

Compendium

Housing and Consumer Durables (General Lifestyle Survey Overview - a report on the 2011 General Lifestyle Survey)

Includes chapters on health, smoking, drinking, households, families and access to vehicles.



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1 . Housing and consumer durables

The General Household Survey (GHS) has included questions on housing and the availability of consumer durables since 1971. Periodically new consumer items have been added and some older items have been dropped. The General Lifestyle Survey (GLF) continued to ask housing and consumer durable questions in 2011.

How the data are used and their importance

The GLF data are used to monitor housing conditions and material deprivation. Material deprivation refers to the inability of households to afford those consumer goods and activities that are typical in a society at a given point in time. Housing conditions and material deprivation are key factors in measuring poverty and all Member States of the European Union are required to collect these data.

Housing data collected from the GLF and GHS are presented in this report; however, data on housing are collated from a number of different sources, including the Census, the Labour Force Survey and the English Housing Survey. These data are used in a number of analyses and reports, such as Chapter 6 of [Social Trends 41](#).

The results

This chapter looks at trends over time as well as data from the 2011 GLF on consumer durables and housing.

2 . Housing

Over the last 40 years home ownership has increased from just under half (49%) in 1971 to around two thirds (67%) of households owning their own home in 2011. The proportion of households owning their own home peaked at 71% in 2007 and 2008. Most of the increase occurred during the 1980s and was due to a marked increase in the proportion of households owning with a mortgage. From 2008 to 2011 the proportion of households owning their home has reduced to 67%. This fall is partly due to a drop in the proportion of households owning with a mortgage, this proportion fell by 4% between 2008 and 2011.

Over the last forty years, the proportion of households renting council homes has fallen from a third (31%) of all households in 1971 to one in ten (10%) of households in 2011. The proportion of households renting council homes increased slightly during the 1970s from 31% in 1971 to 34% in 1981, but since has declined steadily over the last three decades. The proportion of households renting from a housing association ¹ has increased over the same period (from 1% in 1971 to 3% in 1991 and to 9% in 2011). The proportion of households renting privately fell by almost two-thirds between 1971 (20%) and 1991 (7%), then remained between 9% and 11% until 2008. The proportion of households renting privately has increased again over the past few years and was 15 % in 2011. This increase was offset by a decrease in the proportion of owner occupiers with a mortgage from 39 % in 2008 to 35 % in 2011. The housing market in Great Britain has suffered since the start of the recession in 2008. A smaller percentage of new households have successfully acquired mortgages and this is reflected in the decrease in the number of households owning with a mortgage and also in the increase in the number of households renting their accommodation.

[Table 4.1 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

The type of tenure varied depending on the age of the Household Reference Person (HRP - please see Appendix A, Definitions and terms). In 2011, the likelihood of the household owning their accommodation, either outright or with a mortgage increased with the age of the HRP up until retirement age, after which it gradually declined: the proportion owning their own accommodation rose from 11% of households with an HRP aged under 25 to 60% of those with an HRP aged 30-44 and peaked at 81% among those households with an HRP aged 60-64 years. Overall, slightly more households owned their accommodation with a mortgage (35%) than owned their accommodation outright (32%). The proportion of households owning their accommodation with a mortgage was the highest among households with an HRP aged between 30 and 59 (55% of households with an HRP aged 30-44 and 49% of households with an HRP aged 45-59). Households with an HRP aged 60 or over were more likely to own their accommodation outright than with a mortgage: for example, among households with an HRP aged 30-44 5% owned their accommodation outright and 55% owned their accommodation with a mortgage, compared with 60% and 21% respectively of households with an HRP aged 60-64 and 71% and 4% respectively of households with an HRP aged 70 to 79.

