

ROOMS PER PERSON

This pair of maps shows the availability of rooms in people's homes as expressed in rooms per resident, and so gives an indication of the housing conditions in which people are living, and how cramped or spacious those are. It also provides a good measure of latent housing demand and how stressed some areas are becoming due to lack of housing or the inefficient use of much existing housing in the area.

The 2011 Census recorded a remarkable 140 million rooms in houses and flats in the UK (not counting bathrooms, toilets, halls, landings and large storage cupboards). Thus, apart from kitchens and living rooms, all these rooms could be bedrooms. In 2001 there were 127 million rooms. In the 10 years after that, an extra 13 million were added, some through house building but often by adding extensions or putting rooms in the attics of existing properties. The places with the most rooms per person in 2011 were Cotswold and Powys (both 2.60 per person); North Norfolk and Eden (both 2.59); West Lindsey, Malvern Hills and Hambleton (all 2.58); and Fylde and Stratford-upon-Avon (both 2.57). The fewest rooms per person were all in London, with the least of all being in Newham (1.44 per person); Tower Hamlets (1.54); Brent (1.61); and Hackney (1.67). The greatest reductions have also been in London, again led by Newham (-0.19), and then in Waltham Forest, Greenwich and Barking & Dagenham (all -0.18). The largest increases between 2001 and 2011 were recorded where there is more space to expand into, in Strabane (+0.29); Limavady (+0.28); Eilean Siar (+0.27); Omagh and Argyll & Bute (both +0.26); South Lanarkshire (+0.25); and the Orkney Islands and Armagh (both +0.24 rooms per person). The graph below shows how many households were overcrowded in 2011 or had many spare bedrooms. Each couple should have their own bedroom by this standard, and unrelated people over the age of 10 should not have to share bedrooms if they are of the opposite sex. The 4.5% of households that have too few bedrooms will represent a much larger proportion of people in the UK and an even larger proportion of children. Almost all properties with many spare rooms are in the owner-occupied housing sector.

Households by occupancy standard, UK 2011 %

