TEST VALLEY
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Private Sector House Condition Survey 2009
March 2010

Test Valley Borough Council
Working in partnership with

cpc

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Private Sector House Condition Surveys (HCS) are conducted on a regular basis by local authorities as a means of maintaining a detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector (owner occupied and privately rented homes). Such a picture forms a useful evidence base on which to build strategies and inform investment decisions, and feed into statistical returns and other internal reports. The information is also useful in presenting the potential obligations on an authority in relation to current housing legislation:

- Section 3 Housing Act 2004

- Regulatory Reform Order (RRO)

The survey was a sample survey of 700 dwellings, covering all private sector tenures excluding registered social landlords (RSL) or housing association properties. A sample of 1,480 was drawn with a final total of 696 full surveys being undertaken.

In order to place the findings in context, comparisons are made to the English House Condition Survey (EHCS) 2007 and Housing in England 2007-2008, both of which are published by Communities and Local Government (CLG).

General survey characteristics

The following list gives some of the key features of Test Valley's housing stock and population compared with national averages:

- A much higher proportion of the housing stock was built post 1965 than that found nationally (70.6% compared with 40.4%), with lower proportions before that (29.4% compared with 59.6%), particularly in the stock built before 1919 (8.6% compared with 24.6%).

- The tenure profile showed differences to the national profile with a slightly higher proportion of owner occupation (71% compared with 70%);a higher level of privately rented accommodation (15% compared with 12%) and a lower proportion of social housing (14% compared with 18%). The tenure profile does have potential implications for access to affordable housing.

- The stock had higher proportions of semi-detached house, bungalows, converted flats and low rise purpose built flats, with lower proportions of all other dwelling types.

- There are substantially more older households (head of household aged over 65 years) which does have implications for private sector

- housing policy due to the potentially greater need for support typically associated with older households.

- The figures for length of residence suggest a slightly higher turnover in the housing stock.

- Average incomes were slightly higher than those reported for England, with owner occupied households having a slightly lower average and privately rented households a slightly higher average.

- The proportion of households with an income of less than £15,000 is 29.0% compared to 25.1% nationally with some implications for repair and improvement in the private sector dwelling stock.

- Benefit receipt at 28% is above the national average of 17%.

The table shows a summary of key findings from the House Condition Survey:

Characteristic	Owner occupied	Privately rented	All private sector stock	England
Dwellings	34,040	7,010	41,050	
Per cent of stock[1]	*71%*	*15%*	*86%*	
Non decent[2]	8,090	2,560	10,650	
Rate	*23.8%*	*36.5%*	*25.9%*	*35.8%*
Vulnerable in decent homes[3]	5,160	1,910	7,070	
Rate	*67.2%*	*57.5%*	*64.3%*	*57.3%*
Category 1 hazard	4,500	1,600	6,100	
Rate	*13.2%*	*22.4%*	*14.8%*	*23.5%*
In Fuel Poverty	5,200	500	5,700	
Rate	*15.4%*	*7.2%*	*14.3%*	*13.2%*
Mean SAP[4]	54	56	55	48
Residents over 65	14,830	1,410	16,240	
Rate[4]	*44.9%*	*20.5%*	*40.7%*	*36.3%*
Households in receipt of benefit	7,700	3,300	11,000	
Rate[5]	*23%*	*48%*	*28%*	*17.0%*

1. *Percentages given as a proportion of total housing stock, the remaining 11% is all social housing, which was not surveyed as part of this study*
2. *Non decent dwellings fail the Government Decent Homes Standard which aims to ensure homes are warm, safe, in good condition and have reasonably modern facilities*
3. *Refers to households in receipt of an income or disability benefit, as defined under former Public Service Agreement 7 objectives*
4. *SAP is the government's Standard Assessment Procedure for rating energy efficiency on a scale of 1 (poor) to 100 (excellent)*
5. *As a percentage of occupied dwellings, not all dwellings*

Decent Homes Standard

It is Government policy that everyone should have the opportunity of living in a "decent home". The Decent Homes Standard contains four broad criteria that a property should:

A - be above the legal minimum standard for housing, and

B - be in a reasonable state of repair, and

C - have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and services, and

D - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

All of these criteria are described in more detail in their own individual chapters in the main report.

Cost implications for repair and improvement

The cost to make dwellings decent in the private sector provides an idea of the cost of brining dwellings up to a good standard. The costs are the total sum that would be needed for remedial and improvement work, regardless of the source of funding. They take no account of longer term maintenance, which would be in addition to these costs.

Reason	Total Cost (£ million)	Cost per dwelling (£)
Category 1 Hazard	£28.7	£4,700
Repair	£7.9	£5,700
Amenities	£10.1	£14,700
Thermal comfort	£6.9	£1,300
Total	**£53.7**	**£5,000**

Category 1 hazards

One of the most significant changes under the Housing Act 2004 was a change in the minimum standard for housing. The fitness standard was removed and replaced by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is a prescribed method of assessing individual hazards, rather than a general standard to give a judgment of fit or unfit. The HHSRS is evidence based – national statistics on the health impacts of hazards encountered in the home are used as a basis for assessing individual hazards.

The HHSRS system deals with a much broader range of issues than the previous fitness standard. It covers a total of 29 hazards in four main groups described in more detail in the main report:

• Primary hazard failures in Test Valley are excess cold, falling on stairs etc and falling on level surfaces.

- Category 1 hazards are strongly associated with older dwellings and dwellings occupied by households with an annual income of less than £10,000; households in receipt of a benefit; households with a disabled occupant and those where the head of household is aged under 25 and over 65.

- Proportionately, Category 1 hazards are more strongly associated with the privately rented sector.

Energy Efficiency

Energy efficiency is a key consideration in private sector housing and the following illustrates some of the issues:

- Fuel poverty at 14.3% is slightly higher than the rate found in England (EHCS 2007) at 13.2%. The cost to remedy the 5,200 owner occupied dwellings in fuel poverty (i.e. spending more than 10% of income on heating) is £7 million.

- The mean SAP (energy rating on a scale of 0 (poor) to 100 (good)) is 51 in Test Valley, which is higher than that found nationally in private sector properties (48).

- The least energy efficient dwellings are older dwellings (pre 1919); and bungalows. The privately rented sector had a slightly higher mean SAP rating than that found in the owner occupied stock.

- Improving energy efficiency will contribute towards a range of Test Valley's corporate priorities and indeed contribute to a wide range of issues e.g. reduced carbon emissions, tackling fuel poverty, elimination of Cat 1 hazards, improved health and well being – warmer, better homes

- The level of excess cold hazards is an issue given the numbers of older residents in Test Valley and the potential link with cold related illnesses

What of the future?

The replacement of Best Value Performance Indicators with Public Service Agreements (PSAs), introduced flexible target setting from the list of 188 PSAs. The most relevant to the condition of private sector housing are:

➢ PSA17 Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life;

➢ PSA20 Increase long term housing supply and affordability;

➢ NI 186 Per Capita CO2 emissions

➢ NI 187 Fuel Poverty

The national housing agenda is changing priorities, and moving away from dwelling condition toward:

- provision of sufficient affordable housing for all

- the health, safety and well being of occupiers

- reduction in carbon emissions through improved energy efficiency

1   Introduction

1.1   Purpose of the survey

1.1.1   Private Sector House Condition Surveys (HCS) are conducted on a regular basis by local authorities as a means of maintaining a detailed picture of housing conditions in the private sector. Such a picture forms a useful evidence base that can feed into statistical returns and other internal reports. The information is also useful in presenting the potential obligations on the authority in relation to current housing legislation, outlined in more detail in Appendix D.

1.1.2   In 2009 Test Valley Borough Council commissioned a comprehensive House Condition Survey to address this legal requirement, and also to inform the housing strategy and other housing policies. The survey work in Test Valley was conducted in the later part of 2009 and the early part of 2010.

1.1.3   In addition to the mandatory duties outlined in Appendix D there are a number of non-mandatory powers available to the Authority under the Housing Act 2004. These include: taking the most satisfactory course of action in relation to category 2 hazards under the HHSRS (hazard categories are defined in chapter 5 of this report); additional licensing of HMOs that do not fall under the definition for mandatory licensing and serving of overcrowding notices. Part 3 of the Housing Act 2004, provides for selective licensing of other private rented sector accommodation subject to certain conditions being met.

1.1.4   This report will provide much of the evidence base, recommended under the ODPM guidance 05/2003, for the Authority's private sector renewal strategy. In addition, information in the report is likely to prove useful as a source for a wide variety of private sector housing issues.

1.2   Nature of the survey

1.2.1   The survey was a sample survey of a nominal 700 dwellings and covered all private sector tenures. The survey was based on a stratified random sample of addresses in Test Valley, in order to gain a representative picture across the Borough. A sample of 1,480 was drawn with, in practice, 696 surveys being undertaken in total.

1.2.2   The sample was in drawn using the Building Research Establishment (BRE) stock modelling data. This allocates properties into four bands (strata), based on the projection of vulnerably occupied non decent dwellings. This form of stratification concentrates the surveys in areas with the poorest housing conditions and allows more detailed analysis.

This procedure does not introduce any bias to the survey as results are weighted proportionally to take account of the over-sampling.

1.2.3   The models were based on information drawn from the Office of National Statistics Census data, the Land Registry, the English House Condition Survey and other sources. It is this data that was used to predict dwelling condition and identify the 'hot-spots' to be over-sampled.

1.2.4   Each of the 696 surveys conducted contained information on the following areas: General characteristics of the dwelling; condition of the internal and external fabric; provision of amenities; compliance with housing health and safety; age and type of elements; energy efficiency measures; compliance with the Decent Homes Standard and socio-economic information about the household (where occupied).

1.3   Central Government Guidance on house condition surveys

1.3.1   The 1993 Department of the Environment Local House Condition Survey Guidance Manual sets out a methodology that includes a detailed survey form in a modular format, and a step-by-step guide to survey implementation.

1.3.2   The 1993 guidance was updated in 2000 and under the new guidance local authorities are encouraged to make full use of the data gathered from house condition surveys in conjunction with data from other sources. Also included is guidance on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System. The 2009/2010 Test Valley Borough Council HCS followed the ODPM 2000 guidance.

1.3.3   The Comprehensive Local Authority Stock Survey Information Collation (CLASSIC) software system (a CPC package) was used to analyse the results of the survey and to produce the outputs required from the data to write this report.

1.4   Comparative statistics

1.4.1   Comparisons to the position for all England were drawn from the 2007 English House Condition Survey (EHCS) and Housing in England 2007-2008, both published by Communities and Local Government (CLG) and available as a download document from their website.

1.5   Statistical Variance and Standard Deviation

1.5.1   By definition, sample surveys are seeking to give an accurate representation of a larger number of dwellings than those surveyed. The total to be represented is referred to in statistical terms as the 'population', and in the case of this survey the population was all private sector dwellings in Test Valley. Because any figure from a survey is based on a sample, it will be subject to some degree of

variation. This statistical variance can be expressed in terms of 'confidence limits' and 'standard deviation'.

1.5.2   Standard deviation is the amount by which a given figure may be inaccurate either above or below its stated level. Confidence limits state that if the entire survey process were repeated, out of how many of these repetitions would there be confidence in staying within the variation. Traditionally, and in the case of this report, 95% confidence limits have been used, which state that if the survey were carried out 100 times, in 95 cases the standard deviation would be a given amount.

1.5.3   It should be borne in mind, therefore, that the figures in this report are estimates, and it is for this reason that figures are rounded, as described below. More detail on the calculation of standard deviation is given in the appendices.

1.6   **Presentation of figures**

1.6.1   Due to the nature of statistical variation, as outlined above, it is not necessary to quote each individual figure to the nearest dwelling, as this implies a spurious level of accuracy. As with the English House Condition Survey (EHCS), figures in this report are either quoted to the nearest 100 dwellings or 10 dwellings, dependent upon the size of any given figure. Percentages within the report are only quoted to 1 decimal place for the same reason.

2 Profile of the private sector housing stock

2.1 Size of the dwelling stock

2.1.1 At the time of the survey there were an estimated 41,050 private sector dwellings in Test Valley. The 41,050 total for the stock was the estimated private sector stock total, provided by Test Valley Borough Council and based on Council Tax Records. Individual weights were created for each dwelling surveyed, in accordance with the stratified sampling regime, such that each survey would represent a specific number of dwellings within Test Valley. Details of the sample stratification and weighting method are given in the Appendices.

2.2 Age of the dwelling stock

2.2.1 The age profile of the 41,050 owner occupied and privately rented stock in Test Valley was different to the national average with substantially lower levels of dwellings built before 1965 (29.4% compared with 59.6%) and substantially higher proportions built after 1965 (70.6% compared with 40.4%). The difference is particularly pronounced in the pre 1919 age band (8.6% compared with 24.6% nationally).

Figure 2.1 Dwelling age profile England and Test Valley
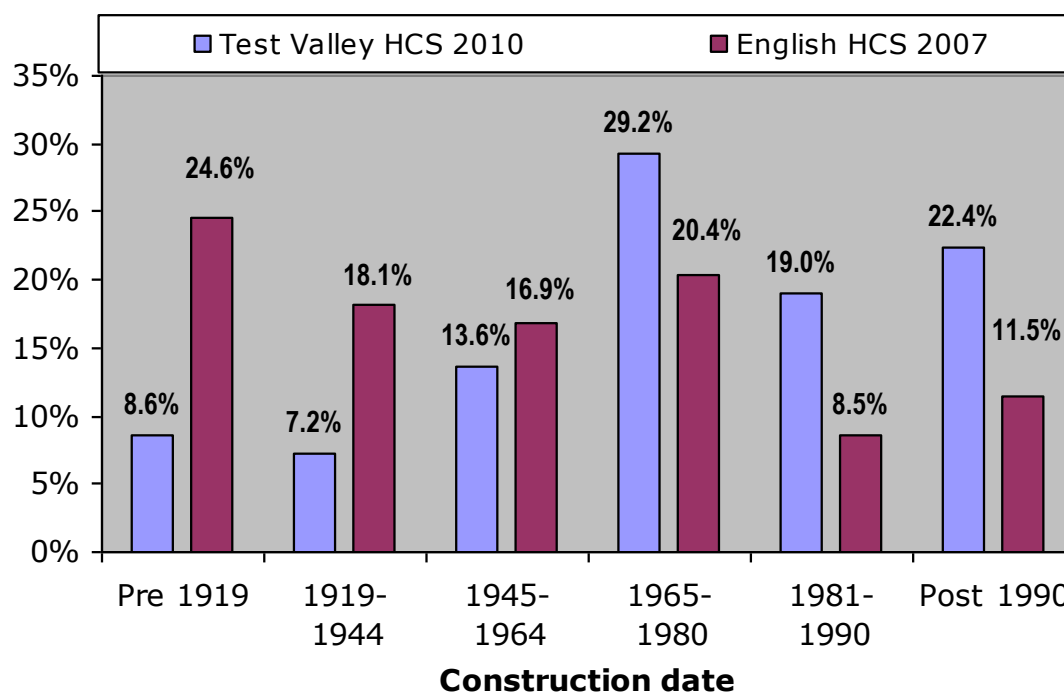
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.3 Dwelling type profile

2.3.1 The building type profile in Test Valley again differed from the national pattern with higher proportions of detached houses, bungalows, converted flats and low rise purpose built flats (less than 6 storeys). Most of the other dwelling types, with the exception of medium/large terraced houses which were the same, had lower proportions, substantially so in the case of small terraced and semi detached houses. No high rise purpose built flats (6 or more storeys) were recorded.

Figure 2.2 Dwelling type profile Test Valley and England
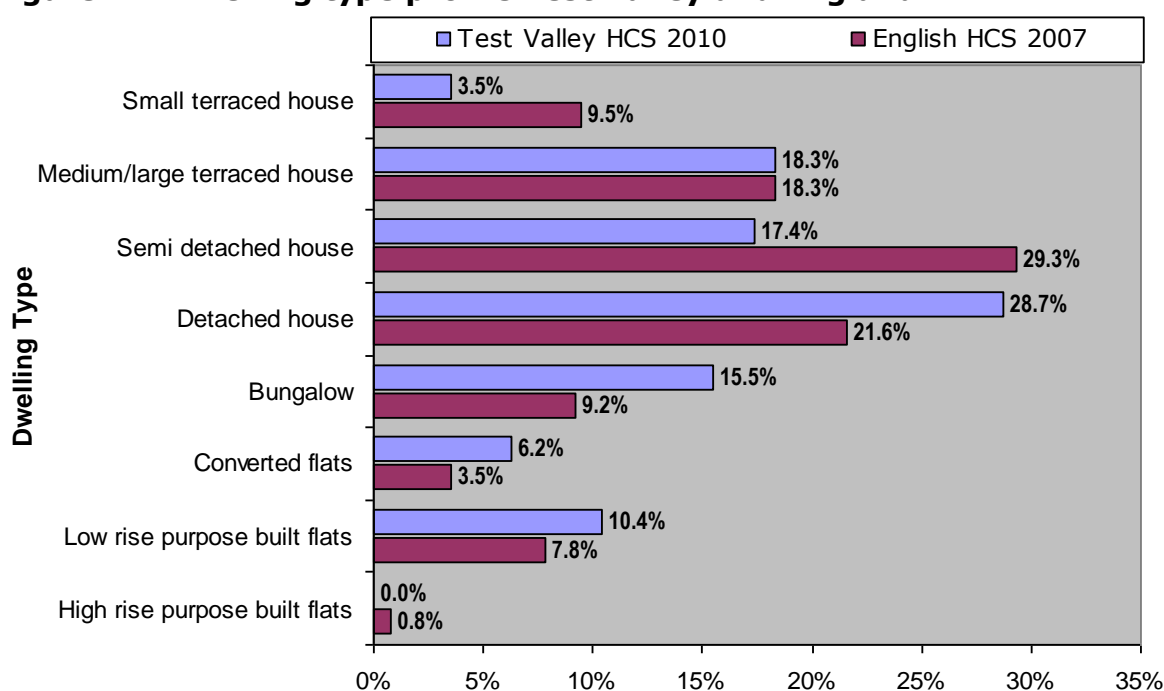
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.4 Tenure

2.4.1 Table 2.1 draws tenure comparisons between the stock profile for Test Valley and that for England as a whole.

Table 2.1 Tenure proportions

Tenure	Dwellings	Percent	EHCS 2007
Owner occupied	34,040	71%	70%
Privately Rented	7,010	15%	12%
Private Sector Stock	*41,050*	*86%*	*82%*
Housing Association (RSL)	6,890	14%	9%
Local Authority	0	0%	9%
Social Housing	*6,890*	*14%*	*18%*
All Tenures	**47,940**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.4.2   The breakdown given in table 2.1 includes social housing tenure for the sake of comparative purposes with the EHCS.

2.4.3   The tenure profile in Test Valley differs from the national averages with a slightly higher level of owner occupation than that found nationally (71% compared with 70%). The privately rented sector was represented at a higher rate (15% compared with 12%) with the overall proportion of social housing being lower at 14% compared with 18% nationally.   The lower proportions of publicly rented accommodation may have implications in terms of access to affordable homes for newly forming households.