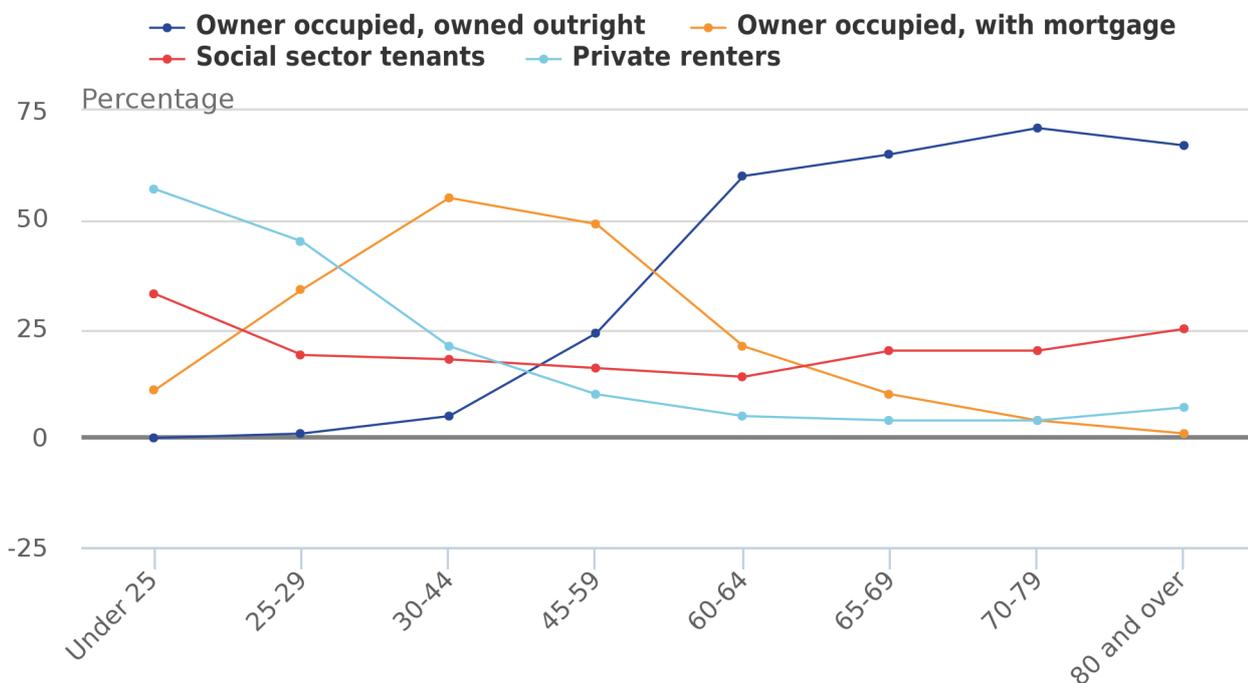
Private renting was most prevalent among households where the HRP was aged less than 25 years (57%). The proportion of households who privately rented their accommodation fell steeply with the increasing age of the HRP (falling from 45% of households with an HRP aged 25-29 to 21% of households with an HRP aged 30-44 and then one in ten households or fewer in all households with an HRP over 35 years of age).

Households with an HRP either in the youngest age group (aged under 25) or the eldest age group (aged 80 or over) were most likely to be social sector tenants: 33% of households with an HRP aged under 25 and 25% of households with an HRP aged 80 and over were social sector tenants. One in five households or fewer in all other HRP age groups were social sector tenants.

[Table 4.9 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Figure 4.1: Tenure by age of household reference person, 2011 <1>

Great Britain



Source: General Lifestyle Survey - Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Tenants whose accommodation goes with the job of someone in the household have been allocated to 'private renters'

In 2011 there were differences in the proportion of households in each tenure group depending on the sex of the HRP. Among households with a male HRP, around three-quarters (71%) owned their home compared with 58% of households with a female HRP. In contrast, households with a female HRP were almost twice as likely to be social sector tenants (renting from a council, housing association or Registered Social Landlord); 27% compared with 14% of households with a male HRP.

[Table 4.10 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Notes for Housing

1. Since 1996, housing associations are described as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). RSLs are not-for-profit organisations which include: charitable housing associations; industrial and provident societies, and companies registered under the Companies Act 1985

