods all of the figures for Burnley were imputed, making them unreliable estimates. The particular problem in 2021/22 and 2022/23 was that all of the figures for Preston were imputed. As the number of starts was so high, being 22.7% and 26.4% of the Lancashire-12 totals for those two periods, some doubt must be cast over the whole analysis for Lancashire.

As for all figures shown in this article, the numbers are all rounded to the nearest 10 before any calculations within the dashboard itself.

The DLUHC tables actually provide figures going back to 1980/81, but some of the starts and completions are allocated to 'New Towns' as well as the local authorities, so we have begun our time-series from the year that such allocations were nil.

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