2.5   Tenure and age comparisons

2.5.1   Figure 2.3 illustrates the differing dwelling age profile between the main private tenures.

Figure 2.3 Tenure by date of construction
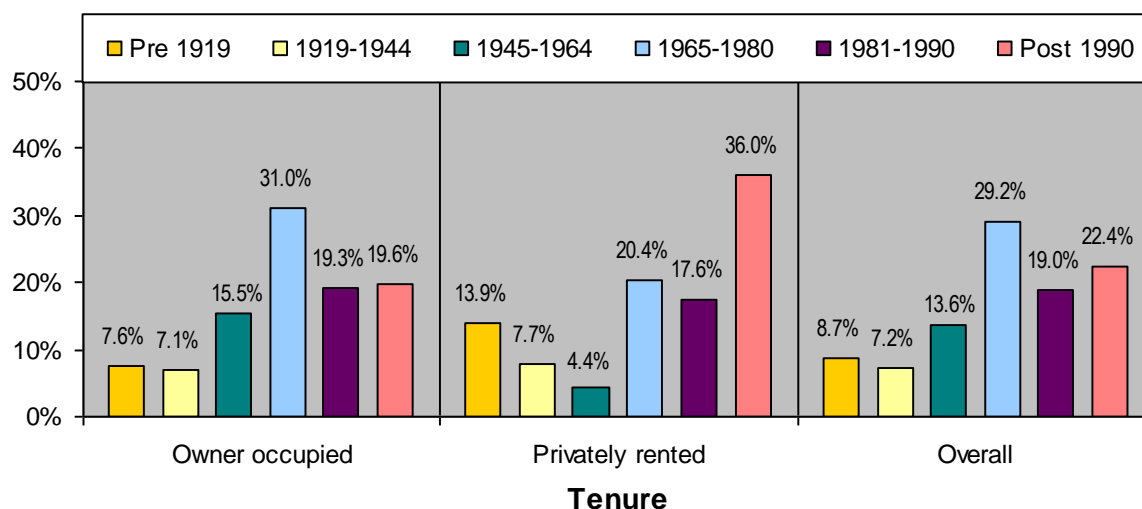
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.5.2   As might have been expected, the owner occupied stock (at 71% of all dwellings) had a similar age profile to the overall stock position, with figures of approximately 69.9% for homes built post 1964 compared with 70.6% in the overall stock. The privately rented sector had the highest proportion of pre 1919 dwellings at 13.9% compared with 8.7% overall.

2.6   Dwelling Use and Houses in Multiple Occupation

2.6.1   Dwellings may be one of several different building types but these types may have different uses, for example a semi-detached house may have been converted into flats or be occupied as a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

Table 2.2 Dwelling use

Dwelling use	Dwellings	Percent
House	35,830	87.3%
Purpose Built Flat	4,250	10.4%
Converted Flat	640	1.6%
HMO	300	0.7%
Licensable HMO	30	0.1%
Total	**41,050**	**100%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.6.2   The vast majority of dwellings (87.3%) were houses generally occupied as built. Of the remainder, most were purpose built or converted flats. An estimated 0.8% of dwellings were HMOs, representing 330 buildings

being used to house multiple households. The national average for HMOs is approximately 2%.

2.6.3 The definition of HMO is that used in the Housing Act 2004, of which only some may potentially be subject to mandatory licensing (described below). Some converted flats now came within the new HMO definition which explicitly includes converted flats where the work does not meet specified standards (generally the Building Regulations 1991) and where less than two thirds are owner occupied.

2.6.4 HMOs formed only a very small proportion of the private sector stock in Test Valley with 30 being identified as potentially licensable HMOs. It should be borne in mind, however, that figures from the survey are estimates derived from the sample of properties inspected and are therefore subject to variation. It is important that the local authority should continue to adopt measures that ensure any potentially licensable HMOs are brought to light.

2.7   Vacant dwellings

2.7.1 Vacant dwellings can be difficult to identify and there are frequently problems in gaining access. By using a combination of sources, including the survey, Council Tax lists, the Census and the council's own figures, it was possible to estimate that there were 1.150 vacant dwellings, 2.8% of the private housing stock within Test Valley. The national average is approximately 4.1%.

2.7.2 Based on the results taken from the stock condition survey it was estimated that 530 (1.3%) of the private sector dwellings within Test Valley were long-term vacant, defined as any dwelling vacant for six months or more, or subject to unauthorised occupation. However, as figures from the survey are estimates derived from the sample of properties inspected they are subject to variation.

Table 2.3 All dwellings by Occupancy Status

Vacancy Status	Dwellings	Percent
Occupied	39,900	97.2%
Vacant awaiting new owner	190	0.5%
Vacant awaiting new tenant	100	0.2%
Vacant being modernised	30	0.1%
New, never occupied	300	0.7%
Long term vacant*	530	1.3%
Total vacant dwellings	**1,150**	**2.8%**
Total stock	**41,050**	**100.0%**

** Includes vacant dwellings to let where they are being modernised prior to
letting or have not been let for over 6 months*
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

2.7.3   The overall estimated proportion of long term vacant properties (taken from the survey results) at 1.3% was below the average for England (approximately 1.5%). However, the estimated 530 long-term vacant properties still represent a substantial wasted resource, an issue that the Council may wish to pursue having regard to the additional powers granted by the Housing Act 2004 to deal with long term vacant dwellings.

3 Profile of Residents

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This chapter will look at some of the key characteristics of households within the surveyed dwellings to determine whether links exist with dwelling condition. As the data can only be collected from occupied dwellings the results are set against a total occupied stock of 39,900.

3.2 Age Profile

3.2.1 The following chart examines the age distribution, of heads of household within the stock, both for Test Valley and for England as a whole.

Figure 3.1 Age of head of household Test Valley and England
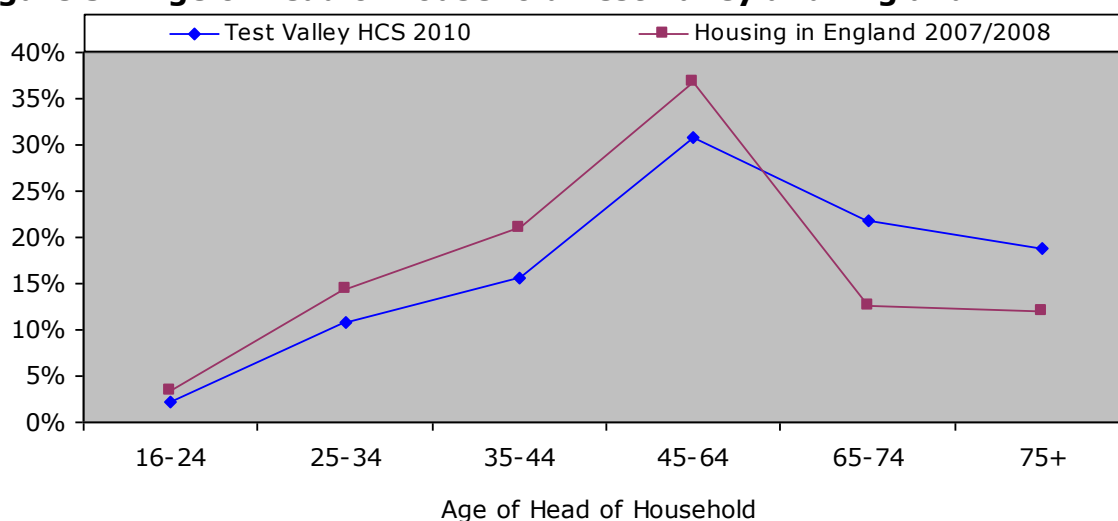
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & Housing in English 2007-2008
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.2.2 Data collected as part of the survey indicated that the age profile of heads of household in Test Valley differed from the national position. There were lower proportions of heads of household aged between 16 and 64 years (59.3% compared with 75.6%) but higher proportions aged 65 and over (40.7% compared with 24.7%), this has implications for private sector housing policy due to the potentially greater need for support typically associated with older households.

3.3   Household types

3.3.1   Table 3.1 gives the distribution of different household types, within the stock, and compares this to England as a whole. Household types were derived from interviewing occupiers and determining the number of adults and children within the household. These figures were then used to determine household type. For example, two or more adults who are not a couple were considered an 'other multi-person household' for the purposes of this analysis which follows the convention used in the Survey of English Housing.

Table 3.1 Household type distribution

Household type	Test Valley 2009		England 2008
Couple no Dependent Child	19,280	48.3%	39.2%
Couple with Dependent Child	7,710	19.3%	22.9%
Lone parent with dependent child	1,860	4.7%	4.7%
One person household	9,130	22.9%	25.7%
Other multi-person household	1,920	4.8%	7.5%
Total Household Type	**39,900**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & Housing in English 2007-2008
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.3.2   The distribution of households by type showed differences to the national position. The proportion of couples with no dependent children was much higher than the national average (48.3% compared with 39.2%). All of the other household types were lower than their national counterparts with the exception of lone parent with dependent child which was the same as that found nationally.

3.4   Length of residence

3.4.1   The proportion of households who had been resident for up to 5 years was 39.7%; similar data taken from the Survey of English Housing 2007/2008, showed that 35.4% of residents had lived in their dwellings for between one and five years. Conversely, 26.7% had lived at their present address for 20 years or more compared with 29.0% nationally.

Table 3.2 Length of residence

	<1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	16 to 20 years	21 to 25 years	26 to 30 years	Over 30 years
Dwellings	**15,840**	**6,080**	**4,990**	**2,340**	**2,450**	**2,750**	**5,450**
Test Valley	**39.7%**	**15.2%**	**12.5%**	**5.9%**	**6.1%**	**6.9%**	**13.7%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.5 Income

3.5.1 Residents were asked about the income of the head of household and, where appropriate, the partner of the head of household. Responses were combined to give a gross household income and the results of these are given below.

Figure 3.2 Household incomes in bands
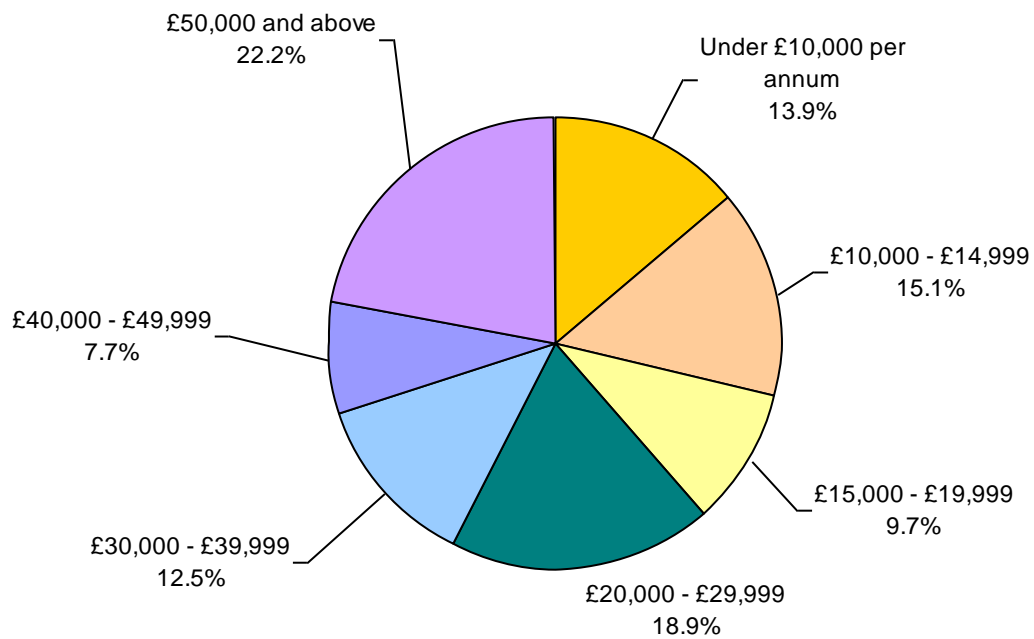
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey

Table 3.3 Number of households within each income band

Income band	No. of households Test Valley 2008		Survey of English Housing *
Under £10,000 per annum	5,530	13.9%	13.2%
£10,000 - £14,999	6,030	15.1%	11.9%
£15,000 - £19,999	3,860	9.7%	10.4%
£20,000 - £29,999	7,530	18.9%	19.4%
£30,000 - £39,999	4,990	12.5%	15.3%
£40,000 - £49,999	3,090	7.7%	10.1%
£50,000 and above	8,870	22.2%	19.7%
Total	**39,900**	**100%**	100.0%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & Housing in English 2007-2008
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.5.2   The figures in figure 3.2 and the table 3.3 show that there were higher proportions than the national average of households with an income of less than £15,000 but with lower proportions for incomes above that except in the £50,000 and above band which was higher. The proportion of households within Test Valley with an income of less than £15,000 (29.0% compared with 25.1% nationally), will potentially make affordability an issue affecting repair and improvement in the private sector dwelling stock.

Table 3.4 Average income by tenure

Tenure	Test Valley HCS 2009	England 2008
Owner occupied	£703	£730
Privately rented	£557	£490

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & Housing in English 2007-2008
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.5.3   These figures demonstrate that recent average incomes in Test Valley, for owner occupied households were slightly lower than the England 2008 average, but for privately rented households it was higher than the England 2008 average.

3.6   Income and age of head of household

3.6.1   Variations in income level are often associated with social characteristics such as the age of head of household, household type, disability etc. This section looks at the data from the survey to see what links can be shown and the possible associations between those links and unsatisfactory housing conditions described later.

Figure 3.3 High and low incomes by age of head of household
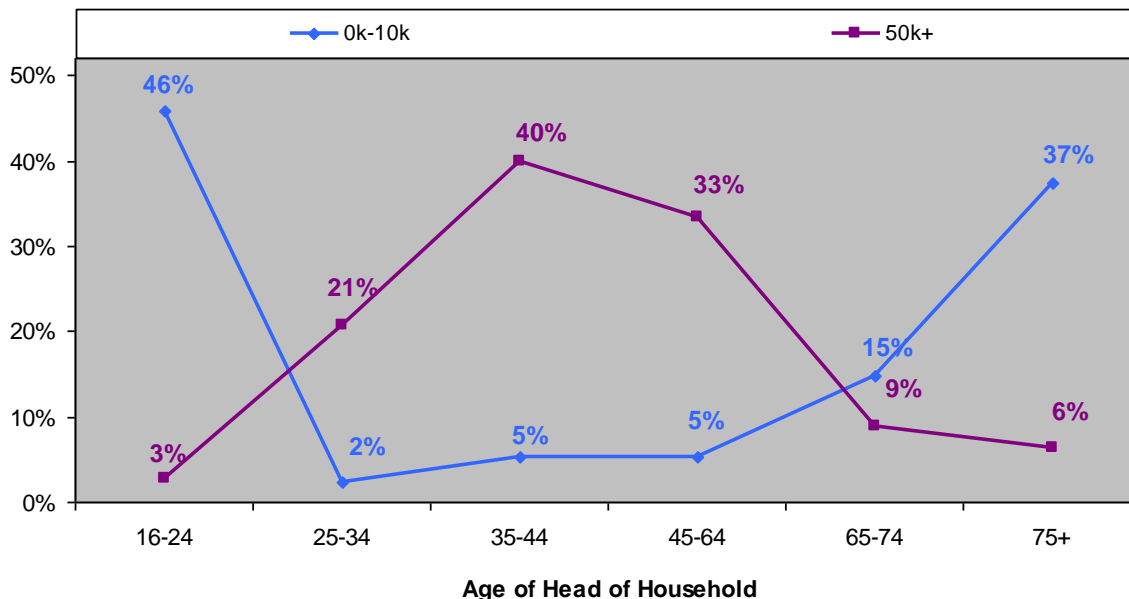
3.6.2   Figure 3.3 illustrates that low income (annual household income below £10,000 per annum) was mostly associated with the younger, those aged between 16 and 24, and older age groups (65 years and older). As is commonly the case, households between 25 and 64 years had the lowest proportion of low incomes and the greatest proportion of high incomes. This pattern suggests that the greatest need for assistance to vulnerable occupiers is at the youngest and oldest ends of the age range.

3.7   Income and household type

3.7.1   Table 3.5 compares low and high annual household income figures by household type.

Table 3.5 Low and High household incomes by household type

Household Type	Low income (household income less than £10,000 per annum)	Middle income (household income £10k-£30k per annum)	High income (household income above £30,000 per annum)
Couple no Dependent Child	7%	54%	38%
Couple with Dependent Child	4%	28%	69%
Lone parent with dependent child	14%	54%	32%
One person household	36%	51%	14%
Other multi-person household	28%	37%	36%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.7.2   Table 3.5 does show that clear associations exist. One person households and other multi person households were most strongly associated with low incomes. Couple with dependent child and couple with no dependent child households had greater proportions of high incomes, in particular couples with dependent children.

3.8   Income and residents with disabilities

3.8.1   It is important to note that this survey used a broad definition of disabled person. This included residents that were frail elderly, as well as registered disabled persons and other persons with a disability.

3.8.2   There is an association between disability and income, as 26% of households with a disabled resident had a household income below £10,000 per annum, compared with 11% where there is no person with a disability. This represents approximately 1,800 such dwellings in Test Valley. The residents of these dwellings may not only have had physical difficulty dealing with repairs, but may be less likely to be able to afford alternative provision.

3.9   Benefit receipt

3.9.1   In addition to income, householders were asked if anyone within the dwelling was in receipt of one or more of a range of means tested benefits. Overall 11,000 (28%) households were estimated to be in receipt of a benefit, which reflects the earlier findings on households on low income. At the national level 17% of private sector households had at least one resident in receipt of a benefit which is significantly less than that found within this survey. The distribution of benefit receipt by tenure showed the highest proportion for the privately rented sector (48%) compared with 23% in the owner occupied sector.

Figure 3.4 Benefit receipt by tenure
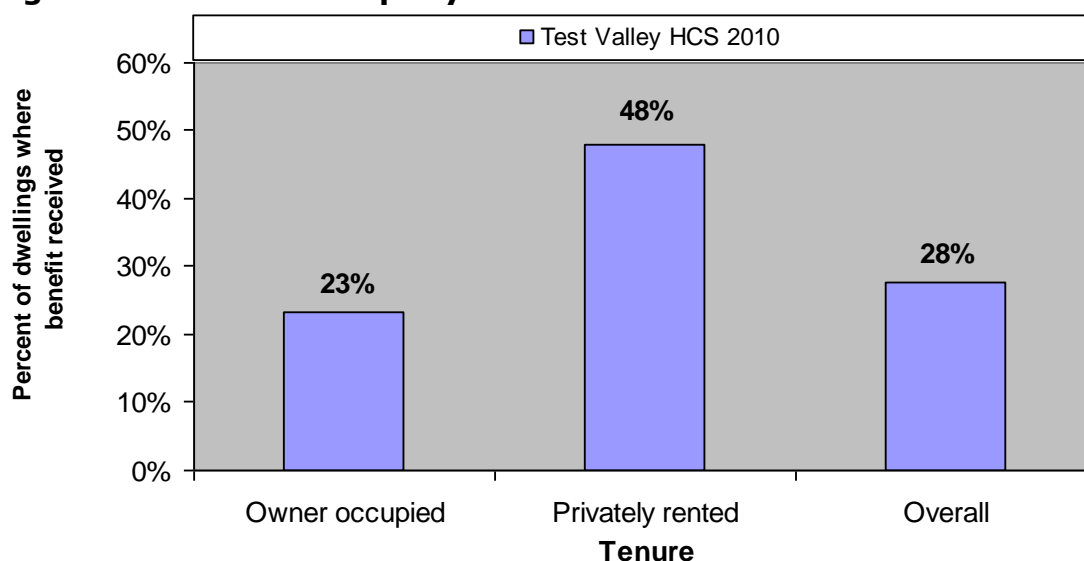
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.10   Value of dwellings and equity

3.10.1   Owner occupiers were asked about the value of their dwelling, the level of any outstanding mortgage, any other debt and the consequent total equity. This was to allow the relationship between available equity and dwelling condition to be examined. Such relationships are relevant to the Regulatory Reform Order 2002; Government guidance focuses on local authorities moving towards facilitating loans/equity release rather than giving grants when offering financial assistance to householders.

3.10.2   The average value of a dwelling in Test Valley was £250,000. This figure was based on the average sale prices in Test Valley compiled by the Land Registry from April to June 2009. The figure was above the average value across the UK of £224,000. The average price in Test Valley was 5th out of the 14 authorities in Hampshire.

3.10.3   The average mortgage level for owner-occupied dwellings in Test Valley, based upon occupier responses, was £107,000 resulting in an average equity of £143,000 per dwelling using the Land Registry average value.

3.10.4   Respondents were asked to consider if they would be interested in a shared ownership scheme, with only 2.4% indicating that they would.

3.11   Residents with disabilities

3.11.1   Residents were asked if any member of the household suffers from a long term illness or disability. It was estimated from the results of this

question that 7,500 (18.8%) occupied dwellings had at least one resident with a long term illness or disability. Residents were further asked to choose the condition that best described their disability and the figure 3.5 illustrates the results of this.

3.11.2 Initially it may seem that 18.8% is a relatively high proportion of households where at least one household member had a disability. The definition used, however, was very broad and it can be seen from the figure 3.5 that 50.2% of people who indicated that they had a long term illness or disability stated that their disability was either walking using a frame or walking unaided, but unsteadily. The vast majority of these residents are frail elderly, but do represent people who are likely to have specific housing needs.

Figure 3.5 Residents with disabilities by type
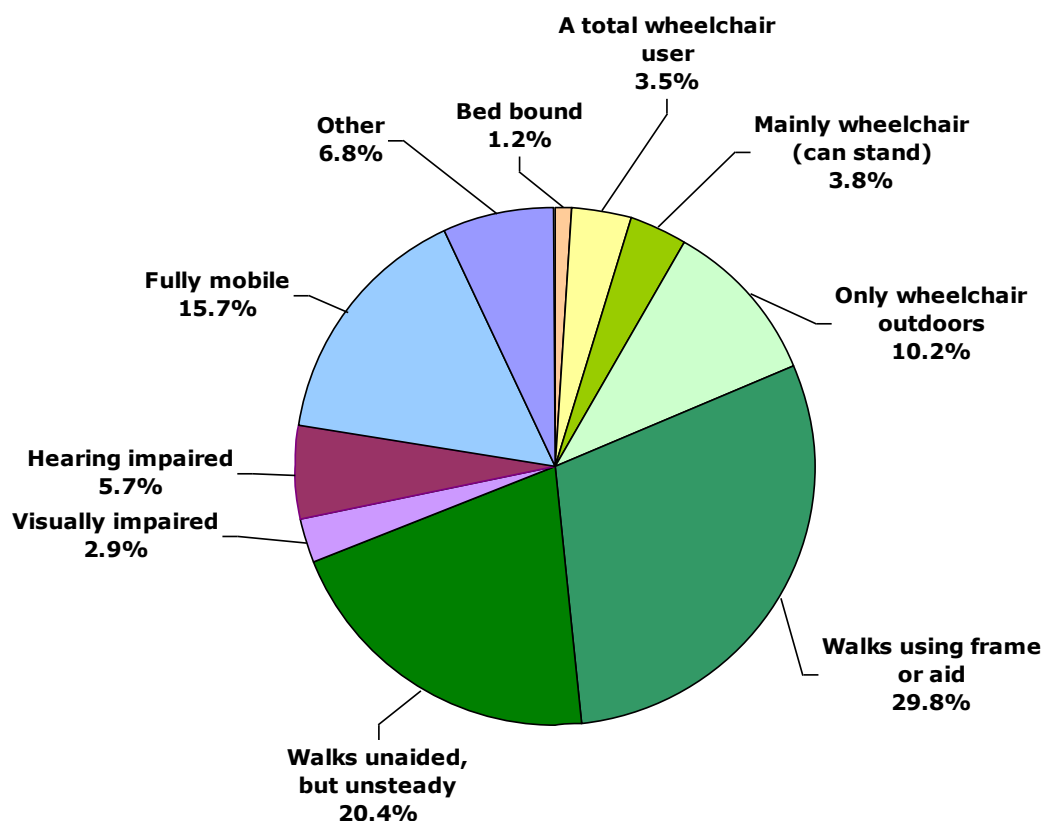
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.11.3 In order to address the specific housing needs of residents with a disability, the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) by local authorities remains mandatory. The potential requirement for adaptations for disabled occupiers and the potential DFG demand are discussed in more detail below.

3.12   Adaptations

Where it was indicated that a member of the household suffered from a long term illness or disability, the survey form included a section regarding the existing provision of adaptations and also whether the occupier felt there was the need for further adaptations.

3.12.1   The provision of adaptations for disabled residents is mandatory under the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) scheme, and local authorities must consider this when assigning budgets to housing provision. There are certain factors that mitigate this demand: firstly, DFGs are subject to means testing and secondly, there needs to be an assessment by an Occupational Therapist who will consider whether an adaptation is necessary and appropriate and also by the authorities disability service to establish if any recommended adaptations can be reasonably and practically undertaken taking into account the construction and configuration of the dwelling.

3.12.2   The following chart illustrates the proportion of dwellings, with residents who had existing adaptations and their perceived need for further adaptations; although it should be made clear that the following need data has not been included as a direct result of a formal assessment of need. The chart is broken down by adaptation type.

Figure 3.6 Disabled adaptations present and required
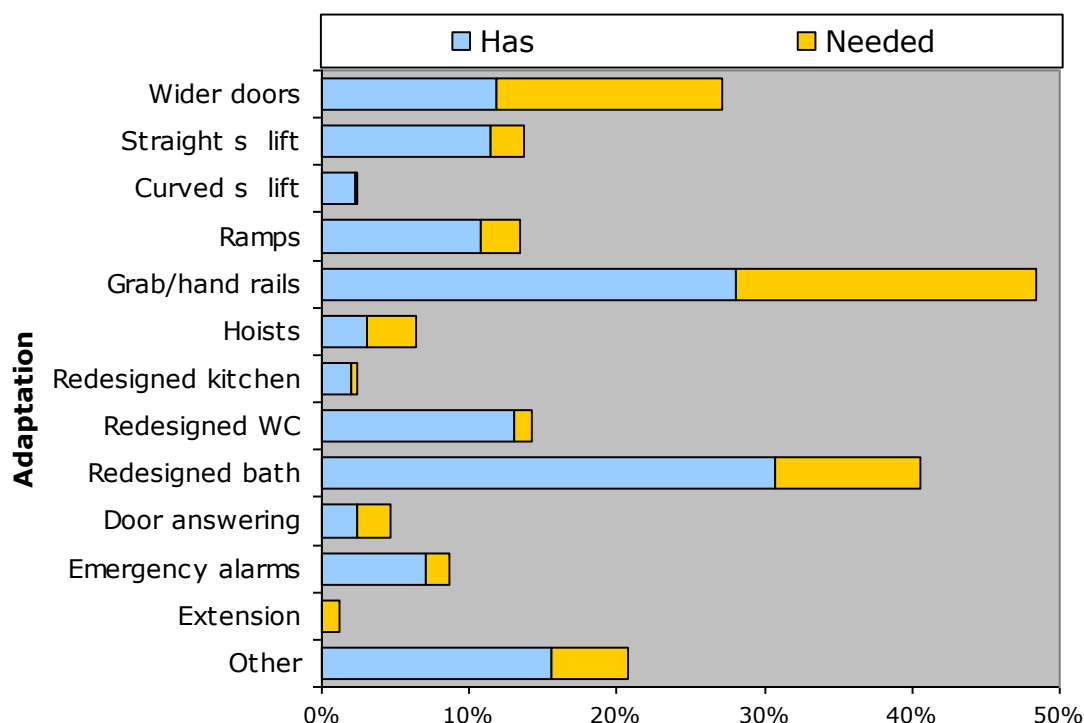
Proportion of all dwellings with a resident who is disabled

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.12.3 Figure 3.6 shows that redesigned bathroom had the highest level of current provision, present in 30.7% of dwellings occupied by a resident with a disability, followed by grab/hand rails at 28.1%. The most needed was the provision of grab/hand rails at 20.4% followed by wider doors (15.3%). When looking at the ratio of 'need' to 'have', the category 'wider doors' had the highest rate followed by hoists.

3.12.4 Table 3.6 takes the figures for adaptations a step further and looks at the numbers of adaptations needed and the cost of carrying out those adaptations. Costs are estimated averages for each of the elements listed below. As a full test of resources is the only accurate way of providing a figure for costs after means testing, some assumptions have been made in order to provided an estimated figure, with those on an income of less than £10,000 assumed to have a nil contribution, those on an income of between £10,000 and £25,000 having a 50% contribution and those on an income above that paying the full amount.

Table 3.6 Cost of adaptations for the disabled

Adaptations	Adaptations*	Adaptations Cost	Cost after means testing
Wider doors	1,150	£1,379,000	£310,000
Straight s lift	170	£516,000	£258,000
Curved s lift	10	£132,000	£0
Ramps	190	£481,000	£206,000
Grab/hand rails	1,530	£765,000	£387,000
Hoists	250	£506,000	£86,000
Redesigned kitchen	30	£164,000	£82,000
Redesigned WC	90	£215,000	£0
Redesigned bath	740	£3,720,000	£2,063,000
Door answering	170	£501,000	£501,000
Emergency alarms	120	£121,000	£17,000
Extension	90	£860,000	£430,000
Other	390	£195,000	£119,000
Total	**4,930**	**£9,555,000**	**£4,459,000**

Figures are for numbers of adaptations, some dwellings may need multiple adaptations
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.12.5 The total cost of all adaptations that could potentially be fitted to benefit residents with a disability was just under £9.6 million. When means testing had been applied this total reduced to just under £4.5 million, which reflects the fact that there are residents with disabilities with average or above average incomes.

3.12.6 It should be considered that two factors will affect the £4.5 million figure in terms of DFGs. Firstly, the figure does not contain any reduction for occupiers that would not be considered after a visit by an occupational therapist, as this cannot easily be factored in. Secondly, many of the residents may not have been aware of the need for an

adaptation, may not have wanted an adaptation or may not have been aware that DFGs are available. The £4.5 million figure is an estimate of the amount that would need to be spent by the authority on adaptations, although this would be spread over a period of five years. The figure is, however, indicative only and could vary substantially if there are significant adaptations for children (applications for which are no longer subject to the test of resources), which would significantly increase the authorities overall contribution, and it does not include the impact of applications from the social housing sector. The figure does, however, give some indication of the potential demand for DFG that should be taken into account when considering future DFG budgets.

3.13   Ethnic origin

3.13.1   Residents were asked to specify the majority ethnic origin type within their household and the results are given in table 3.7:

Table 3.7 Ethnic origin

Ethnic Origin	Dwellings	Per cent	England [1]
White British	38,260	95.89%	83.60%
White Irish	260	0.65%	1.10%
White Other	1,060	2.66%	3.50%
White/Black Caribbean	140	0.35%	0.60%
White/Black African	0	0.00%	0.20%
White/Asian	90	0.23%	0.50%
Other mixed	30	0.08%	0.40%
Indian	10	0.03%	2.60%
Pakistani	0	0.00%	1.80%
Bangladeshi	0	0.00%	0.70%
Asian Other	20	0.05%	0.70%
Black Caribbean	0	0.00%	1.20%
Black African	0	0.00%	1.40%
Black Other	30	0.08%	0.20%
Chinese	0	0.00%	0.80%
Other	0	0.00%	0.70%
Total	**39,900**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
[1]ONS Resident Population Estimates by Ethnic Group (Percentages), 2007
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.13.2   The majority of households described their ethnic origin as being predominantly White British (95.9%), with the proportion including White Irish and White Other increasing this to 99.2% compared with 88.2% in England as a whole. Proportionately, therefore, the other ethnic groups represented 0.8% of private sector households. As the other ethnic groups, individually, were represented at such low levels they are not statistically robust enough to provide meaningful comparisons.

3.14   Overcrowding

3.14.1   In the ODPM report Overcrowding in England: the national and regional picture it stated that "Households that are statutorily overcrowded are so rare that a reliable estimate of numbers cannot be produced at a national (England) level even using data from the Survey of English Housing and the 2001 English House Condition Survey, which are relatively large surveys. It follows that estimates for individual regions cannot be produced using these sources".

3.14.2   As with the above comments, this survey, which is considerably smaller than both of those mentioned, cannot produce any results that would be of any statistical relevance. Given that and issues revolving around the sample size, this section attempts to provide some basic information on the level of estimated overcrowding within Test Valley.

3.14.3   The existing statutory overcrowding standards were set in 1935 and restated in Part 10 of the Housing Act 1985, and include both a room standard and a space standard.

3.14.4   In the Court of Appeal case Elrify v. City of Westminster Council (2007) it was established that both of the Housing Act measurements must be calculated to establish if a statutory overcrowding situation existed.

3.14.5   The Survey of English Housing uses a Bedroom standard as an indicator of occupation density, allocating a number of bedrooms to each household according to the age, sex and marital status composition coupled with the relationship of the members to one another.

3.14.6   If the Housing Act overcrowding measurement is taken, the estimated level of overcrowding is shown in table 3.8:

Table 3.8 Statutory measurement of overcrowding

	Overcrowded	Not Overcrowded
Test Valley	**2.6%**	**97.4%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.14.7   Looking at the Survey of English Housing bedroom standard of occupation density, table 3.9 shows the figures:

Table 3.9 Bedroom standard measurement of overcrowding

Area Name	Overcrowded	Not overcrowded
Test Valley	**3.9%**	**96.1%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

3.14.8   The bedroom standard (3.9%) had a higher overall rate than the statutory standard (2.6%) which is to be expected as the bedroom standard uses a more limited room indicator of occupation density. It must, however, be taken in the context described by the ODPM report

mentioned above that a reliable estimate of numbers cannot be produced. Both these systems resulted in an estimated total of between 1,030 and 1,510 overcrowded dwellings within the Borough. However, this data should be treated with caution.

3.14.9   Sections 139 to 144 of the Housing Act 2004 relate to the service of an overcrowding notice. It applies to an HMO if it has no interim or final management order in force and it is not required to be licensed under Part 2 of the Act. No HMOs were found to be overcrowded.

3.14.10 Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme, one of the elements to be considered is that of Crowding and Space, which takes into account a number of matters that are deemed likely to affect the likelihood and harm outcomes. This also indicates that the average likelihood of an illness or injury occurring is 1 in 8,000, showing the low average potential for harm. No properties during the survey were scored under this heading.

4   The Decent Homes Standard

4.1   Introduction

4.1.1   It is Government policy that everyone should have the opportunity of living in a "decent home". The Decent Homes Standard contains four broad criteria that a property should:

> A - be above the legal minimum standard for housing, and
>
> B - be in a reasonable state of repair, and
>
> C - have reasonably modern facilities (such as kitchens and bathrooms) and services, and
>
> D - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort (effective insulation and efficient heating).

4.1.2   If a dwelling fails any one of these criteria it is considered to be "non decent". A detailed definition of the criteria and their sub-categories are described in the ODPM guidance: "A Decent Home – The definition and guidance for implementation" June 2006.

4.1.3   The revised guidance did not substantially change the criteria for the decent homes standard laid out in 2002 with the exception of thermal comfort. This changed from a calculated, energy efficiency based approach to a simpler, but more practical system which takes into account the heating systems, fuel and insulation in a dwelling to determine if it provides adequate thermal comfort.

4.1.4   Obligations under the Decent Homes Standard were originally directed solely at the social housing sector. Under "The Decent Homes Target Implementation Plan" June 2003 – as modified April 2004, the ODPM outlined its commitments under Public Service Agreement (PSA) 7. These stated that PSA 7 will have been met if:

- There is a year on year increase in the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes;

- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 65% by 2006/07.

- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 70% by 2010/11.

- If the proportion of vulnerable private sector households in decent homes is above 75% by 2020/21.

4.1.5   Following the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007, the Government scrapped the PSA7 target (effective from 1 April 2008).

However, the percentage of vulnerable households in decent homes in the private sector remained part of CLG's Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSO2, 2.8)

4.1.6   Due to this, the Test Valley house condition survey collected adequate and appropriate data to allow judgement of dwellings across all tenures against the Decent Homes Standard.

4.2   Change of emphasis and the Housing Act 2004

4.2.1   Whilst the changes under the revised definition and guidance for the decent homes standard apply, there was a change in Criterion A of the standard from April 2006. Prior to this change, Criterion A used the Housing Fitness Standard as the measure of whether a dwelling meets the minimum legal standard. From April 2006 the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 replaced the former statutory fitness standard.

4.2.2   The HHSRS system assesses "hazards" within dwellings and categorises them into Category 1 and Category 2 hazards. Local housing authorities have a duty to take action to deal with Category 1 hazards. The Housing Health and Safety Rating System also applies to the Decent Homes Standard – if there is a Category 1 hazard at the property it will fail Criterion A of the standard.

4.2.3   A detailed definition of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System are given in the following chapter.

4.3   The meaning of non decency

4.3.1   Concern had been raised by a number of local authorities over the term 'non decent', which tends to conjure up images of dilapidated houses and serious disrepair issues. It is the case, however, that a dwelling can fail the Decent Homes Standard on a single item, such as the heating system, whilst being in a very good state of repair. The owner of such a property may well not think that there is anything wrong with their home.

4.3.2   It is possible to regard the Decent Homes Standard as an ideal standard or a level to aspire to. In practice, it is a relatively low standard and failure to meet the standard should be regarded as a trigger for action. In some cases, however, it may not be practical to make a dwelling decent and it may also not be in the best interests of the occupiers to do so. The guidance on recording of outcomes recognises that there may be instances where it is appropriate to record cases where work to achieve only partial compliance with the standard has been achieved, or where non compliance results from the occupier refusing to have work carried out.

4.4 **Overall level of non decency**

4.4.1 Based on the House Condition Survey data 10,650 dwellings (25.9%) were classified non decent. In England as a whole the rate was 35.8% (owner occupied and privately rented stock) making the Test Valley rate lower than the national average. The all England figure was taken as the proportion of non decent private sector dwellings from the EHCS 2007. When the HHSRS for Criterion A was used for the first time in the EHCS 2006, a significant increase in Criterion A failure (homes not meeting the statutory component of the Decent Homes standard) was recorded. Rising from just over 4% under the former fitness standard to 22.4% under the HHSRS Category 1 hazard rate, increasing the overall non decency rate from 26.8% for privately occupied dwellings in 2005 to 35.3% in 2006.

4.4.2 The Decent Homes Standard contains 4 criteria. The table below gives a breakdown of the reasons for failure:

Table 4.1 Reasons for failure of dwellings as a decent home.

Reason	Dwellings	Percent (of non decent)	Percent (of stock)	Percent (EHCS 2007)
Category 1 hazard dwellings	6,100	57.3%	14.8%	23.5%
In need of repair	1,400	13.1%	3.4%	7.3%
Lacking modern facilities	700	6.6%	1.7%	2.9%
Poor degree of thermal comfort	5,500	51.6%	13.4%	15.9%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.4.3 The percentages by non decent do not total 100%. This reflects the fact that the categories are not mutually exclusive; although any dwelling can fail on just one criterion, it may fail on two or more. The national figures given are for private sector tenures only.

4.4.4 In Test Valley, the hierarchy of reasons for failure followed the national profile with a slightly higher rate of failure for Category 1 hazards than for thermal comfort. Prior to the reported data from the EHCS 2006 being published, poor degree of thermal comfort was the primary reason for failure of the Decent Homes Standard. It should however, be borne in mind that excess cold was the main Category 1 hazard reason for failure (see chapter 5) and this overlaps heavily with poor thermal comfort. In all categories, the failure rate in Test Valley was below their national equivalent.

4.4.5 The predicted figures from the BRE stock modelling exercise described in Part 1 were for an overall rate of non decency of 29.4%, with category 1 hazards at 18.6%, failures of the repair criterion 5.6%, lacking modern amenities 1.9% and thermal comfort 14.4%. The actual results are close to those predicted.

4.5 Numbers of failures per dwelling

4.5.1 As mentioned above, dwellings can fail to be decent for more than one reason. The total number of failures per dwelling can give an indication of the severity of problems in particular dwellings. Figure 4.1 looks at the number of failures per dwelling in non decent dwellings.