3 . Consumer durables

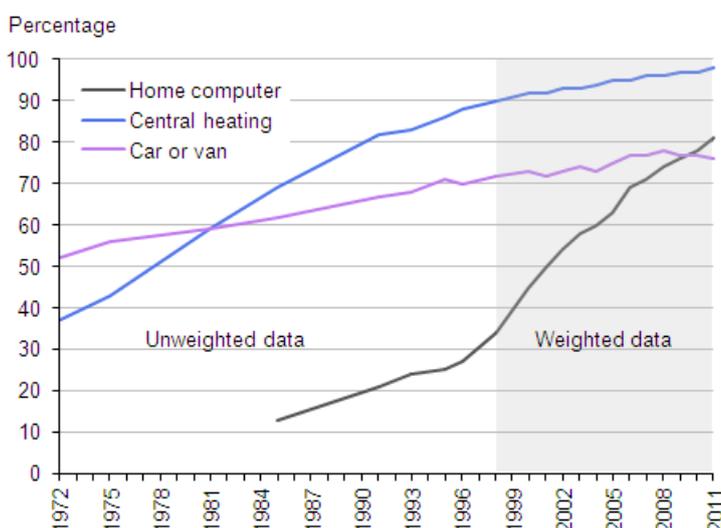
Since the early 1970s the survey has recorded a significant increase in the ownership of many consumer durables and household amenities. For example, almost all households (98%) had central heating in 2011 compared with only 37% in 1972. This proportion has risen throughout the period, but rose in the 1970s from 37% in 1972 to 59% in 1981 and then again through the 1980s and 1990s to 92% by 2000.

Access to a car or van has also risen since the questions were first asked in 1972; in 1972 at least one car or van was available to just over half (52%) of households, this increased to over three-quarters (76%) in 2011. However, the proportion of households with access to only one car or van has remained the same between 1972 and 2011: in 2011 44% of households had access to one car or van. Since 1972 the number of households with access to more than one car or van has more than trebled from around one in ten households (9%) to a third of all households (32%) in 2011.

[Table 4.19 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Figure 4.2: Percentage of households with central heating, cars and home computer 1972 to 2011 <1>,<2>,<3>

Great Britain



Notes:

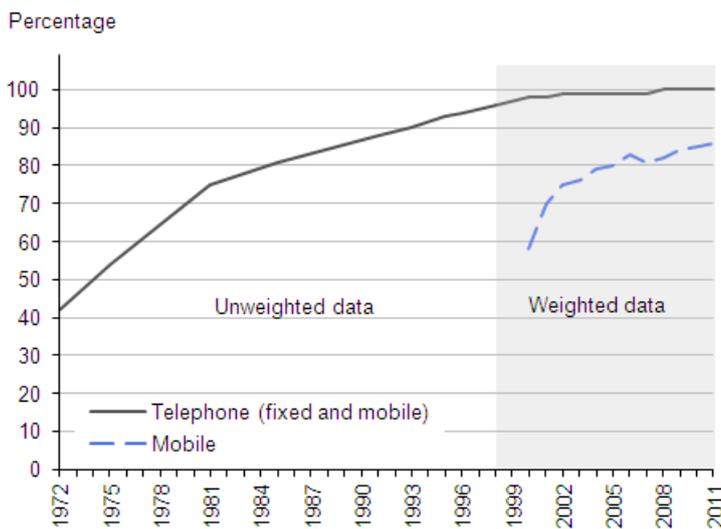
1. 2005 data includes the last quarter of 2004/5 data as the survey changed from a financial year to a calendar year. Results from 2006 onwards include longitudinal data.
2. Weighted data are shown from 1998 onwards.
3. The survey was not run in 1997/78 or 1999/00. A linear trend has been drawn between the data point before and after these years. The survey first asked about ownership of a home computer in 1984, and since then the proportion of households with a home computer has increased consistently from just over one in eight households (13%) in 1985 to eight in ten households (80%) in 2011.

In 1972 less than half of all households (42%) had a telephone; by 2011 almost all households had a phone (either landline or mobile). In 2000, when the GHS first asked about mobile phones, the proportion of households in which at least one person had a mobile phone was 58%; this increased to 86% in 2011. Over the same period, the proportion of households with a fixed telephone fell from 93% in 2000 to 90% in 2011.

[Table 4.19 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

Figure 4.3: Percentage of households with fixed and mobile telephones 1972 to 2011 <1>, <2>, <3>

Great Britain



Notes:

1. 2005 data includes the last quarter of 2004/5 data as the survey changed from a financial year to a calendar year. Results from 2006 onwards include longitudinal data.
2. Weighted data are shown from 1998 onwards.
3. The survey was not run in 1997/98 or 1999/00. A linear trend has been drawn between the data point before and after these years.

In 2011 there were differences in ownership of consumer durables by family type. Lone-parent families were less likely than other families with dependent children to have a home computer (88% compared with 97%) or have access to a car or van (55% compared with 92%). Lone parent families were also less likely to have a fixed telephone (76% compared with 93% for other families with dependent children); however, the proportions for mobile telephone ownership were the same at 92%.

[Table 4.23 \(488 Kb Excel sheet\)](#)

4. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk