

Healthy Foundations

The crucial link between housing and public health

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David Finch @davidfinchthf

<https://www.health.org.uk/evidence-hub/housing>



Housing affects health through three key channels

- **Quality**
- Security
- Affordability



Housing affects health through three key channels



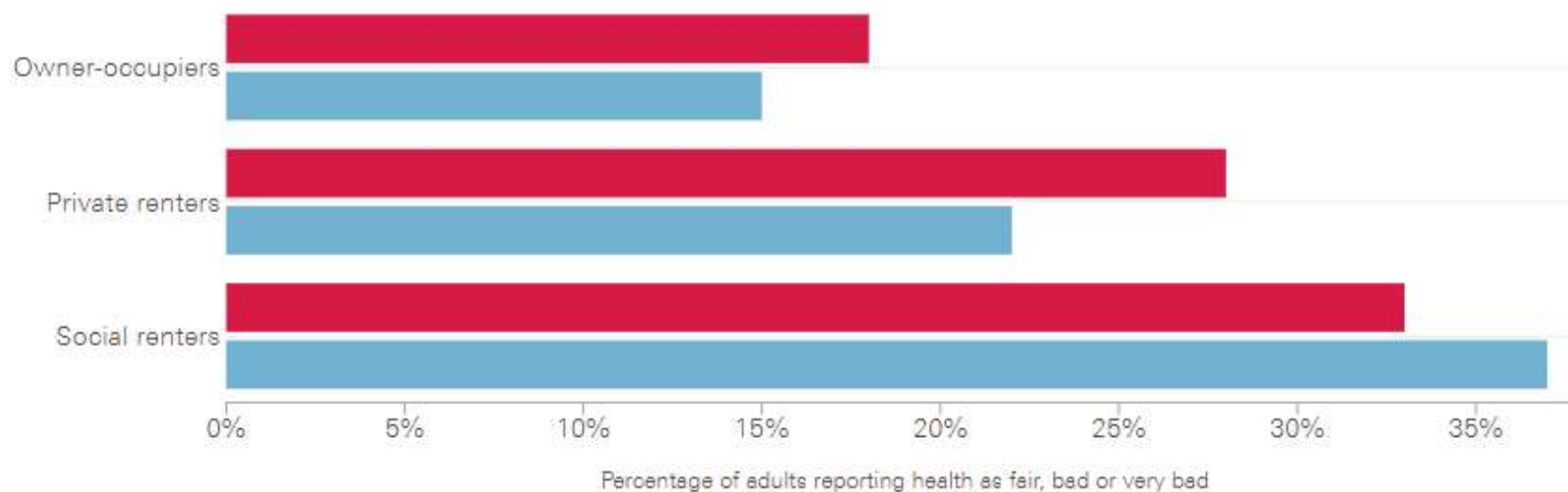
- **Quality**

- **Injuries** from hazards in people's homes, such as trips or falls, electrical problems or fire risk
- **Respiratory problems** caused by damp which leads to the spread of mould and fungi
- **Cold homes** are linked to higher excess deaths in winter, respiratory diseases and circulatory problems
- **Overcrowded living conditions** can put strain on family relationships, reduce privacy and limit the space for children to study or play

Living in a non-decent home is associated with worse health

Self-rated health by housing tenure and whether living in a non-decent home, England