Figure 4.1 Degree of failure of the Decent Homes Standard
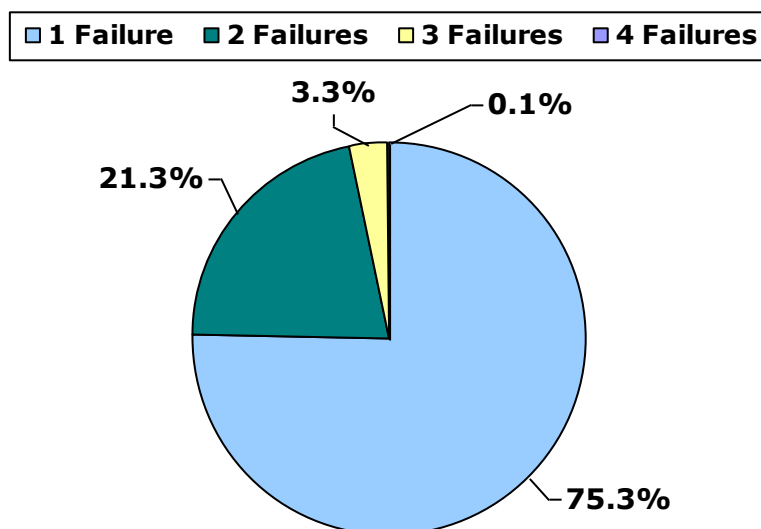
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.5.2 The majority of failures were in respect of one criterion only, with the number of properties with two or more failures being 24.7%. Realistically in the majority of cases this will have been related to heating/insulation issues whether as a failure for an excess hazard or failure of the thermal comfort criterion.

4.6 Non decency by general characteristics

4.6.1 Figure 4.2 shows the proportions of non decent private sector dwellings by tenure. The distribution by tenure is typical of the national picture in that privately rented dwellings had the highest rate of non decency at 36.5%, followed by owner occupied dwellings at 23.8%.

Figure 4.2 Tenure by non decent dwellings
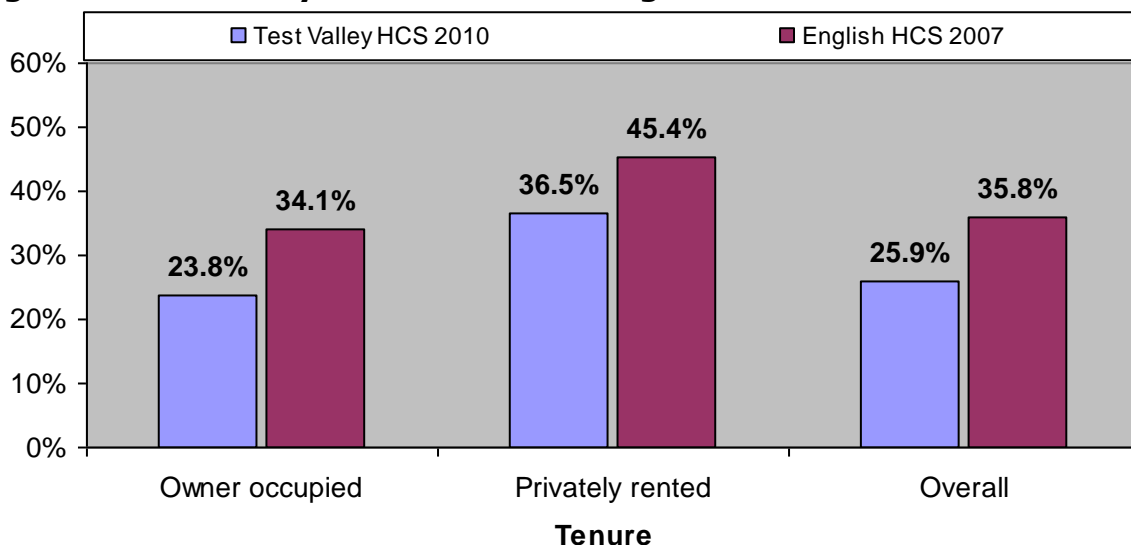
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.6.2   Figure 4.3 examines decent homes failures by dwelling type.

Figure 4.3 Non decent dwellings by dwelling type
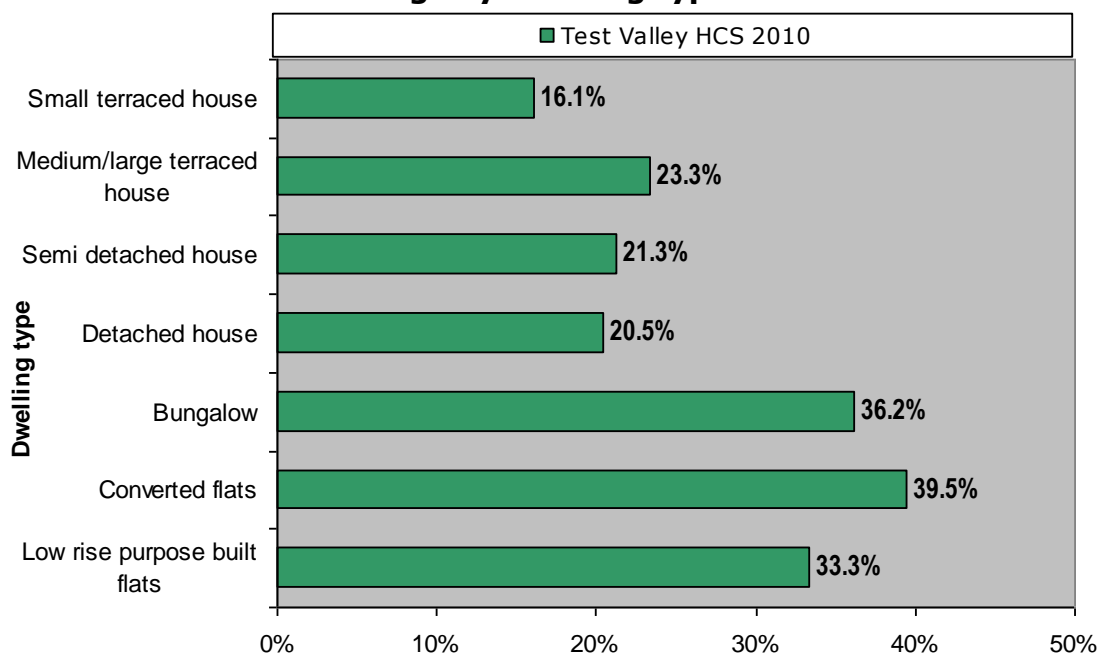
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.6.3   The highest rate of non decency was found in converted flats (39.5%), which are generally associated with the private rented sector and poor repair. Bungalows had the next highest rate at 36.2%, followed by low rise purpose built flats (33.3%). The lowest rate was found in small terraced houses (16.1%).

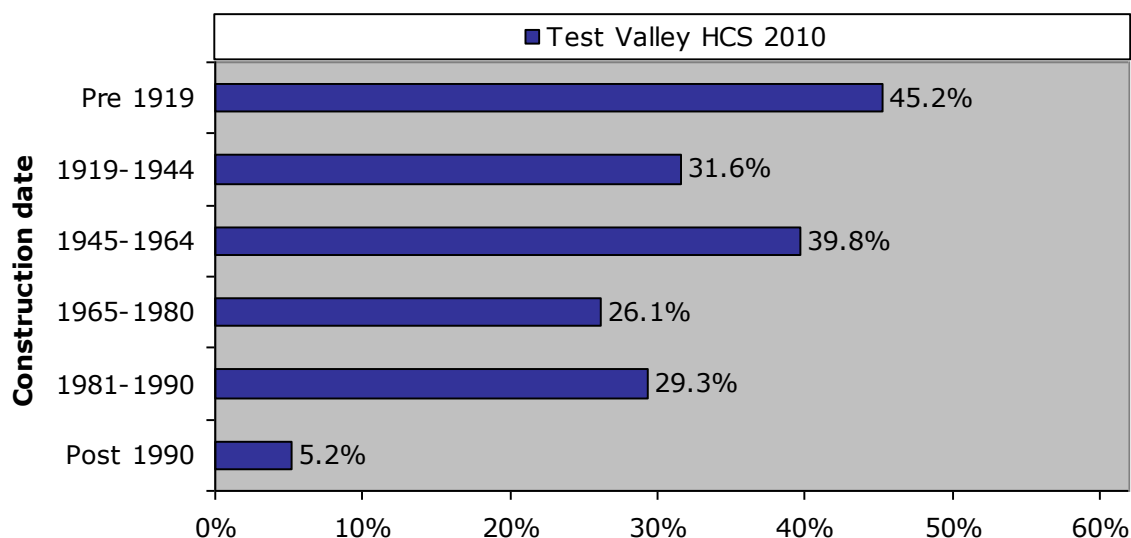## Figure 4.4 Non decent dwellings by date of construction

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.6.4   As is common, the rate of failure of the Decent Homes Standard was highest in pre 1919 properties at 45.2%. Usually there is a pattern of an increasing rate with property age being followed. However, in Test Valley this was not followed, with the 1945 to 1964 age band (39.8%) having a higher rate than that for the 1919 to 1944 age band (31.6%), due to higher rates of disrepair, lacking modern facilities and thermal comfort failure. In addition, the 1981 to 1990 age band had an inflated rate to that of the 1965 to 1980 age band (29.3% compared with 26.1%) due to higher rates of Category 1 Hazards, disrepair and thermal comfort failure.

4.7   Cost to Remedy

4.7.1   Having determined the reasons for dwellings being classified as non decent, it is possible to indicate what level of repairs / improvements would be needed to make all dwellings decent.

4.7.2   The cost to remedy non decency was determined by examining the specific failures of each non decent dwelling and determining the work necessary to make the dwelling decent.   This was done for each criterion of the standard and table 4.2 below shows the cost distribution for all non decent dwellings in the stock.

Table 4.2 Repair cost by non-decency reason (HHSRS)

Reason	Total Cost (£ million)	Cost per dwelling (£)
Category 1 Hazard	£28.7	£4,700
Repair	£7.9	£5,700
Amenities	£10.1	£14,700
Thermal comfort	£6.9	£1,300
Total	**£53.7**	**£5,000**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.7.3   The costs were based on the assumption that only the items that cause dwellings to be non decent are dealt with. Comprehensive repairs (referred to later) most closely resemble traditional renovation grant costs, but the costs given here are lower as they relate to the works necessary to deal only with items that failed the standard and not all repair issues.

4.8   Age of Head of Household and non decency

4.8.1   As part of the social survey a grid was filled in containing basic details for each of the residents in a dwelling, such as their age, working status, sex etc. It was left to residents to determine who was considered the head of the household, and therefore what the relationship between all other residents and the head was (e.g. spouse, child, parent, lodger etc).

4.8.2   Age of head of household is a useful indicator as it generally gives an impression of the age of the household and its profile. It has also been found that dwelling conditions often vary according to the age of the head of household.

4.8.3   Figure 4.5 illustrates the relationship between the age of head of household and levels of non decency. Within age groups, the highest rate of non decency occurred where the age of head of household was aged between 45 and 64 (31.5%), followed by households where the head was aged 75 and over (25.9%). The overall rate for those aged 65 and over was 25.9%.

Figure 4.5 Non decency by age of head of household
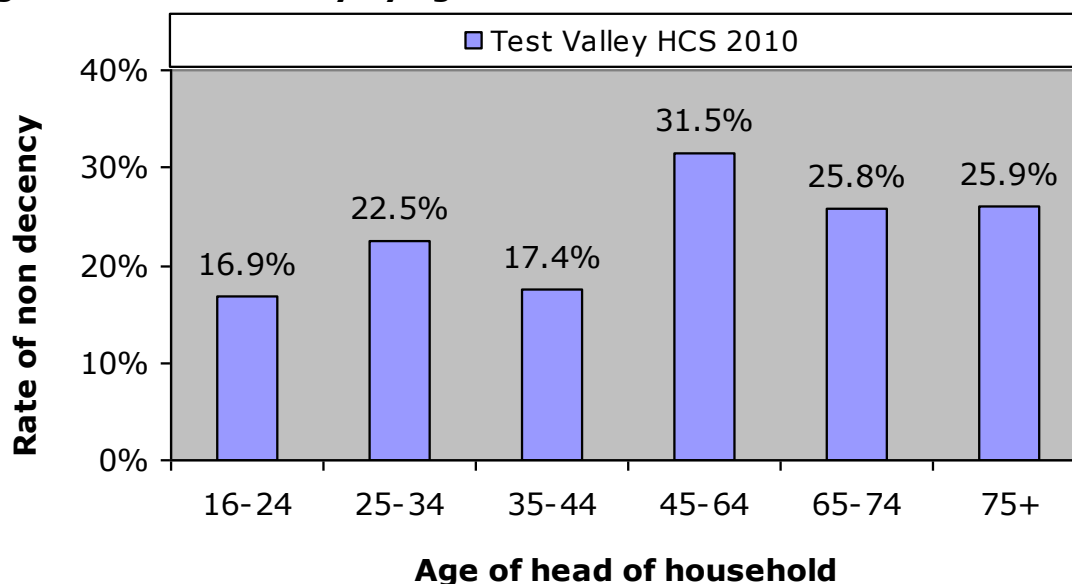
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.9 Household income and non decency

4.9.1 The relationship between income and non decency can be analysed by combining household income figures with failures under the Decent Homes Standard. The highest proportion of dwellings found to be non decent were occupied by residents with an income of between £10k and £15k (33.6%) The next highest rate was for residents with an income of less than £10k at 32.8%. The lowest rate was found where incomes were between £40 and £50k at 12.4%.

Figure 4.6 Non decency by annual household income band
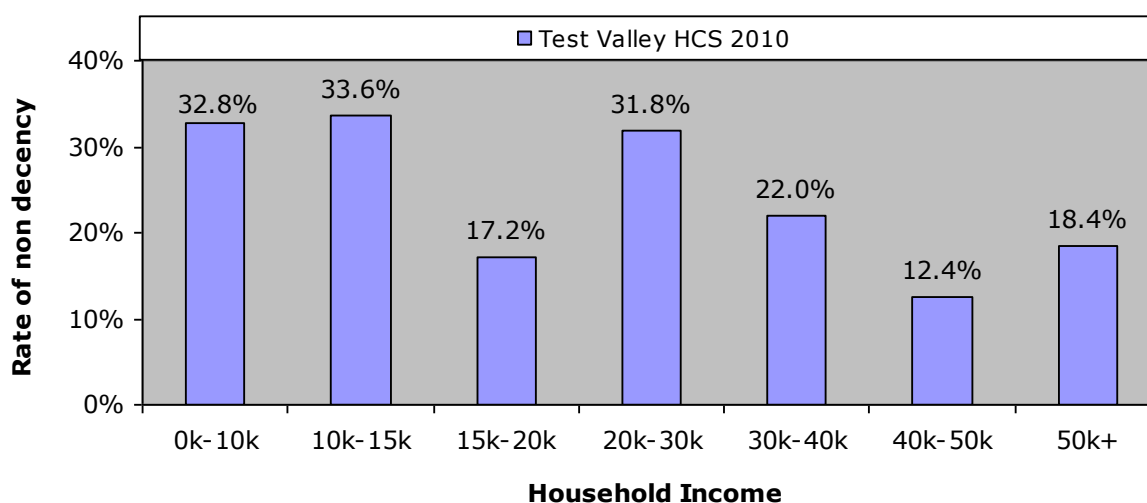
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

4.10 Private sector vulnerable occupier base-line

4.10.1 Up until the 1 April 2008, the government target for achieving decency standards in the private sector was that set by PSA7, which set a target of 65% of all dwellings occupied by vulnerable residents being made decent by 2006/07, with the baseline figure being measured against the results of the EHCS 2007. In practice, the most challenging target was the 70% to be met by 2010/11. As indicated previously, although the PSA7 target no longer exists, it is still a CLG Departmental Strategic Objective under DSO2, 2.8).

4.10.2 Vulnerable households are defined as those in receipt of the benefits listed below, certain of which are means tested:

- Income support
- Housing benefit
- Council tax benefit
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Attendance allowance
- Disabled living allowance
- Industrial injuries disablement benefit
- War disablement pension
- Pension credit
- Working tax credit (with a disability element) [total income < £16,040]
- Child tax credit [total income < £16,040]

4.10.3 In Test Valley, there were 11,000 private sector dwellings (owner occupied and privately rented) that were occupied by residents in receipt of one of the benefits listed above. Of these an estimated 3,930 were classified non decent, which represents 35.7% of dwellings occupied by a vulnerable resident. Conversely this means that 64.3% were decent. The EHCS 2007 found that 39.0% of vulnerable households were living in non decent homes.

4.10.4 On this basis Test Valley just failed to meet the national target for 2006/07 of 65% of vulnerable households to be living in decent homes.

4.10.5 In order to raise the proportion of private sector dwellings, occupied by vulnerable people, above the 2010/11 70% threshold for decency, 630 dwellings will need to be made decent by 2010/11. As these figures are based on a sample survey they will be subject to statistical variance, but nonetheless this indicates some extensive work needs to be done to meet the 70% target.

4.10.6   When the proportions of vulnerable households in non decent properties by tenure was considered, the results showed that whilst the overall shortfall was 630, the owner occupied stock had a shortfall of 220 dwellings whilst the much smaller privately rented sector had a shortfall of 410 dwellings.

5   Meeting the Decent Homes Standard – The Statutory Minimum Standard for Housing (Category 1 Hazards)

5.1   Requirement to remedy poor housing

5.1.1   Formerly, under Part XI of the Housing Act 1985, local authorities had a statutory duty to take: 'The most satisfactory course of action', with regard to unfit dwellings and the Act was supported by relevant statutory guidance. A range of enforcement measures were available including service of statutory notices to make properties fit. Closure or demolition was only appropriate in the most extreme cases.

5.1.2   With owner occupied dwellings in particular, many local authorities looked to offer financial assistance, especially where owners were on low incomes. In the private rented sector enforcement action was much more likely in respect of unfit homes.

5.1.3   From April 2006 Part XI of the Housing Act 1985 was replaced by Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004, which repealed the former housing fitness standard and through statutory instruments and statutory guidance replaced it with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System.

5.1.4   As described in Appendix D, the Act differentiates between Category 1 and Category 2 hazards. Local authorities have a duty to take 'the most appropriate course of action' in respect of any hazard scored under the HHSRS as Category 1. Authorities have discretionary power to take action with Category 2 hazards (which do not score past the threshold for Category 1). Further information on the HHSRS is given in Appendix D and below.

5.2   Definition of Hazards under the HHSRS and Category level

5.2.1   The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) replaced the former fitness standard and is a prescribed method of assessing individual hazards, rather than a conventional standard to give a judgment of fit or unfit. The HHSRS is evidence based – national statistics on the health impacts of hazards encountered in the home are used as a basis for assessing individual hazards.

5.2.2   The HHSRS system deals with a much broader range of issues than the previous fitness standard. It covers a total of 29 hazards in four main groups:

- *Physiological Requirements* (e.g. damp & mould growth, excess cold, asbestos, carbon monoxide, radon, etc)

- *Psychological Requirements* (crowding and space, entry by intruders, lighting, noise)

- *Protection Against Infection* (domestic hygiene, food safety, personal hygiene, water supply)

- *Protection Against Accidents* (e.g. falls on the level, on stairs & steps & between levels, electrics, fire, collision…).

5.2.3 The HHSRS scoring system combines two elements: firstly, the probability that deficiency (i.e. a fault in a dwelling whether due to disrepair or a design fault) will lead to a harmful occurrence (e.g. an accident or illness) and the spread of likely outcomes (i.e. the nature of the injury or illness). If an accident is very likely to occur and the outcome is likely to be extreme or severe (e.g. death or a major or fatal injury) then the score will be very high.

5.2.4 All dwellings contain certain aspects that can be perceived as potentially hazardous, such as staircases and steps, heating appliances, electrical installation, glass, combustible materials, etc. It is when disrepair or inherent defective design makes an element of a dwelling significantly more likely to cause a harmful occurrence that it is scored under the HHSRS.

5.2.5 Surveyors were required to score all hazards under the HHSRS and the survey form allowed for this. Excess Cold was modelled from survey data, at the individual dwelling level, in order to provide a more accurate picture for this hazard type. The modelling of excess cold hazards by use of SAP (energy efficiency) information was outlined in CLG guidance in June 2006 and has been used by the BRE as part of the housing stock projections for excess cold hazards.

