

United kingdom energy efficiency

Several factors affect the energy efficiency of a dwelling, including property type, tenure and when it was constructed. This article highlights the types of dwellings typically associated with high and low energy efficiency scores.

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) indicate the energy efficiency of dwellings. They are based on data about a building's energy features, for example, the building materials used, the heating systems and insulation. These are collected by an accredited energy assessor and entered into government-approved software to generate an EPC score, typically ranging from 1 to 100. Domestic EPCs are banded from A to G, where A is the most energy efficient.

EPC data for England and Wales are available from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Open Data Communities website.

This analysis uses EPC data to present energy efficiency, the main fuel type used in central heating, and the carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of dwellings with an EPC for England and Wales separately. It is based on one record per dwelling, using records from April 2013 to March 2023. This is because EPCs are only valid for 10 years from when dwellings are constructed, converted, sold or let.

This analysis does not cover all dwellings in England and Wales because not every dwelling has an EPC and so these statistics cannot be viewed as a full representation of the entire dwelling stock. However, they are still useful to provide insight into the energy efficiency of housing, as they include the most recent data available for each dwelling that has an EPC. More information on our base population can be found in Section 10: Data sources and quality.

The housing stock across England and Wales varies, and this is reflected in median energy efficiency scores. The median energy efficiency score was 68 in England and 66 in Wales for all records up to March 2023, which are equivalent to band D. Within England, Yorkshire and The Humber had the lowest median score (66, equivalent to band D), the same as Wales. London was the only International Territorial Level 1 (ITL1) region with a median energy efficiency score in band C (69) where all other regions and countries were band D.

Figure 1: London had the highest median energy efficiency score, compared with all other regions in England and Wales Median energy efficiency score, English regions and Wales, up to March 2023 Source: Energy Performance Certificate data on Open Data Communities from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Property Attributes data from the Valuation Office Agency Download this chart Figure 1: London had the highest median energy efficiency score, compared with all other regions in England and Wales Image .csv .xls

Property type affects energy efficiency. Overall, "flats and maisonettes" was the most energy-efficient property type in both England and Wales, with a median energy efficiency score of 73, which is equivalent to band C (see Figure 2). "Flats and maisonettes" is the only property type that had a score above band D.

Detached and terraced dwellings scored the lowest in Wales (both 64), while in England, semi-detached (65) was the property type scoring the lowest. This may be a result of external wall exposure being higher in houses, compared with flats and maisonettes, which are more likely to be grouped in blocks. While there was a large difference in energy efficiency between flats and houses, there was only a small difference between the different types of houses.

Figure 2: "Flats and maisonettes" was the most energy efficient property type for all dwellings in both England and Wales Median energy efficiency score by property type, England and Wales, up to March 2023 Source: Energy Performance Certificate data on Open Data Communities from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and Property Attributes data from the Valuation Office Agency Download this chart Figure 2: "Flats and maisonettes" was the most energy efficient property type for all dwellings in both England and Wales Image .csv .xls

Looking at dwellings solely by tenure, social rented dwellings had the highest median energy efficiency score, 70 in England and 71 in Wales, equivalent to band C. Owner-occupied dwellings scored the lowest in both England and Wales, with scores of 64 and 62, respectively, equivalent to band D. However, this does not account for property type.

By combining property type and tenure, a more detailed picture of the energy efficiency of housing appears. Social rented dwellings scored the highest median energy efficiency across property types in England and Wales, sharing the top score only with owner-occupied flats in England at a median of 72 (Figure 3).

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