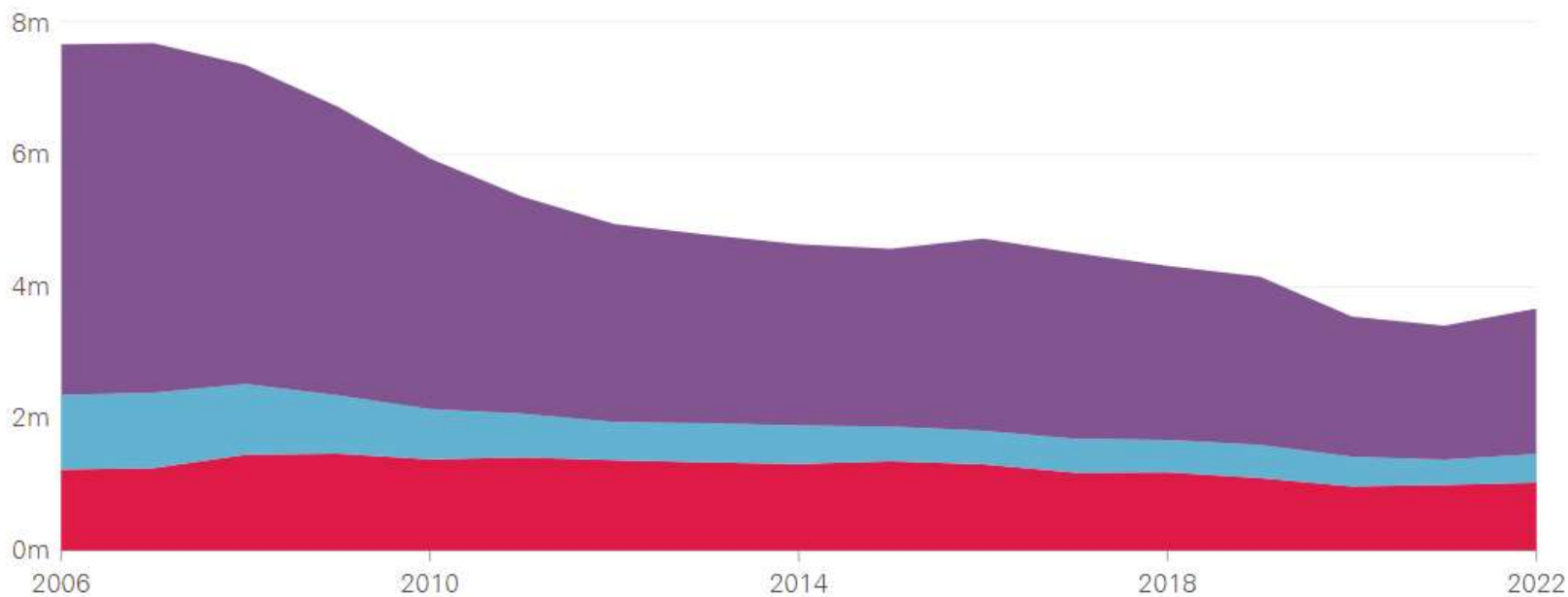
■ Non-decent home ■ Decent home



There are fewer non-decent homes than in 2006, but progress has stalled

Number of non-decent homes (millions), by tenure: England, 2006–22

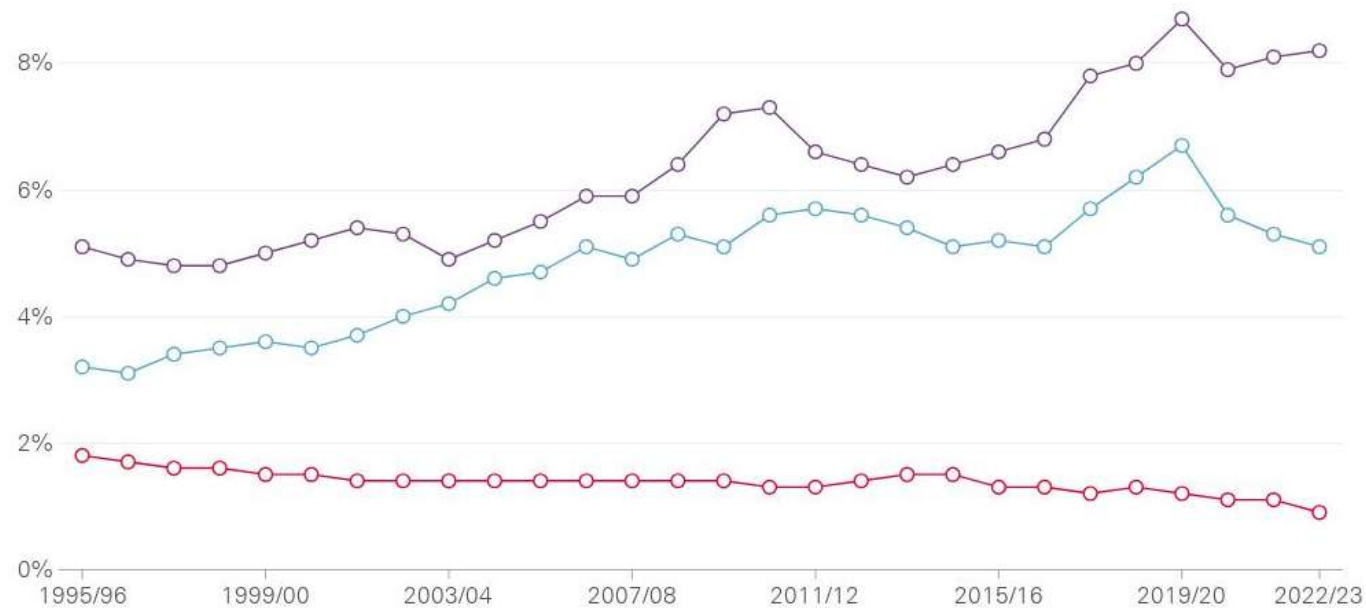
■ Private rented ■ Social rented ■ Owner-occupied



Overcrowding has increased in rented sectors

There have been large increases in overcrowding in rented tenures
 Percentage of households that are overcrowded by tenure: England, 1995/96–2022/23

■ Owner-occupiers ■ Private renters ■ Social renters



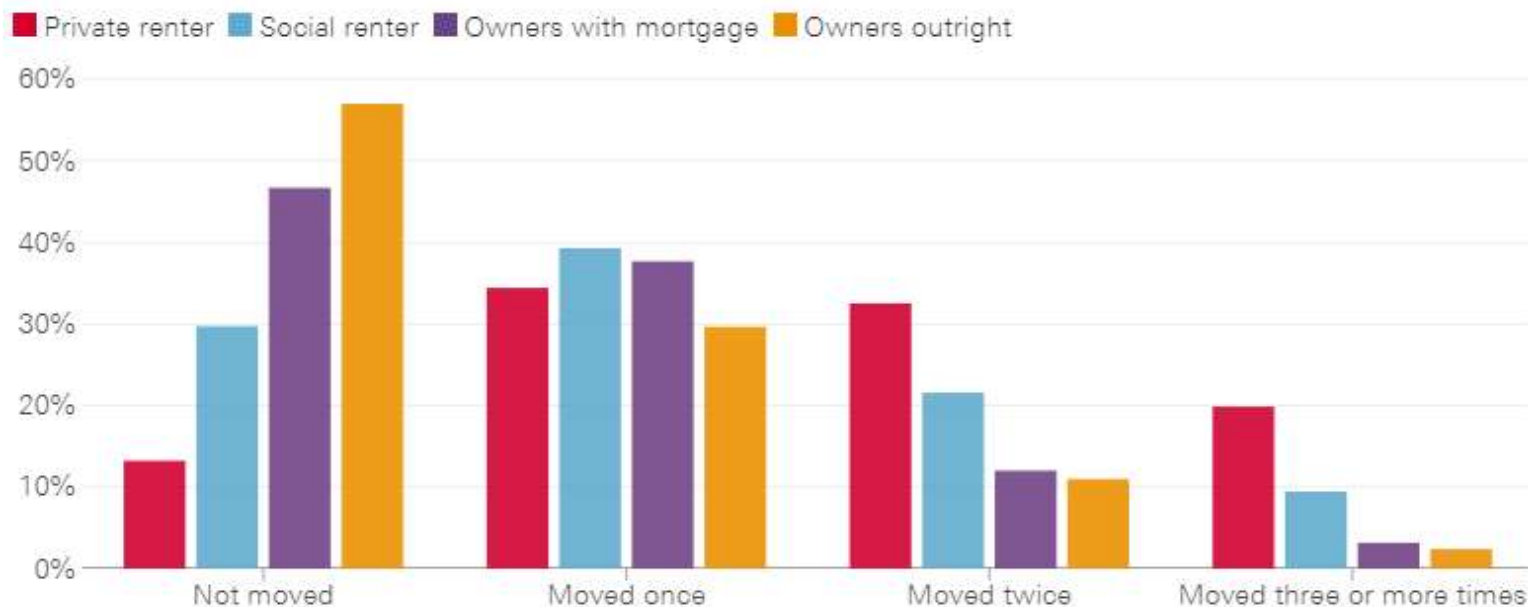
Housing affects health through three key channels