5.2.6 The modelling of excess cold hazards is based on the use of the individual SAP rating for each dwelling, which is scaled to give a hazard score. Where a dwelling has a SAP rating of less than 35, this produces a category 1 hazard score.

5.2.7 The exact scores generated under the HHSRS can be banded into one of ten bands from A to J, with bands A to C being further defined as Category 1 hazards and those in bands D to J as Category 2. The threshold score for a Category 1 Hazard is 1,000. As stated earlier, a Local Authority has a duty to deal with any Category 1 hazards found and a discretionary power to deal with Category 2 hazards. This survey focuses particularly on Category 1 Hazards, but describes all hazards, including Category 2, for comparative purposes.

5.3 **Overall dwelling conditions**

5.3.1 The overall proportion of dwellings with a Category 1 Hazard was 14.8% compared with 23.5% (owner occupied and privately rented

dwellings) found in the EHCS 2007. This represented 6,100 dwellings across Test Valley with 5,100 being houses and 1,000 being flats.

5.4 Reasons for Category 1 Hazards

5.4.1 The following graph provides a breakdown of the proportions with a Category 1 hazard by type and ranked highest to lowest.

Figure 5.1 Category 1 Hazards by reason, as % of Category 1 Hazards
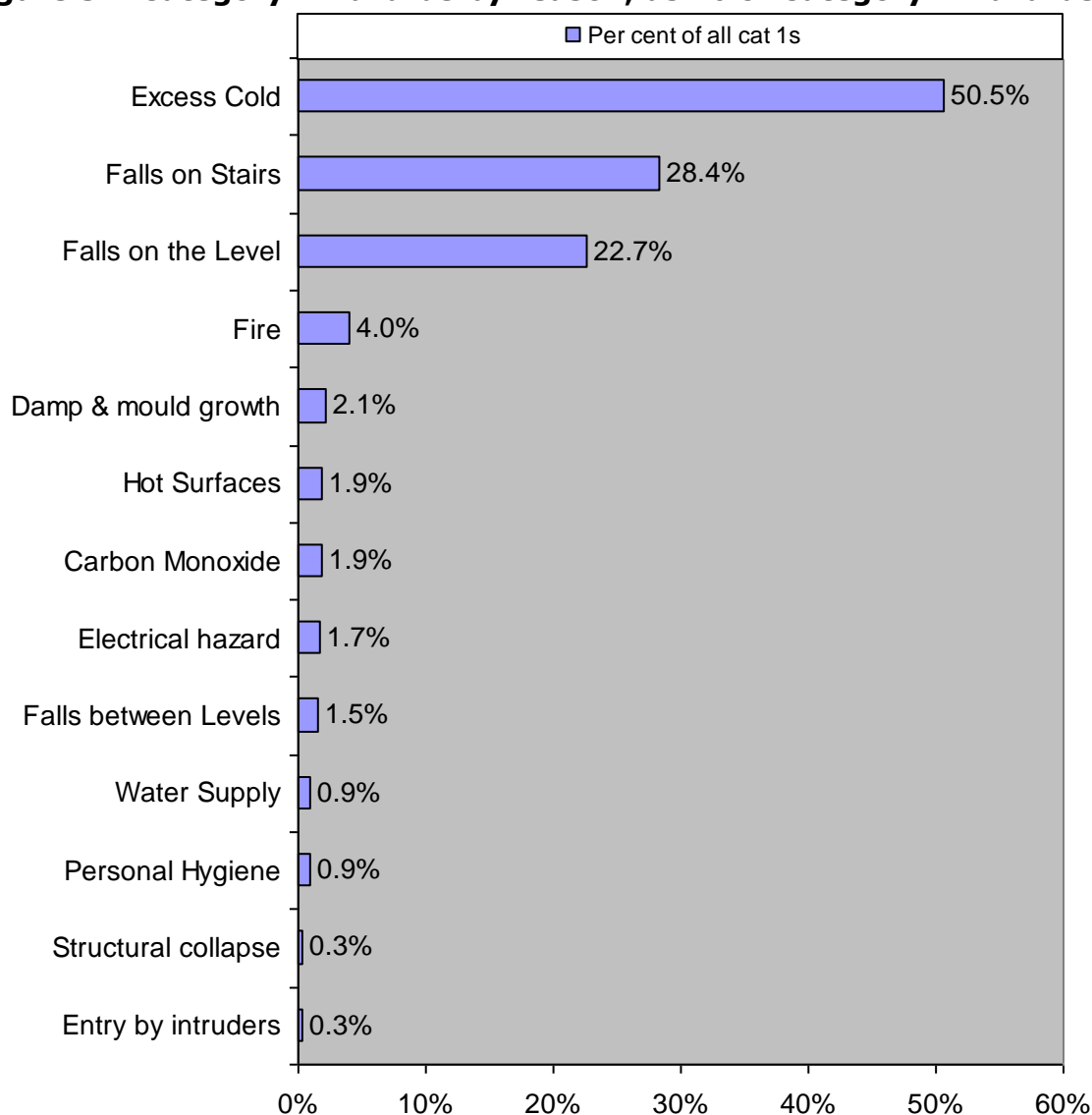
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.4.2 The proportion of category 1 hazards attributable to excess cold was the highest by a substantial margin, followed by falling on stairs etc and then falling on level surfaces. This follows the national pattern. (Note: the chart excludes those hazards where there was a nil return.)

5.5   **Severity of Category 1 Hazards**

5.5.1   One indication of the severity of Category 1 hazard failure is the number of items that a dwelling fails the standard on. Overall 10.6% of dwellings had two or more Category 1 Hazards.

5.6   **Category 1 Hazards by general characteristics**

5.6.1   This section examines the relationship between those general stock characteristics set out in chapter two, with the level of Category 1 Hazards. The following charts and commentary examine the rates of Category 1 hazards by tenure, dwelling type and construction date.

5.6.2   As is usually the case, the highest rate of Category 1 Hazard failure was found in the privately rented stock (22.4%) with the owner occupied sector being 13.2%.

Figure 5.2 Rates of Category 1 Hazards by tenure
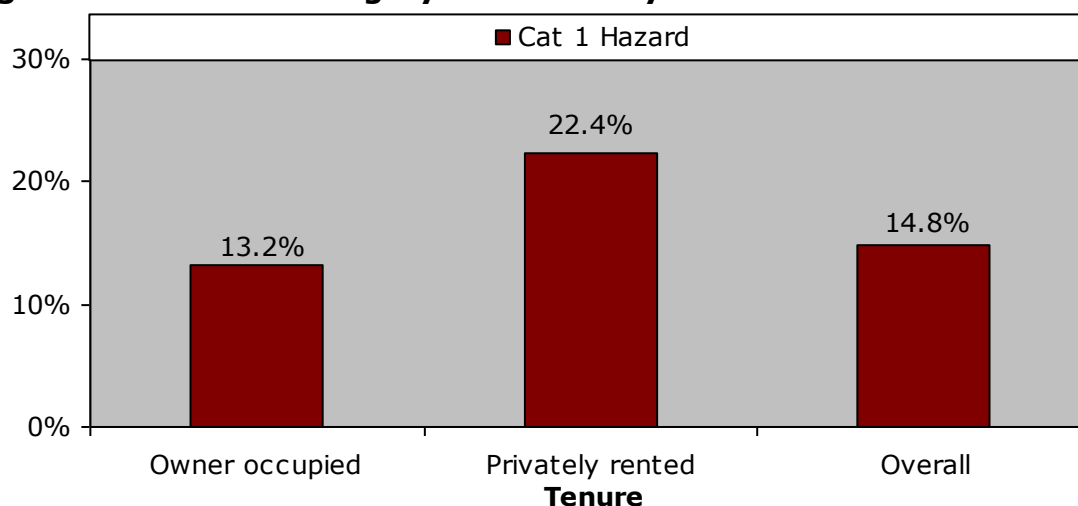
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.6.3   The chart below shows the rates of Category 1 Hazards by build type. The highest rate was found in bungalows at 25.4%, followed by converted flats at 18.6% and semi-detached houses (13.5%). The lowest rate was found in small terraced houses (8.5%).

Figure 5.3 Rates of Category 1 Hazards by building type

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.6.4   Category 1 Hazards are generally much less closely linked with the deterioration of building elements, than the former fitness standard, as the HHSRS system is concerned primarily with the effect of deficiencies, which may be due to design faults, as well as disrepair. There was, nevertheless, a general trend of Category 1 hazard rates being more prevalent as dwellings became older, although the 1981 to 1990 age band has a slightly inflated rate.

Figure 5.4 Rates of Category 1 Hazards by construction date

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.7 Category 1 hazards by social characteristics

5.7.1 This section looks at the impact that Category 1 hazards have on a number of social variables, including age, benefit receipt and disability.

5.7.2 Table 5.1 shows that all of the variables had rates that were above the Borough average.

Table 5.1 Category 1 Hazards by social characteristics

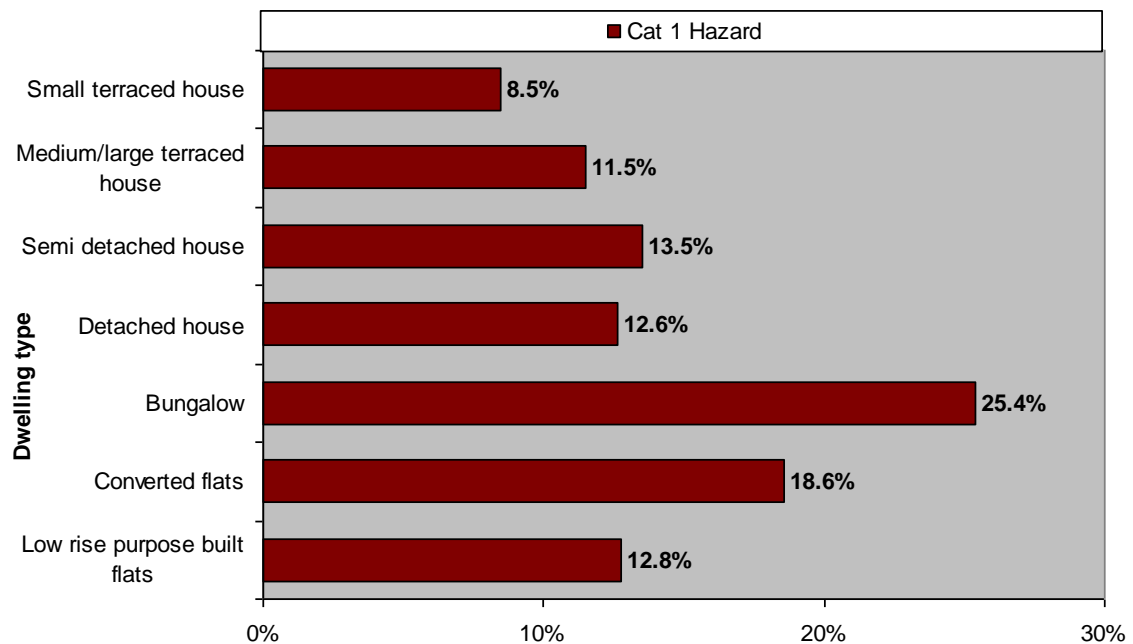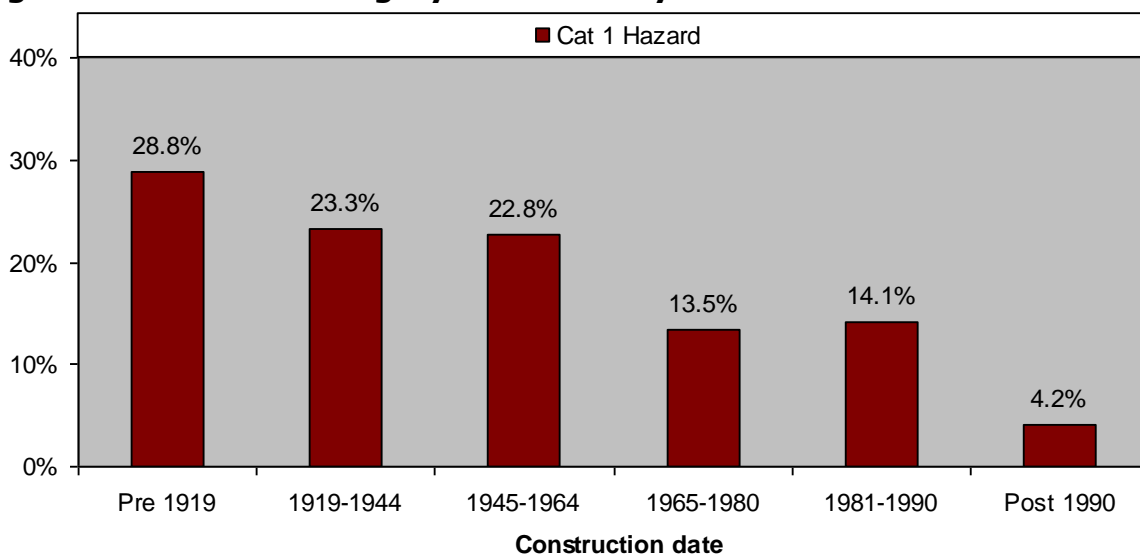| Group	Category 1 hazard
Income under 10k	21.6%
On Benefit	21.5%
Under 25	17.7%
Over 65	14.9%
Resident with disability	15.4%
Test Valley Average	**14.8%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.8 Cost of works to dwellings with a Category 1 Hazards

5.8.1 This section seeks to present the cost not only of basic failure items, but also the comprehensive cost of repairs in Category 1 Hazard dwellings. Comprehensive repair is the level of repair and improvement needed such that no new work is required to the dwelling in the next 10 years. This level of work most closely resembles the former mandatory renovation grant regime. Table 5.2 below shows basic remedial costs, the cost for urgent works and works required within 5 years and 10 years.

5.8.2 The total cost just to rectify category 1 hazards was an estimated £28.7 million at an average cost per dwelling of £4,700. The average cost per dwelling was higher in privately rented dwellings. The total level of comprehensive repair in dwellings with a Category 1 hazard in Test Valley was an estimated £126.8 million, an average of £20,900 per dwelling, with owner occupied dwellings having a slightly higher average cost than privately rented dwellings.

Table 5.2 Repair costs in Category 1 Hazard dwellings by tenure

Tenure	Remedial	Urgent[2]	5 year[2]	Comprehensive[2]
Owner occupied (£m)[1]	**18.2**	**24.6**	**33.6**	**94.1**
Average (£s)	*4,000*	*5,500*	*7,500*	*20,900*
Privately Rented (£m)[1]	**10.5**	**13.2**	**17.2**	**32.7**
Average (£s)	*6,700*	*8,400*	*10,900*	*20,800*
All tenures (£m)[1]	**28.7**	**37.9**	**50.8**	**126.8**
Average (£s)	*4,700*	*6,200*	*8,400*	*20,900*

1. Figures given in millions of pounds sterling

2. Figures are cumulative and therefore include the previous column
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.9   Category 2 hazards in bands D and E

5.9.1   There were an estimated 21,700 (52.8%) dwellings in Test Valley that have at least one Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E). Of those 19,400 (89.4%) had no corresponding Category 1 hazard.

5.9.2   The following graph illustrates the distribution of Category 2 hazards (Bands D and E) by age, building type and tenure.

Figure 5.5 Category 2 hazards by general characteristics
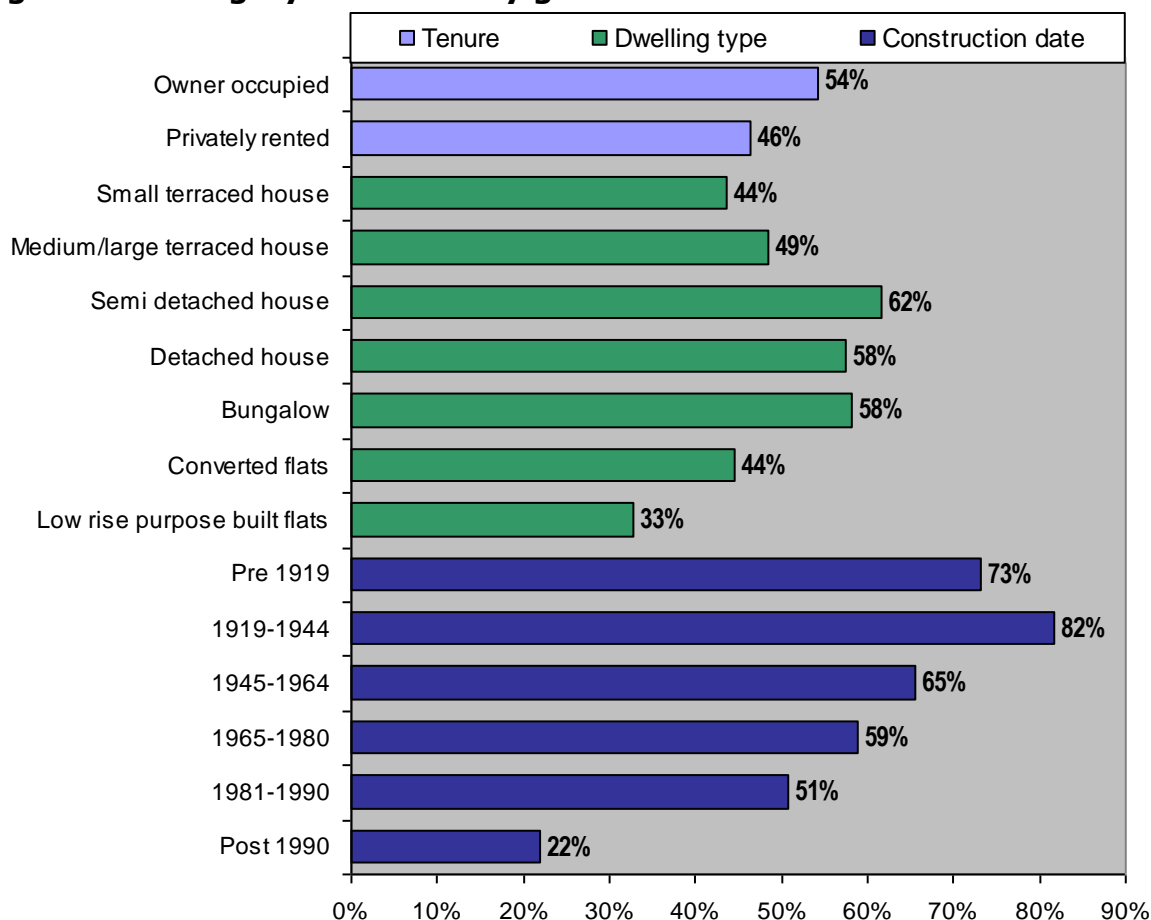
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.9.3   The rate in the owner occupied sector at 54% was higher than that in the privately rented sector (46%).

5.9.4   Semi-detached houses were the most likely dwelling type to have a Category 2 hazard with at least one atypical hazard (62%), followed by bungalows and detached houses both at 58%. The lowest rate was found in low rise purpose built flats (less than 6 storeys) at 33%.

5.9.5   The usual pattern of a decreasing incidence with age is mainly followed by properties with Category 2 hazards, except for the 1919 to 1944 age band with a rate of 82% which was higher than that for pre 1919 dwellings (73%).

5.9.6   Figure 5.6 illustrates the distribution of Category 2 hazards (scoring above average) by hazard type and ranked highest to lowest.

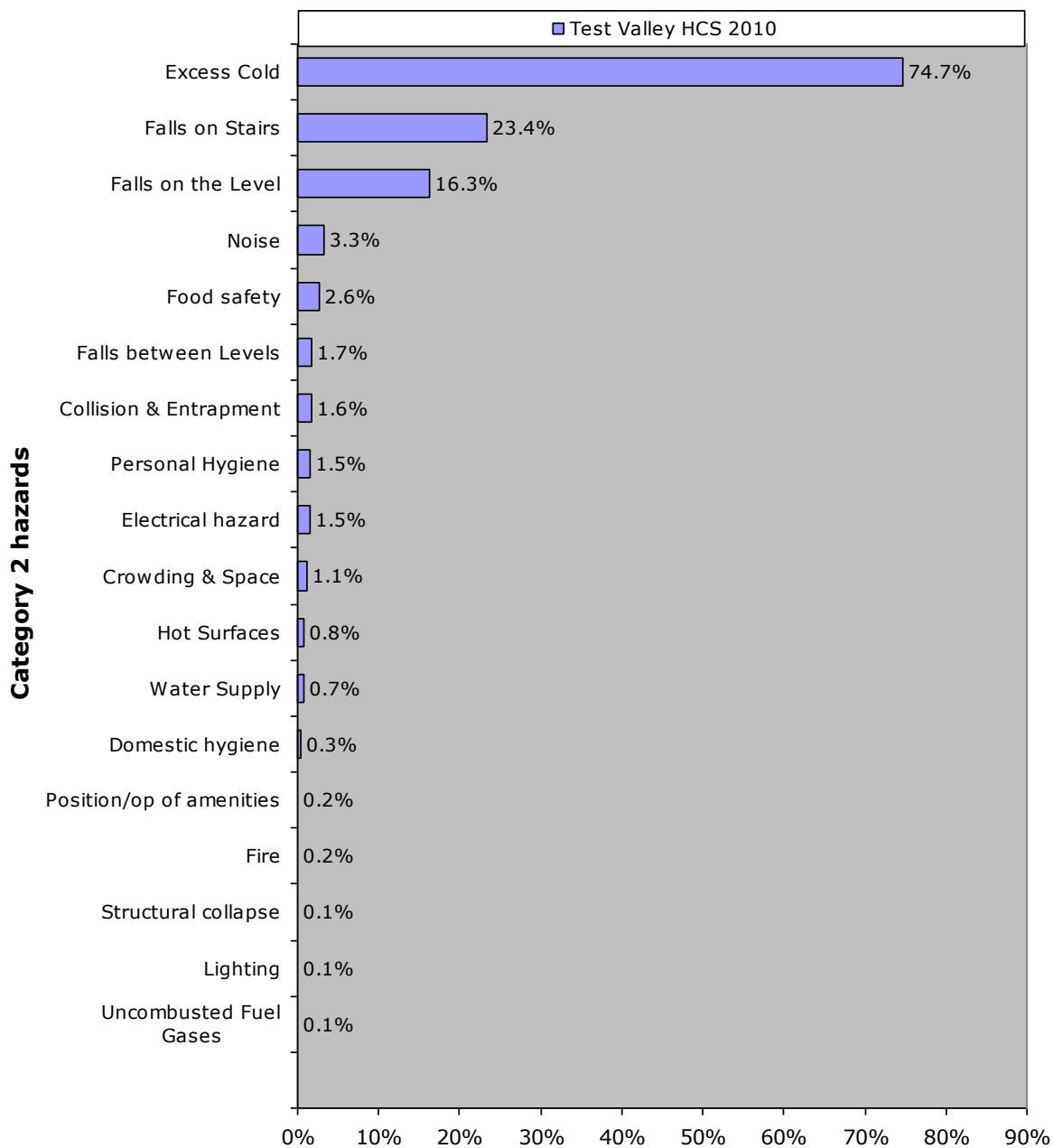**Figure 5.6 Category 2 hazards by hazard type**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

5.9.7   As with Category 1 hazards, excess cold had the highest rate, followed by falls on stairs and falls on the level.

6 Meeting the Decent Homes Standard – Reasonable State of Repair

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Criterion B of the Decent Homes Standard looks at the issue of the state of general repair of a dwelling, with a dwelling failing if it meets one or more of the following:

- One or more key building components are old (which are specifically defined in the criteria) and, because of their condition need replacing or major repair or:

- Two or more other building components are old and, because of their condition need replacing or major repair.

6.1.2 A building that has component failure before the components expected lifespan does not fail the decent homes standard.

6.1.3 In Test Valley 1,400 dwellings failed this criterion which was well below the national level (3.4% compared to 8.1%).

6.2 Disrepair and general characteristics

6.2.1 The overall repair cost within Test Valley was £7.9 million, an average of £5,700 per dwelling. (This is the cost of simply rectifying failures of the repair criterion of the Decent Homes Standard – it is not the cost of comprehensive repairs which is considered later in this section.) The following section gives a breakdown of repair failure by a number of key variables.

Figure 6.1 Disrepair by general characteristics
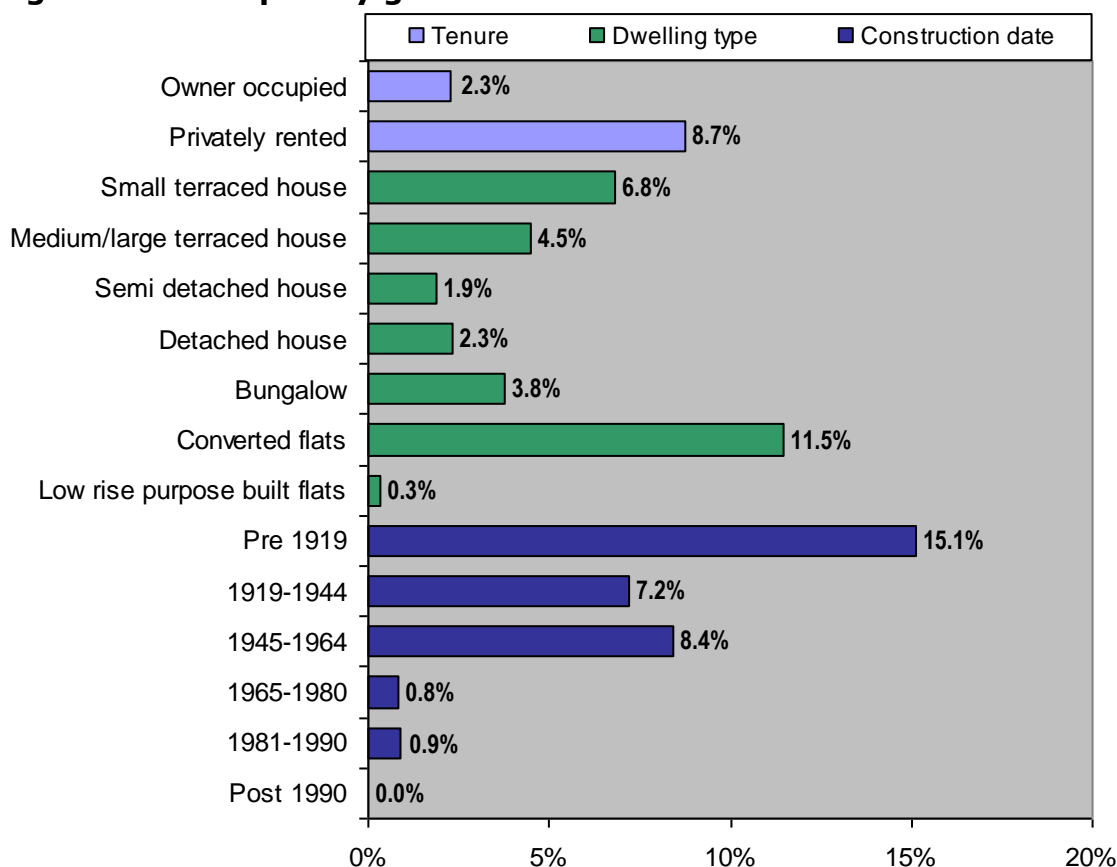
	Tenure	Dwelling type	Construction date
Owner occupied	2.3%		
Privately rented	8.7%		
Small terraced house		6.8%	
Medium/large terraced house		4.5%	
Semi detached house		1.9%	
Detached house		2.3%	
Bungalow		3.8%	
Converted flats		11.5%	
Low rise purpose built flats		0.3%	
Pre 1919			15.1%
1919-1944			7.2%
1945-1964			8.4%
1965-1980			0.8%
1981-1990			0.9%
Post 1990			0.0%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

6.2.2   The private rented sector had the highest rate (8.7%) with the owner occupied stock at 2.3%.

6.2.3   By dwelling type, the highest rate was again found in converted flats at 11.5% followed by small terraced houses at 6.8%.

6.2.4   The proportionate rate of repair failure by construction date mainly followed the usual pattern of increasing with property age; the rate in pre-1919 properties being 15.1%. No disrepair was identified in the post 1990 age band, although as this is a sample survey it is quite likely that there may be some.

6.3   Disrepair by social characteristics

6.3.1   The impact that disrepair has on a range of social variables, including age, benefit receipt and disability, is shown in the following table.

6.3.2   Three of the variables (those with an income of lees than £10k, those in receipt of a benefit and residents with a disability) had rates that were above the Borough rate. For those aged under 25 and over 65

the rates were lower, especially for those aged under 25 which had a nil return.

Table 6.1 Disrepair by social characteristics

Group	In disrepair
Income under £10k	6.3%
On Benefit	5.6%
Under 25	0.0%
Over 65	3.1%
Resident with disability	6.1%
Test Valley average	**3.4%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

7 Meeting the Decent Homes Standard – Modern Facilities

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 So far this report has considered Criterion A of the Decent Homes Standard: Category 1 Hazards and Criterion B: dwellings failing due to disrepair issues. The third criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is that a dwelling should have adequate modern facilities, and this chapter deals with that issue.

7.1.2 Few dwellings within the private sector failed on this criterion at national level (2.9%). In Test Valley, the rate was lower than the national average with 700 (1.7%) dwellings failing for this reason. The low level of failure nationally, and in Test Valley, reflects the fact that a dwelling only fails if it lacks *three* or more of the following:

- A kitchen which is 20 years old or less
- A kitchen with adequate space and layout
- A bathroom that is 30 years old or less
- An appropriately located bathroom and WC
- Adequate noise insulation
- Adequate size and layout of common parts of flats

7.1.3 For example, if a dwelling had a kitchen and bathroom older than the specified date, it would not fail unless the kitchen had a poor layout or the bathroom was not properly located.

7.1.4 As a result of the relatively small number of dwellings failing the Decent Homes Standard on this criterion, it was not possible to further subdivide those failures to examine their tenure distribution or other characteristics. However, this chapter will examine the general provision of facilities and in particular consider the potential for a greater level of failure in the future.

7.2 Key amenities bathrooms and kitchens

7.2.1 Under the Decent Homes Standard the age of bathrooms and kitchens is of importance to the modern facilities criterion. Figure 7.1 examines the age of these two facilities in dwellings within Test Valley.

Figure 7.1 Bathroom and Kitchen age
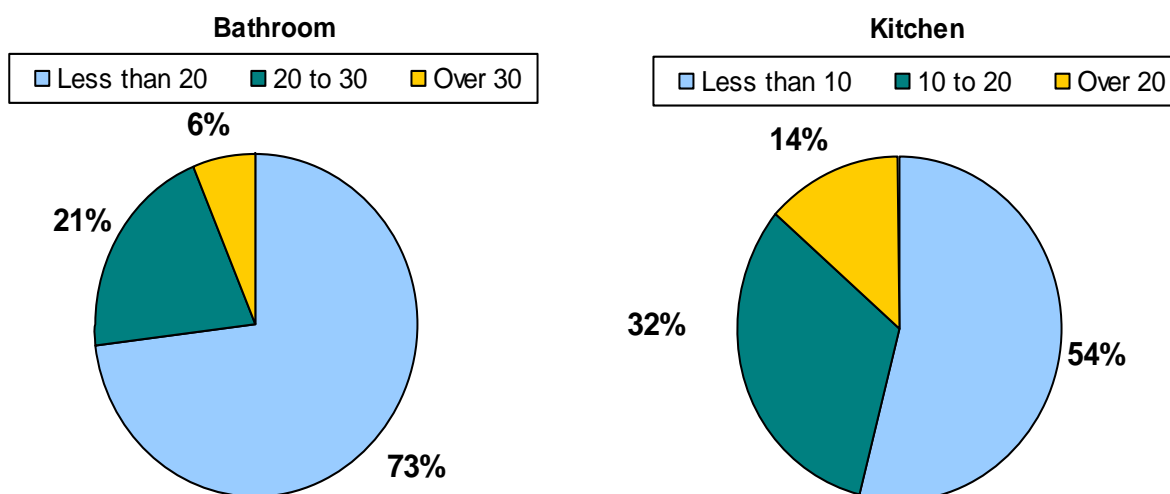
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

7.2.2   It is possible to see from the two charts that potential for failure under the facilities criterion of the Decent Homes Standard is fairly low with bathrooms as the great majority (73%) were less than 20 years old but greater with kitchens as 46% were either older than the age specified in the criterion or would become so in the next 10 years. For these dwellings to fail, however, it would be necessary that one of the other elements of this criterion be breached (such as inadequate noise insulation). It is unlikely therefore that failure to replace older kitchens and bathrooms would cause any significant increase in non decency.

8 Meeting the Decent Homes Standard – Thermal Comfort

8.1 Thermal comfort failures

8.1.1 Failure of the thermal comfort criterion, and consequently the work required to remedy that failure, is based on the combination of heating system type and insulation present within a dwelling. In Test Valley 5,500 dwellings (13.4%) failed the thermal comfort criterion, which was below the national average of 15.9%.

8.1.2 The following are the three requirements under the thermal comfort criterion of the Decent Homes Standard:

- For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are walls that can be insulated effectively) or at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is a loft space) is an effective package of insulation.

- For dwellings heated by electric storage heaters/ LPG/ programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are walls that can be insulated effectively).

- All other heating systems fail (i.e. all room heater systems are considered to fail the thermal comfort standard).

8.1.3 Figure 8.1 below shows the distribution of thermal comfort failure by age, building type and tenure.

8.1.4 The privately rented stock had the highest rate (18.8%) and the highest average remedial cost (£1,300), with the owner occupied dwellings rate being 12.3% (average remedial cost £1,250).

8.1.5 The highest rate of failure by dwelling type was found in low rise purpose built flats (27.3%); converted flats (22.4%) and bungalows (20.5%). The highest average cost was found in semi-detached houses (£1,630) followed by bungalows (£1,550. The lowest rate was found in small terraced houses (3.3%), although this type had the third highest average remedial cost at £1,200.

8.1.6 Thermal comfort failure rates usually increase with dwelling age. However, in Test Valley this is not the case, with the 1981 to 1990 age band having the highest failure rate (22.2%), followed by the 1945 to 1964 age band (19.8%) and then the pre 1919 age band (15.3%). The main issue with the 1981 to 1990 age band is that there are high proportions of storage heaters as the main heating type (22.3% or

1,730 dwellings) most of which (96.9% or 1,680 dwellings) have inadequate insulation. The lowest rate was found in Post 1990 dwellings (2.3%).

Figure 8.1 Thermal comfort failure by general characteristics
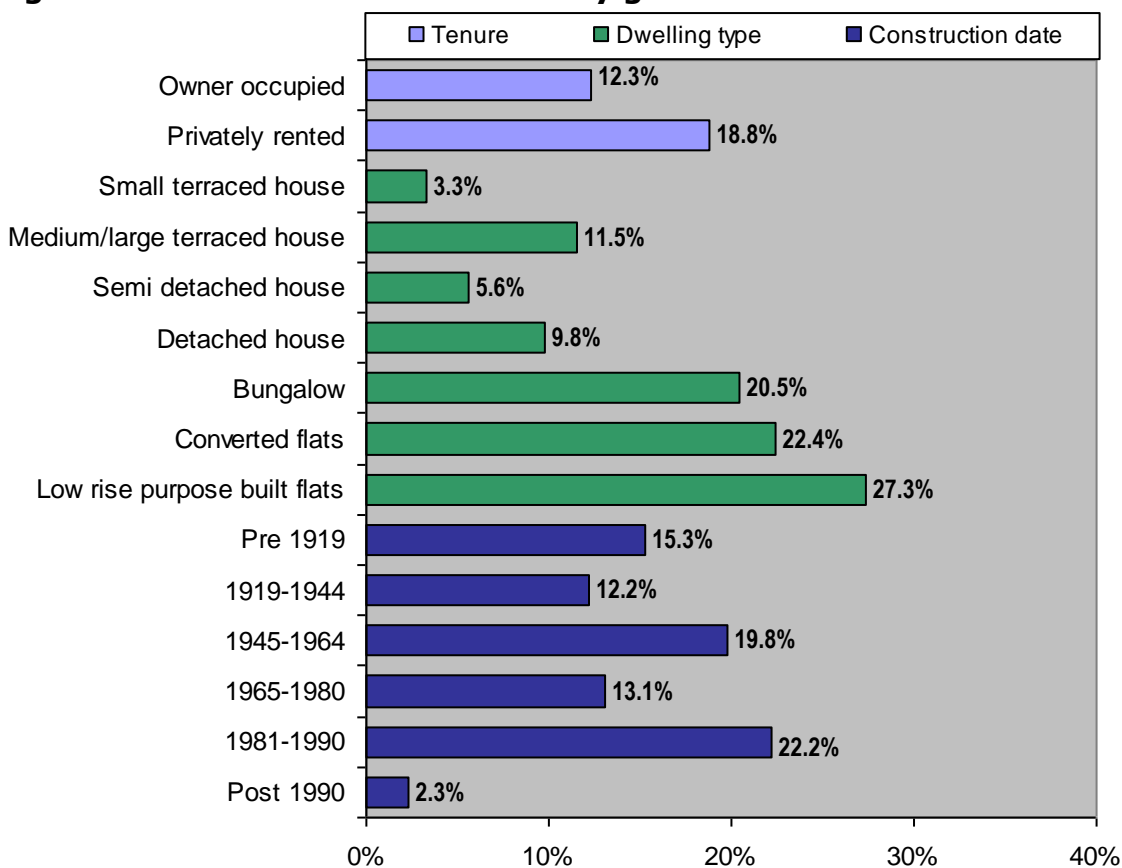
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9 Energy Performance

9.1 Energy performance and SAP ratings

9.1.1 The Standard Assessment Procedure or SAP is a government rating for energy efficiency. It is used in this report in conjunction with annual CO_2 emissions figures, calculated on fuel consumption, and the measure of that fuel consumption in kilo Watt hours (kWh), to examine energy efficiency.

9.1.2 The SAP rating in this report was the energy rating for a dwelling and was based on the calculated annual energy cost for space and water heating. The calculation assumes a standard occupancy pattern, derived from the measured floor area so that the size of the dwelling did not strongly affect the result. It is expressed on a 0-100 scale. The higher the number the better the energy rating for that dwelling.

9.1.3 The software used to calculate SAP ratings for this report used SAP2005.

9.2 Distribution of SAP ratings

9.2.1 The average SAP rating in Test Valley for private sector dwellings was 55, compared to an average SAP rating of 48 nationally (for private sector dwellings only), based on the findings of the EHCS 2007, which also used SAP2005.

9.2.2 Table 9.1 shows the energy performance distribution by tenure incorporation the same banding system used by the EHCS 2007. The majority for each tenure group were contained within the 39 to 68 bandings, being 80.1% for owner occupied dwellings and 60.5% for the privately rented stock. The overall stock rate was 76.7% within those bands, which was above the national rate (73.2%).