- Quality
- **Security**
 - **Stress** from instability, frequent moves or concern about repossession or eviction
 - **Family, social and community networks** can be undermined by moving home

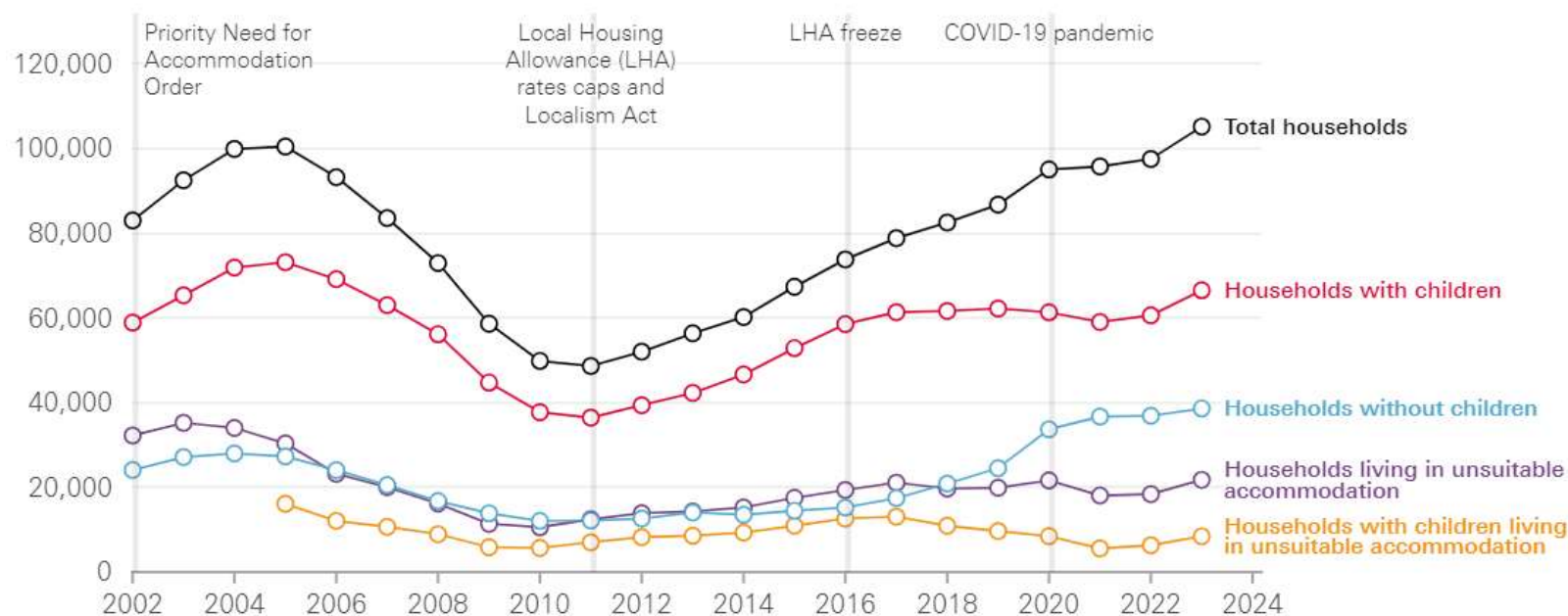
Children in rented sectors are more likely to have moved more than once

Number of residential moves experienced by households with children up to age 15 years by housing tenure: UK, 2000 to 2015



The number of households in temporary accommodation has more than doubled in a decade

Number of households in temporary accommodation in England, 2002–23



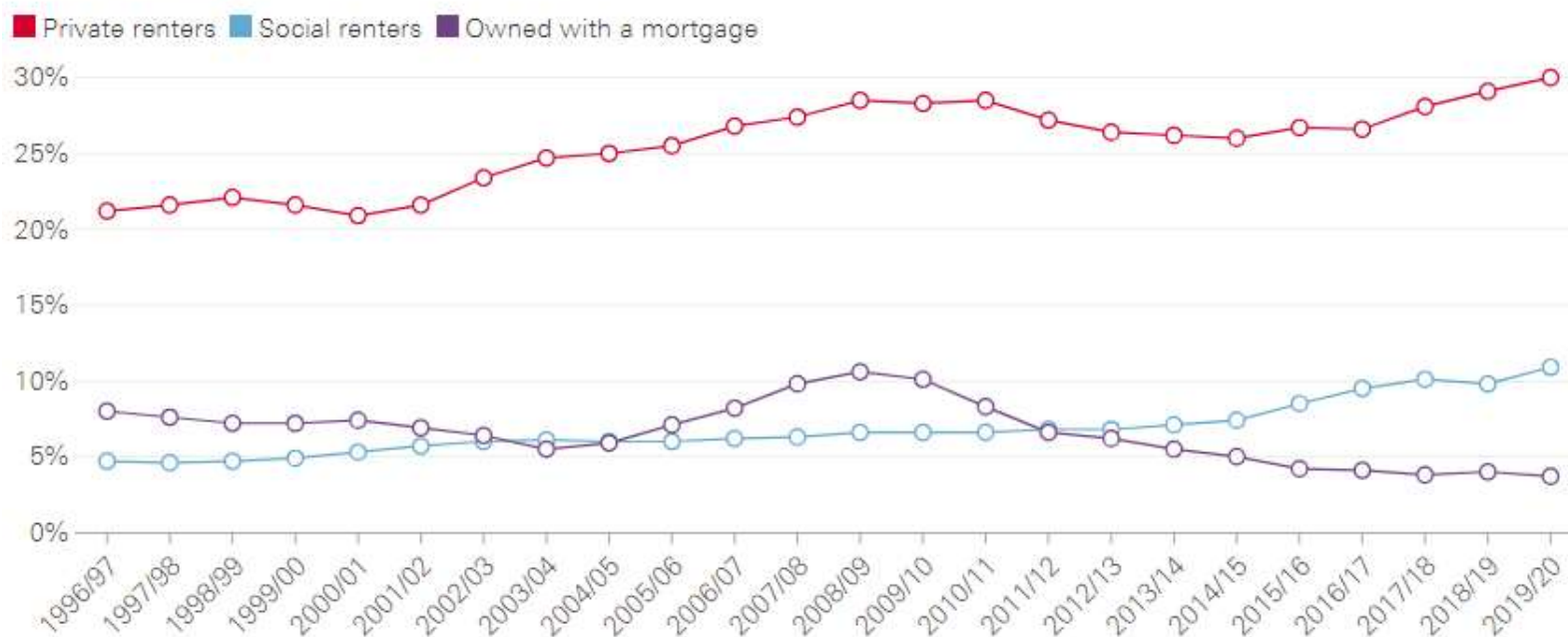
Housing affects health through three key channels



- Quality
- Security
- **Affordability**
 - **Stress** caused by difficulty covering housing costs
 - **A lack of income** to cover essentials such as food, fuel and social participation

Affordability problems have risen for social renters over the last decade

Percentage of households spending more than a third of net income on housing costs by tenure: England, 1996/97–2019/20



Cost of living: Financial concerns were worst among people whose housing costs had risen