Table 9.1 Energy performance SAP banded

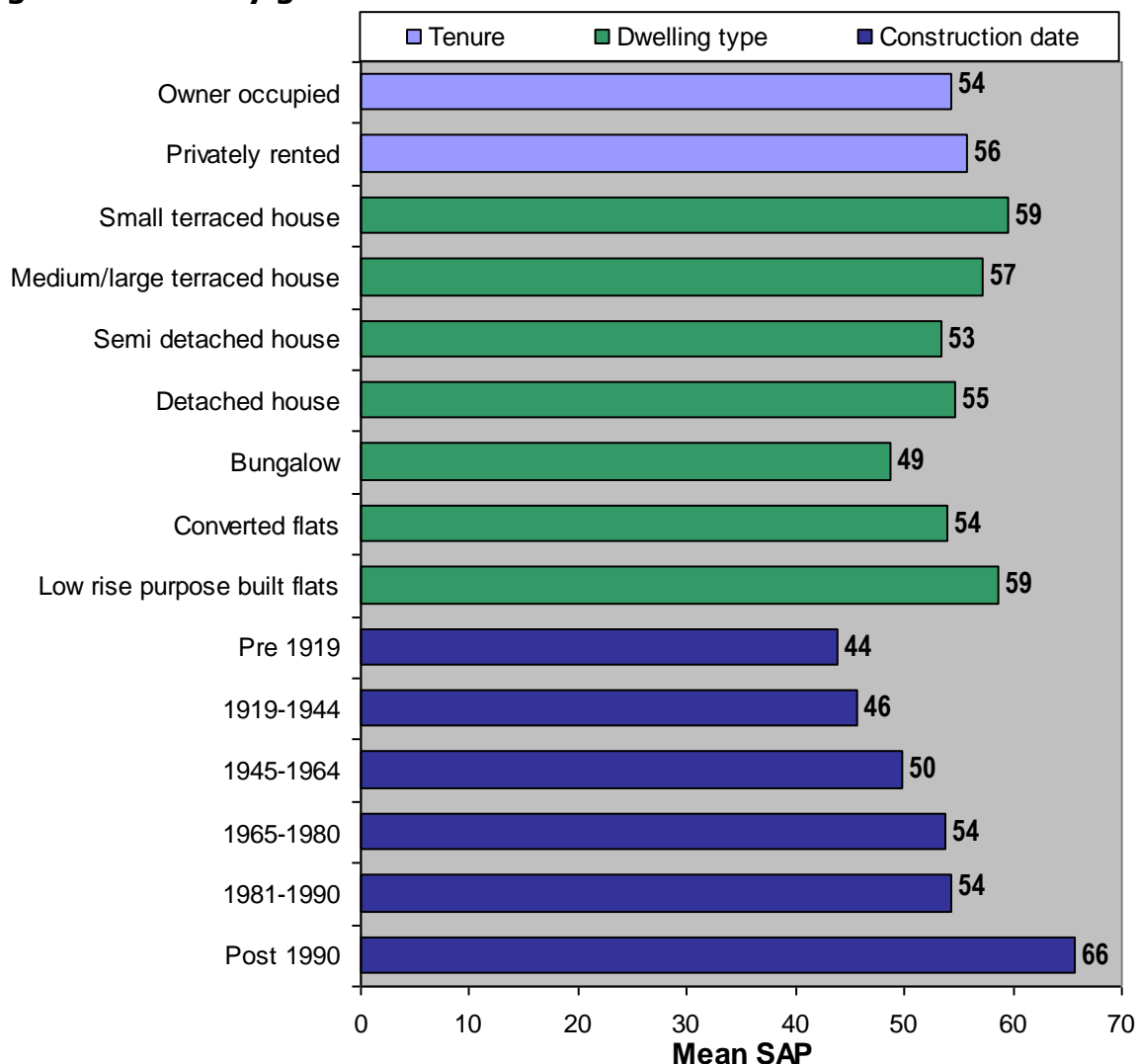| EPC SAP Range Banded	Owner occupied	Privately rented	Whole Stock	EHCS 2007
Band A (92-100)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Band B (81-91)	0.3%	2.7%	0.7%	0.1%
Band C (69-80)	9.2%	22.4%	11.5%	5.0%
Band D (55-68)	44.9%	33.5%	43.0%	30.4%
Band E (39-54)	35.2%	27.0%	33.8%	42.8%
Band F (21-38)	8.2%	9.7%	8.4%	17.3%
Band G (1-20)	2.2%	4.7%	2.7%	4.4%
Total	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey & EHCS 2007
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.3   SAP by general characteristics

9.3.1   The physical characteristics of dwellings have a major effect on the efficiency of a dwelling. The number of exposed external walls and the construction materials and methods all affect the overall heat loss and therefore the energy efficiency. Different types and ages of dwellings will have different energy characteristics.

9.3.2   Figure 9.1 gives a breakdown of average SAP ratings by tenure, building type and construction date.

9.3.3   The privately rented stock had a slightly higher average mean SAP (56) than the owner occupied stock (54).

9.3.4   When examining SAP ratings by built form, bungalows had the lowest mean SAP rating at 49 followed by semi-detached houses (53). The highest rate was found jointly, in small terraced houses and low rise purpose built flats both at 59.

9.3.5   Increases in SAP are usually associated with a reduction in dwelling age; the most modern stock having the highest SAP. This pattern was followed in Test Valley; the lowest mean SAP was for pre-1919 properties at 44 and the highest in post 1990 properties at 66.

Figure 9.1 SAP by general characteristics

| | Tenure | Dwelling type | Construction date |

Category	Mean SAP
Owner occupied	54
Privately rented	56
Small terraced house	59
Medium/large terraced house	57
Semi detached house	53
Detached house	55
Bungalow	49
Converted flats	54
Low rise purpose built flats	59
Pre 1919	44
1919-1944	46
1945-1964	50
1965-1980	54
1981-1990	54
Post 1990	66

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.4   Carbon Dioxide emissions

9.4.1   As part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review the Government announced a single set of indicators which would underpin the performance framework as set out in the Local Government White Paper "Strong and Prosperous Communities". To provide a more powerful and consistent incentive to local authorities, to develop and effectively implement carbon reduction and fuel poverty strategies, included within the set of indicators were a per capita reduction in Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) emissions in the Local Authority area and the tackling of fuel poverty.

9.4.2   PSA Delivery Agreement 27 (Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change) stated that "The overall framework for the Government's domestic action is set out in the Climate Change Bill for

which Parliamentary approval will be sought". This was subsequently passed into legislation on 26 November 2008, through the Climate Change Act 2008, which included legally binding targets to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions through action in the UK and abroad of at least 80% by 2050, and reductions in CO_2 emissions of at least 26% by 2020, against a 1990 baseline.

9.4.3   The government launched a consultation document entitled "Heat and energy saving strategy consultation" in February 2009.

9.4.4   The overall aim of the consultation was to reduce annual emissions by up to 44 million tonnes of CO_2 in 2020, the equivalent of a 30% reduction in emissions from households compared to 2006, making a significant contribution to meeting the government's carbon budgets.

9.4.5   One key aspect of the government's approach was to consider the energy needs of the 'whole house', putting together a more comprehensive programme of work for the whole house rather than the installation of individual measures one at a time. It was considered that modern heating offered the potential to cut energy bills and reduce CO_2 emissions, and the government wanted to help the development of heating networks within communities where it made sense to do so.

9.4.6   The Government's strategy for saving energy and decarbonising heating both now and into the future, has four main objectives:

- to help more people, especially in the current difficult economic climate, as well as over the longer term, to achieve a reduction in their energy bills by using less energy;

- to reduce the UK's emissions and increase the use of renewable energy in line with the demands of the government's carbon budgets, their renewables target and the ultimate objective of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050;

- to help maintain secure and diverse energy supplies; and

- to take advantage of the economic opportunities presented by the shift to a low carbon economy in the UK and in the rest of the world. This to help during the current economic downturn and over the longer term.

9.4.7   By 2015, it is the government's aim to have insulated all the lofts and cavity walls where it is practicable to do so. Although it is considered that this will not be enough to achieve the ambitions for the 2050 target of cutting emissions by 80%. Once these options have been exhausted, more substantial changes are being considered, such as small-scale energy generation and solid wall insulation, with the aim of helping up to seven million homes by 2020.

9.4.8   It is proposed to retain the current Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) until 2012, when it is thought that a more coordinated, community-based approach, working door-to-door and street-to-street to cover the needs of the whole house. It is proposed that this more coordinated approach is piloted under a new Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP), to be launched in 2009.

9.4.9   Test Valley had no Lower Super Output Areas contained within the list of areas of low income that qualify for the Community Energy Saving Programme.

9.4.10   The CO_2 data provided as part of this survey indicated that emissions within the private sector stock of Test Valley were 181,600 tonnes per annum an average of 4.4 tonnes per annum per property or 1.6 tonnes per capita. The EHCS 2007 reported total CO_2 emissions of 130 tonnes per annum or 7.1 tonnes per dwelling (owner occupied and privately rented)

9.4.11   Figure 9.2 shows the range of dwelling CO_2 emissions released per annum. The majority of dwellings (75.5%) had emissions of between 2 and 6 tonnes per annum, with 16.4% having annual emissions above this. 4.1% had emissions above 10 tonnes per annum.

Figure 9.2 Annual dwelling CO2 emissions
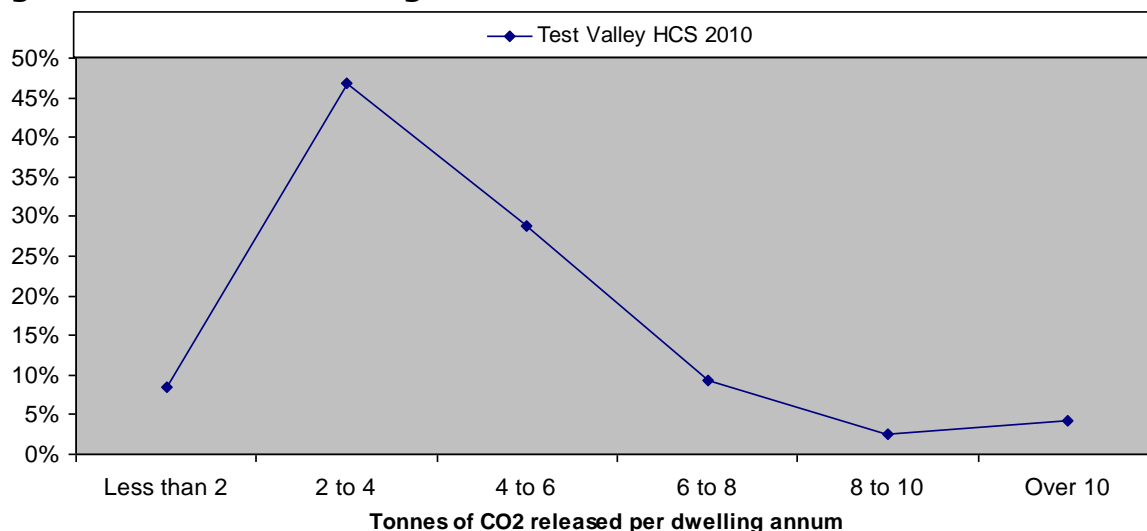
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.4.12   Emissions per main fuel type are given below; with smokeless fuel having the highest average at 17.1 tonnes followed by oil (7.6 tonnes).

Table 9.2 Main fuel CO$_2$ emissions

Fuel main	CO$_2$ (tonnes)	Average CO$_2$ per property
Mains Gas	113,765	3.8
LPG/Bottled Gas	1,908	3.7
Oil	37,905	7.6
Coal/Wood	4,769	6.2
Anthracite	0	0.0
Smokeless Fuel	3,143	17.1
On Peak Electricity	42	2.5
Off Peak Electricity	20,067	4.3

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.5   SAP and National Indicator 187

9.5.1   Following the 2007 comprehensive spending review guidance was issued on a change in measuring local authority performance through a revised set of indicators. There are 188 indicators covering every aspect of a Councils' responsibilities, but of primary interest here is National Indicator 187. NI187 requires local authorities to measure the proportion of households on an income related benefit living in dwellings with SAP ratings below 35 and 65 and above; the intention being to decrease the former and increase the latter. The indicator refers to 'fuel poverty' but the measure is actually a surrogate for fuel poverty (see 9.9). It is anticipated that Councils will measure progress using an annual postal survey.

9.5.2   Table 9.3 gives a breakdown of dwellings with SAP ratings below 35 and 65 and over, as well as combining this with information on income related benefit receipt. This information can be used as a baseline for NI187 against which future progress can be measured.

Table 9.3 SAP bands and NI187

Test Valley HCS 2009			
	Dwellings total	Households with an income benefit recipient	Rate
SAP less than 35	2,980	800	26.8%
	7.3%	**8.3%**	
SAP 35 to 64	29,180	7,100	24.3%
	71.1%	74.0%	
SAP 65 and over	8,890	1700	19.1%
	21.7%	**17.7%**	
	41,050	**9,600**	**23.4%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.5.3   The figures given in red are those required under NI187. They illustrate that 8.3% of households in receipt of an income related benefit lived in a dwelling with a SAP rating below 35 and that 17.7% lived in a dwelling with a SAP of 65 and over.

9.6   Energy efficiency improvement

9.6.1   The vast majority of dwellings (75.9%), had mains gas, with 88.2% of dwellings having a central heating system compared with 90.0% found in the EHCS 2007.

9.6.2   The provision of different heating systems and insulation within the dwelling stock does allow scope for some dwellings to have additional insulation, improved heating, draught proofing etc.   Such improvements can lead to a reduction in energy consumption with consequent reduction in the emission of gases such as carbon dioxide implicated in climate change.

9.6.3   However, it should be noted that improving energy efficiency does not necessarily equate to a reduction in energy consumption.   In the majority of cases there will be a reduction, but, for example, where a household is in fuel poverty and improvements are made, energy consumption may well go up. In such dwellings the occupiers may well have been heating the dwelling to an inadequate level using expensive fuel. Use of cheaper fuels can create affordable warmth, but also lead to increased energy consumption.

9.7   The cost and extent of improvement

9.7.1   The following figures are based on modelling changes in energy efficiency, brought about by installing combinations of items listed below.   These are based on measures that have been provided by many local authorities and are loosely based on the Warm Front scheme.
   ▪ Loft insulation to 270mm
   ▪ Cylinder insulation to 70mm Jacket (unless foam already)
   ▪ Double Glazing to all windows
   ▪ Cavity wall insulation
   ▪ Installation of a modern high efficiency gas boiler where none is present
   ▪ Full central heating where none is present

9.7.2   The computer model entered whatever combination of these measures is appropriate for a particular dwelling taking into account the provision of heating and insulation shown by the survey.

9.8 Future improvement

9.8.1 If all combinations of improvements listed above were carried out to all dwellings, the total cost would be just over £55.2 million, an average of £1,940 per dwelling, where improvements were required.

9.8.2 The total cost of improvements given above is distributed among 28,400 dwellings, 69.2% of the stock. The majority of these dwellings will have complied with Building Regulations current at the time they were built and realistically most of them will currently provide an adequate level of thermal efficiency. In most cases, however, there is still scope for improvement even if only minor.

9.8.3 The following analysis looks at how many dwellings could have each type of measure applied.

Table 9.4 All energy efficiency measures that could be carried out

Measure	Dwellings	Percent of stock
Loft insulation	19,900	48.5%
Wall insulation	12,600	30.7%
Double glazing	3,600	8.8%
Cylinder insulation	9,200	22.4%
New boiler	9,800	23.9%
New central heating	30	0.1%
Any measures	**28,400**	**69.2%**

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
*For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.8.4 The wide range of measures indicates that, in most cases, two or more improvements could be carried out. Generally loft insulation would be an improvement on existing insulation, rather than an installation where none exists. With cylinder insulation, most improvements would be the replacement of old cylinders with jackets, for new integral foam insulated cylinders. Installation of new central heating is only indicated where the dwelling currently relied solely on room heaters as the primary heating source.

9.9 Tackling fuel poverty

9.9.1 A key issue in reducing energy consumption is tackling fuel poverty. The occupiers of a dwelling are considered to be in fuel poverty if more than 10% of their net household income would need to be spent on heating and hot water to give an adequate provision of warmth and hot water. Not only do dwellings where fuel poverty exists represent dwellings with poor energy efficiency, they are, by definition, occupied by residents with low incomes least likely to be able to afford improvements. In "Fuel Poverty in England: The Government's Plan for Action" published in 2004, the government set a target for the total eradication of fuel poverty by November 2016.

9.9.2   There are an estimated 5,700 (14.3%) dwellings in fuel poverty in Test Valley compared to approximately 13.2% based on the findings of the EHCS 2007, as reported in the Annual Report on Fuel Poverty Statistics 2009, published by the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC).

9.9.3   A slightly higher proportion than the national average, the 5,700 dwellings represent a substantial number of households that are in fuel poverty and will present issues in terms of both energy efficiency and occupier health. The highest rate of fuel poverty was found in owner occupied dwellings where 15% were in fuel poverty, compared with 7% in the privately rented sector. Intervention programmes such as Warm Front have been set up to tackle fuel poverty among vulnerable households in the private rented and owner occupied sectors, and provide grant packages to undertake energy efficiency measures for those eligible.

9.9.4   By the very nature of fuel poverty, it is almost always associated with those residents on the lowest incomes. 3,400 households (60% of the households in fuel poverty) were households with incomes below £10,000 per annum, with the remaining 2,300 (40%) having incomes above £10,000 per annum. This means that the rate of fuel poverty in the households with an income below £10,000 was 61%.

9.9.5   Fuel poverty is usually associated with dwellings where one or more residents are in receipt of a means tested benefit as such benefits are indicative of low income. In Test Valley fuel poverty was found in 3,500 households (61% of households in fuel poverty) where a benefit was received, compared with 2,200 households (39% of households in fuel poverty) where occupiers did not receive benefit. This means that 32% of households in receipt of benefit were in fuel poverty.

9.9.6   For owner-occupiers, assistance in the form of advice can be given, as well as grants and other partnership schemes with energy efficiency companies and other organisations. The total cost of energy efficiency improvements to dwellings in fuel poverty in the owner-occupied sector, was just over £7 million. This expenditure requirement is distributed between the 5,200 owner-occupied dwellings in fuel poverty where works were possible at an average cost per dwelling of £1,300.

9.10   Beyond fuel poverty

9.10.1 Tackling dwellings where fuel poverty exists helps those least able to afford either to heat their homes properly or to afford the improvement works necessary.

9.10.2 Beyond fuel poverty, however, the Authority has a duty under the Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) to help reduce energy consumption in dwellings within Test Valley.

9.11 Energy efficiency works to all other dwellings

9.11.1 The cost of carrying out all works to all dwellings where the residents were not in fuel poverty but where potentially improvements could be made is just under £46.8 million. This represents an average expenditure of approximately £1,400 per dwelling in 34,200 properties.

9.11.2 Due to the high proportion of dwellings where potential improvements could be undertaken, the numbers are widespread and targeting, is therefore, not specifically concentrated in any particular area or property type. Perhaps the best targets are those most in need of improvement, in particular those dwellings that are the least energy efficient at present.

9.11.3 There were 1,300 dwellings where the household was not in fuel poverty but where the mean SAP is less than 35. To carry out all improvement works required for these dwellings would cost just over £2.2 million, with almost all of this cost being required for the owner-occupied stock. The mean cost per dwelling in the owner-occupied stock is £1,700. The reason the average cost of improvements is higher is that many of these dwellings would require the installation of full central heating, insulation and other measures to bring their SAP above 35.

9.11.4 Part of the survey considered whether a range of energy measures had been installed within dwellings, including low energy light bulbs, photo voltaic cells, solar water heating and other renewable energy sources. Table 9.5 provides a breakdown of the proportion of rooms that had low energy light bulbs fitted, with the results showing a broad spread of current provision.

Table 9.5 Low energy light bulb provision

Low Energy Light Bulbs	Proportion of rooms
1% to 24%	13.3%
25% to 49%	12.5%
50% to 74%	25.7%
75% to 100%	32.6%
None	15.7%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

9.11.5 As far as other provision is concerned, Table 9.6 shows the level of photo voltaic cells, solar water heating and other renewable energy sources. It is clear that there was very little provision found.

Table 9.6 Other energy measures

Photo Voltaic Cells	Solar Water Heating	Other Renewables
0.8%	0.9%	0.5%

Source: 2009 House Condition Survey
For notes on statistical variance & small sample sizes see appendix C

Appendix A - Index of tables and figures

A.1 The following is a list of tables throughout the main report which are referenced to the relevant chapter number by the first digit of the table number.

The following is a list of figures throughout the report which are referenced to the relevant chapter number by the first digit of the table number.

Appendix B- Methodology

B.1   The survey used a stratified random sample of 1,480 dwellings from an address file supplied by Test Valley Borough Council. The sample was a stratified random sample to give representative findings across the authority with the objective of gaining as many surveys in each as possible.

B.2   All addresses on the original address list were assigned an ID number and a random number generating computer algorithm was used to select the number of addresses specified.