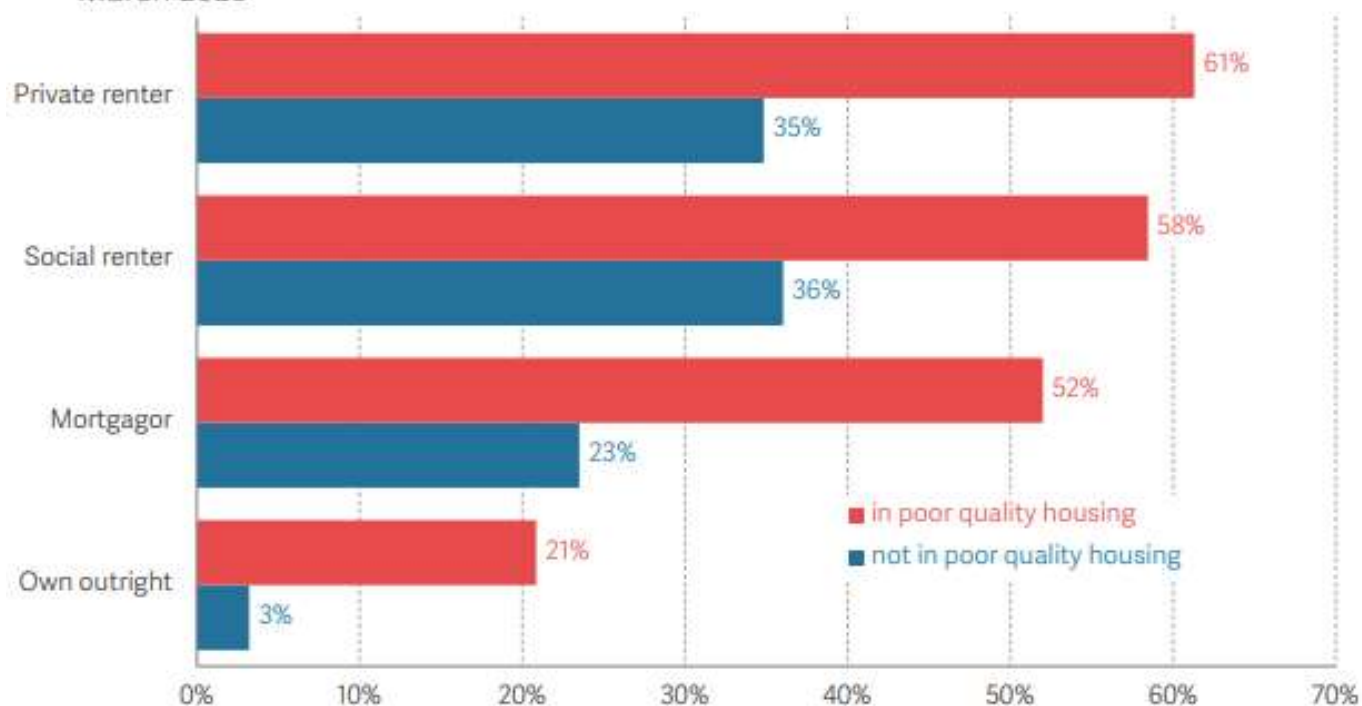
Percentage of respondents reporting the state of their financial situation and future worries, by housing cost (HC) and pay change category: UK, 2023



NOTES: Base = all aged 18-64 (n=6,250). Base by categories: HC not up (n=3,301); HC up, pay up (n=920); HC up, pay not up (n=390); HC up, not in work (n=488). Bars do not sum to 100 per cent because respondents had the option to select multiple answers and the remainder of respondents did not report an increase in their pay in either or both periods.
SOURCE: RF analysis of YouGov, Cost of Living Crisis October 2023 wave.

Cost of living: People with poor quality housing are more worried about meeting their housing costs

Proportion of adults reporting they are very or fairly worried about meeting their housing costs over the next three months by housing quality and tenure: UK, 6-12 March 2023



NOTES: All (n=8831), not in poor quality housing (n=8003), in poor quality housing (n=828). Results exclude students, and tenures 'live in home owned by parent etc' and 'other'. Excludes 820 observations who reported 'No - other reason' to any of the three housing quality questions. These figures have been analysed independently by the Resolution Foundation.
SOURCE: RF analysis of YouGov, adults aged 18+ Cost of Living Crisis March 2023 wave.

Moving to healthy homes

- Renters Reform Bill is applying the Decent Homes Standard to the private rented sector
 - Must ensure that standards are fit for the future
 - Enforcement must be properly resourced
- More widely a healthy home also needs to be secure and affordable:
 - Recent increase to Local Housing Allowance will help but comes after people have struggled for a long time
 - Ending no fault evictions important but risk it is watered down

Thank you

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