B.3   The survey incorporates the entire private sector stock, excluding registered social landlords (Housing Associations).

B.4   Each dwelling selected for survey was visited a minimum of three times where access failed and basic dwelling information was gathered including a simple assessment of condition if no survey was ultimately possible. To ensure the sample was not subject to a non-response bias, the condition of the dwellings where access was not achieved was systematically compared with those where the surveyors were successful. Where access was achieved, a full internal inspection was carried out including a detailed energy efficiency survey. In addition to this, where occupied, an interview survey was undertaken.

B.5   The basic unit of survey was the 'single self-contained dwelling'. This could comprise a single self-contained house or a self contained flat. Where more than one flat was present the external part of the building, encompassing the flat and any access-ways serving the flat were also inspected.

B.6   The house condition survey form is based on the survey schedule published by the ODPM in the 2000 guidelines (Local House Condition Surveys 2000 HMSO ISBN 0 11 752830 7).

B.7   The data was weighted using the CLASSIC Reports software. Two approaches to weighting the data have been used.

B.8   The first method is used for data such as building age, which has been gathered for all dwellings visited. In this case the weight applied to the individual dwellings is very simple to calculate, as it is the reciprocal of the sample fraction. Thus if 1 in 10 dwellings were selected the sample fraction is 1/10 and the weight applied to each is 10/1.

B.9   Where information on individual data items is not always present, i.e. when access fails, then a second approach to weighting the data is taken. This approach is described in detail in the following appendix, but a short description is offered here.

B.10 The simplest approach to weighting the data to take account of access failures is to increase the weight given to the dwellings where access is achieved by a proportion corresponding to the access failures. Thus if the sample fraction were 1/10 and 10 dwellings were in a sample the weight applied to any dwelling would be 10/1 which would give a stock total of 100. However, if access were only achieved in 5 dwellings the weight applied is the original 10/1 multiplied by the compensating factor, 10/5. Therefore 10/1 x 10/5 = 20. As there are only 5 dwellings with information the weight, when applied to five dwellings, still yields the same stock total of 100. The five dwellings with no data are ignored.

B.11 With an access rate above 50% there may be concern that the results will not be truly representative and that weighting the data in this manner might produce unreliable results. There is no evidence to suggest that the access rate has introduced any bias. When externally gathered information (which is present for all dwellings) is examined the stock that was inspected internally is present in similar proportions to those where access was not achieved suggesting no serious bias will have been introduced.

B.12 Only those dwellings where a full survey of internal and external elements, energy efficiency, housing health and safety and social questions were used in the production of data for this report. A total of 696 such surveys were produced.

B.13 The use of a sample survey to draw conclusions about the stock within the area as a whole introduces some uncertainty. Each figure produced is subject to sampling error, which means the true result will lie between two values, e.g. 5% and 6%. For ease of use, the data are presented as single figures rather than as ranges. A full explanation of these confidence limits is included in the following appendix.

Appendix C - Survey Sampling

Sample Design

C.1   The sample was drawn from the Test Valley Borough Council address file derived from Council Tax records, using the Building Research Establishment (BRE) stock modelling data. This allocates properties into four bands (strata), based on the projection of vulnerably occupied non decent dwellings. This form of stratification concentrates the surveys in areas with the poorest housing conditions and allows more detailed analysis. This procedure does not introduce any bias to the survey as results are weighted proportionally to take account of the over-sampling.

C.2   The models are based on information drawn from the Office of National Statistics Census data, the Land Registry, the English House Condition Survey and other sources. It is this data that is used to predict dwelling condition and identify the 'hot-spots' to be over-sampled.

Stock total

C.3   The stock total is based initially on the address list; this constitutes the sample frame from which a proportion (the sample) is selected for survey. Any non-dwellings found by the surveyors are marked as such in the sample; these will then be weighted to represent all the non-dwellings that are likely to be in the sample frame. The remaining dwellings surveyed are purely dwellings eligible for survey. These remaining dwellings are then re-weighted according to the original sample fractions and produce a stock total.

C.4   In producing the stock total the amount by which the total is adjusted to compensate for non-dwellings is estimated, based on how many surveyors found. With a sample as large as the final achieved data-set of 696 dwellings however, the sampling error is likely to be very small and the true stock total is likely, therefore, to be very close to the 41,050 private sector dwellings reported. Sampling error is discussed later in this section. Table C.1 shows the response rates to the survey.

Weighting the data

C.5   The original sample was drawn from Test Valley Borough Council Address file. The sample fractions used to create the sample from this list can be converted into weights. If applied to the basic sample these weights would produce a total equal to the original address list. However, before the weights are applied the system takes into account all non-residential and demolished dwellings. This revised sample total is then weighted to produce a total for the whole stock, which will be slightly lower than the original total from which the sample was drawn.

Dealing with non-response

C.6 Where access fails at a dwelling selected for survey the easiest strategy for a surveyor to adopt is to seek access at a neighbouring property. Unfortunately this approach results in large numbers of dwellings originally selected subsequently being excluded from the survey. These are the dwellings whose occupiers tend to be out all day, i.e. mainly the employed population. The converse of this is that larger numbers of dwellings are selected where the occupiers are at home most of the day, i.e. older persons, the unemployed and families with young children. This tends to bias the results of such surveys as these groups are often on the lowest incomes and where they are owner-occupiers they are not so able to invest in maintaining the fabric of their property.

C.7 The methods used in this survey were designed to minimise the effect of access failures. The essential features of this method are; the reduction of access failures to a minimum by repeated calls to dwellings and the use of first impression surveys to adjust the final weights to take account of variations in access rate.

C.8 Surveyors were instructed to call on at least three occasions and in many cases they called more often than this. At least one of these calls was to be outside of normal working hours, thus increasing the chance of finding someone at home.

C.9 Where access failed this normally resulted in a brief external assessment of the premises. Among the information gathered was the surveyor's first impression of condition. This is an appraisal of the likely condition of the dwelling based on the first impression the surveyor receives of the dwelling on arrival. It is not subsequently changed after this, whatever conditions are actually discovered.

C.10 Where access fails no data is collected on the internal condition of the premises. During data analysis weights are assigned to each dwelling according to the size of sample fraction used to select the individual dwelling.

C.11 The final weights given to each dwelling are adjusted slightly to take into account any bias in the type of dwellings accessed. Adjustments to the weights (and only the weights) are made on the basis of the tenure, age and first impression scores from the front-sheet only surveys.

Sampling error

C.12 Results of sample surveys are, for convenience, usually reported as numbers or percentages when in fact the figure reported is at the middle of a range in which the true figure for the population will lie. It is usual to report these as the 95% confidence limits, i.e. the range either side of the reported figure within which one can be 95% confident that the true figure for the population will lie.

C.13 For this survey the estimate of dwellings with a category 1 hazard is 14.8% and the 95% confidence limits are + or − 2.6%. In other words one can say that 95% of all samples chosen in this way would give a result in the range between 12.2% and 17.4%.

Table C.3 95% per cent confidence limits for a range of possible results and sample sizes

Expected result as per cent	Sample size									
	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1,000
10	5.9	4.2	3.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.1	2	1.9
20	7.8	5.5	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.2	3	2.8	2.6	2.5
30	9	6.4	5.2	4.5	4	3.7	3.4	3.2	3	2.8
40	9.6	6.8	5.5	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.2	3
50	9.8	6.9	5.7	4.9	4.4	4	3.7	3.5	3.3	3.1
60	9.6	6.8	5.5	4.8	4.3	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.2	3
70	9	6.4	5.2	4.5	4	3.7	3.4	3.2	3	2.8
80	7.8	5.5	4.5	3.9	3.5	3.2	3	2.8	2.6	2.5
90	5.9	4.2	3.4	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.2	2.1	2	1.9

Very small samples and zero results

C.14 When sub-dividing the results of a sample survey by multiple variables, it is possible to produce a result where no survey carried out matches these criteria. In such a case the result given will be zero, however, this can give a false impression that no such dwellings exist. In reality, it may well be possible that a very small number of dwellings, with the given characteristics, are present, but that in numbers that are too low to have been randomly picked by the sample.

C.15 In the case of the 2009 Test Valley HCS, the average weight is approximately 59 (41,050 private sector dwellings divided by 696 surveys). As a consequence, if there are fewer than 100 dwellings of a certain type within the Borough, the result from the survey will tend to be a very crude measure. This is because, based on the average weight, only a result of 59, 118 or 177 could be given, which if, in reality, there are 50 dwellings with a certain characteristic, is fairly inaccurate.

C.16 Because of the points outlined above, the reader is encouraged to view extremely small or zero results with caution. It should be considered that these represent a small but indeterminate total, rather than none at all.

Appendix D – Legislative Requirements

D.1 Section 605 of the Housing Act 1985 (as amended) placed a duty on Local Authorities to consider the condition of the stock within their area, in terms of their statutory responsibilities to deal with unfit housing, and to provide assistance with housing renewal. Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004 replaced this with a similar duty to keep housing conditions under review.

D.2 The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 came into effect on the 19 July 2003 and led to major change in the way Local Authorities can give financial help for people to repair or improve private sector homes. Before the Order, the Government set clear rules which controlled the way financial help could be given and specified the types of grant which could be offered. The Order set aside most of these rules (apart from the requirement to give mandatory Disabled Facility Grants). It now allows Local Authorities to adopt a flexible approach, using discretion to set up their own framework for giving financial assistance to reflect local circumstances, needs and resources.

D.3 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), published guidance under Circular 05/2003. In order to use the new freedom, a Local Authority must prepare and publish a Private Sector Renewal Policy. The policy must show that the new framework for financial assistance is consistent with national, regional and local policies. In particular, it has to show that the local priorities the strategy is seeking to address have been identified from evidence of local housing conditions including stock condition.

D.4 The Housing Act 2004 received Royal Assent in November 2004. The Act makes a number of important changes to the statutory framework for private sector housing, which came into effect in April 2006:

- The previous fitness standard and the enforcement system have been replaced by the new Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- The compulsory licensing of higher risk houses in multiple occupation (HMO) (three or more storeys, five or more tenants and two or more households).
- New discretionary powers including the option for selective licensing of private landlords, empty dwelling management orders and tenancy deposit protection.

D.5 Operating Guidance was published on the Housing Health and Safety Rating System in February 2006. This guidance describes the new system and the methods for measurement of hazards, as well as the division of category 1 and 2 hazards. Guidance has been issued by the ODPM on the licensing provisions for HMOs, which describes the high risk HMOs that require mandatory licensing and those that fall under additional, voluntary licensing.

D.6 As the Rating System has now replaced the fitness standard, this report will deal with findings based on statutory hazards, not unfitness.

Mandatory Duties

- Unfit houses (Housing Act 1985) - to take the most satisfactory course of action – works to make property fit, closure/demolition or clearance declaration.

With effect from April 2006 replaced by:

- Category 1 Hazards, Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Housing Act 2004) – to take the most satisfactory course of action – improvement notices, prohibition orders, hazard awareness notices, emergency remedial action, emergency prohibition orders, demolition orders or slum clearance declaration.

- Houses in Multiple Occupation (Housing Act 1985) - to inspect certain HMOs, to keep a register of notices served, to require registration where a registration scheme is in force.

With effect from April 2006 replaced by:

- HMO Licensing by the Authority (Housing Act 2004) of all HMOs of three or more storeys, with five or more residents and two or more households. Certain exceptions apply and are defined under sections 254 to 259 of the Housing Act 2004.

- Overcrowding - (Housing Act 1985) - to inspect and report on overcrowding

Now In Addition

- Overcrowding – (Housing Act 2004) – to inspect and report on overcrowding as defined under sections 139 to 144 of the Housing Act 2004 along with statutory duty to deal with any category 1 overcrowding hazards found under the HHSRS.

- The provision of adaptations and facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities (Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996) - to approve applications for Disabled Facilities Grants for facilities and/or access

- Energy Conservation (Home Energy Conservation Act 1995) - to have in place a strategy for the promotion and adoption of energy efficiency measures and to work towards specified Government targets to reduce fossil fuel use.

Appendix E - Definition of a Non Decent Home

Measure of a decent home

E.1   A dwelling is defined as non decent if it fails any one of the following 4 criteria:

Table E.1 Categories for dwelling decency

A	It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing – at present that it should not have a Category 1 hazard under the HHSRS
B	It is in a reasonable state of repair – has to have no old and defective major elements*
C	It has reasonably modern facilities and services – Adequate bathroom, kitchen, common areas of flats and is not subject to undue noise
D	Provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

* Described in more detail below

E.2   Each of these criteria has a sub-set of criteria, which are used to define such things as 'providing a reasonable degree of thermal comfort'. The exact details of these requirements are covered in the aforementioned ODPM guidance (see 4.1.2).

Applying the standard

E.3   The standard is specifically designed in order to be compatible with the kind of information collected as standard during a House Condition Survey (HCS). All of the variables required to calculate the standard are contained within a complete data set.

E.4   The four criteria used to determine the decent homes standard have specific parameters. The variables from the survey used for the criteria are described below:

Criterion A:

E.5 Criterion A is simply determined as whether or not a dwelling fails the current minimum standard for housing. This is now the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – specifically Category 1 hazards. All dwellings surveyed were marked on the basis of the HHSRS and if any one or more Category 1 hazards was identified the dwelling was deemed to fail under criterion A of the Decent Homes Standard.

Criterion B:

E.6 Criterion B falls into 2 parts: firstly, if any one of a number of key major building elements is both in need of replacement and old, then the dwelling is automatically non decent. Secondly, if any two of a number of key minor building elements are in need of replacement and old, then the dwelling is automatically non decent. The elements in question are as follows:

Table E.2 Major Elements (1 or more)

Element	Age to be considered old
Major Walls (Repair/Replace >10%)	80
Roofs (Replace 50% or more)	50 for houses 30 for flats
Chimney (1 or more needing partial rebuild)	50
Windows (Replace 2 or more windows)	40 for houses 30 for flats
Doors (Replace 1 or more doors)	40 for houses 30 for flats
Gas Boiler (Major Repair)	15
Gas Fire (Major Repair)	10
Electrics (Major Repair)	30

Table E.3 Minor Elements (2 or more)

Element	Age to be considered old
Kitchen (Major repair or replace 3+ items)	30
Bathroom (Replace 2+ items)	40
Central heating distribution (Major Repair)	40
Other heating (Major Repair)	30

Criterion C:

E.7 Criterion C requires the dwelling to have reasonably modern facilities. These are classified as the following:

Table E.4 Age categories for amenities

Amenity	Defined as
Reasonably modern kitchen	Less than 20 yrs
Kitchen with adequate space and layout	If too small or missing facilities
Reasonably modern bathroom	Less than 30 yrs
An appropriately located bathroom and W.C.	If unsuitably located etc.
Adequate noise insulation	Where external noise a problem
Adequate size and layout of common parts	Flats

E.8 You may notice that the age definition for kitchens and bathrooms differs from criterion B. This is because it was determined that a decent kitchen, for example, should generally be less than 20 years old but may have the odd item older than this. The same idea applies for bathrooms.

Criterion D:

E.9 The dwelling should provide an adequate degree of thermal comfort. It is currently taken that a dwelling, which is in fuel poverty, is considered to be non decent. A dwelling is in fuel poverty if the occupiers spend more than 10% of their net income (after Tax, N.I and housing cost e.g. mortgage or rent) on heating and hot water.

E.10 A number of Local Authorities criticized this approach, as it requires a fully calculated SAP for each dwelling that is being examined. Whilst this is fine for a general statistical approach, such as this study, it does cause problems at the individual dwelling level for determining course of action.

E.11 The alternative, laid out in the new guidance, is to examine a dwelling's heating systems and insulation types. The following is an extract from the new guidance:

E.12 The revised definition requires a dwelling to have both:

Efficient heating; and

Effective insulation

Efficient heating is defined as any gas or oil programmable central heating or electric storage heaters or programmable LPG/solid fuel central heating or similarly efficient heating systems, which are developed in the future. Heating sources, which provide less efficient options, fail the decent homes standard.

Because of the differences in efficiency between gas/oil heating systems and other heating systems listed, the level of insulation that is appropriate also differs:

For dwellings with gas/oil programmable heating, cavity wall insulation (if there are cavity walls that can be insulated effectively) or at least 50mm loft insulation (if there is loft space) is an effective package of insulation;

For dwellings heated by electric storage radiators/LPG/programmable solid fuel central heating a higher specification of insulation is required: at least 200mm of loft insulation (if there is a loft) and cavity wall insulation (if there are cavities that can be insulated effectively).

E.13 For the purposes of this study the above definition will be used in calculating the proportion of dwellings that are considered non decent.

Appendix F - Additional amenities

F.1 The following charts examine the position for electrical systems and boilers. Electrical systems over 30 years of age are considered as reaching a point where regular inspection and testing is advisable to ensure that they are not likely to present a hazard. Many boilers over the age of 15 will still be working satisfactorily but they will be reaching the end of their economic life and their energy efficiency is likely to be declining. Boilers installed now have much higher levels of efficiency in order to meet current Building Regulations.

F.2 75% of boilers and 55% of electrical systems are either older than the age specified in the criterion or will become so in the next 10 years.

Figure F.1 Electrics and boiler age

Boiler

Less than 5 5 to 15 Over 15

25% 48% 27%

Electrics

Less than 20 20 to 30 Over 30

45% 36% 19%
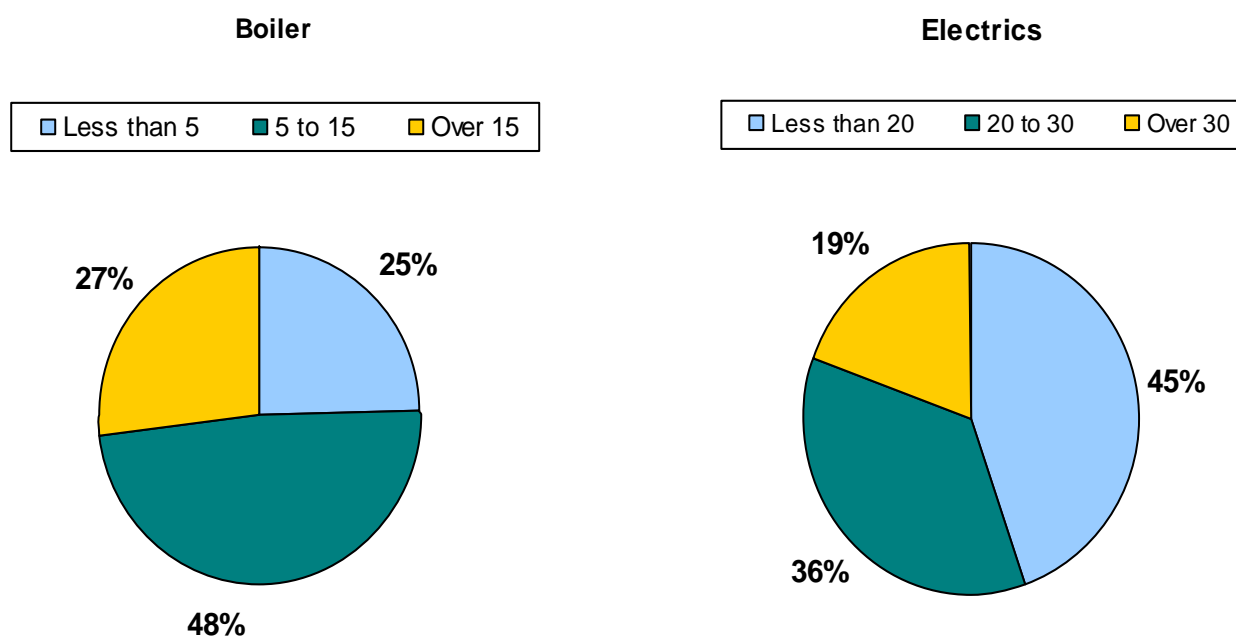
Source: 2009 House Condition Survey

F.3 The age bands used in these charts and those used in chapter 7 differ, dependent upon the design life of the amenity in question. The second band in each chart represents where the amenity will become older than its design life during the next ten years.