

## **The 2011 Census dwelling count**

### **Definition of a dwelling**

Dwellings are classified into two types, unshared and shared. The 2011 Census defines a dwelling as a single self-contained household space (an unshared dwelling) or two or more household spaces at the same address that are not self-contained, but combine to form a shared dwelling that is self-contained. A household space is the accommodation that a household occupies, and self-containment means that all rooms, including the kitchen, bathroom and toilet are behind a door (but not necessarily a single door) only that household can use. In most cases, a single household space will be an unshared dwelling.

### **Definition of a household**

One person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities **and** share a living room or sitting room or dining area.

### **Derivation of dwelling count**

For the 2011 Census, the number and type of dwelling (shared or unshared) is calculated using address information of households together with information provided by householders to questions asked in the Census about the accommodation in which they live. These questions relate to the type of accommodation of the household and whether the accommodation is self-contained, with additional consideration given to the ethnic group of household members living in mobile accommodation.

Accommodation may be occupied or unoccupied (such as vacant properties or second or holiday homes). Unoccupied accommodation is included in the total dwelling count. However, accommodation in communal establishments such as halls of residences, care homes and other establishments do not form part of the dwelling count.

A household's accommodation is defined as being part of a shared dwelling if (a) the type of accommodation is 'part of a converted or shared house (including bedsits), (b) not all the rooms, including the kitchen, bathroom and toilet, are behind a door only that household can use, and (c) there is at least one other such household accommodation at the same address with which it can be combined to form a shared dwelling.

In addition, if a household has accommodation type 'a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure' and at least one member of the household has a 'Gypsy or traveller' ethnic group, and conditions (b) and (c) also apply, then the accommodation is also defined as being part of a shared dwelling (it is assumed that households living in 'caravans or other mobile or temporary structures' do not share cooking or living facilities, therefore the accommodation is self-contained and the dwelling is unshared. However, people belonging to a 'Gypsy or traveller' ethnic group who live in such accommodation may often share facilities, and therefore do not necessarily live in unshared dwellings. Unless the accommodation is described as self-contained, these form shared dwellings.). All other accommodation which does not meet these criteria is classified as unshared dwellings.

The dwelling type (shared or unshared) for unoccupied accommodation is determined using the same criteria as above for occupied accommodation. For vacant unoccupied accommodation, the accommodation type and self-containment has been determined by Census field staff using proxy information provided by neighbours or from another reliable source. For unoccupied second or holiday homes, the information has been provided either by the homeowner or has been estimated by field staff.

### **Applied examples**

1. "Flat share":
  - a. 4 adults live together in a flat with 3 bedrooms and share a kitchen and living room, a bathroom and a front door: **1 household, 1 unshared dwelling.**

- b. 4 adults live together in a flat with 3 bedrooms and share a kitchen, a bathroom and a front door but no dining or living room area,: **3 households, 1 shared dwelling.**

2. “Granny annex”:

- a. 2 adults and their 2 children live together in a house with 1 kitchen and 1 bathroom. At one side of the house is an extension comprising a bedroom and en suite bathroom, occupied by a third adult, a grandparent of the children. The extension has its own separate external front door and an internal door connecting it with the rest of the house: **2 households, 1 shared dwelling.**
- b. 2 adults and their 2 children live together in a house with 1 kitchen and 1 bathroom. At one side of the house is an extension comprising a bedroom, en suite bathroom and small kitchen, occupied by a third adult, a grandparent of the children. The extension is not connected with the rest of the house by an internal door and has an external door of its own: **2 households, 2 unshared dwellings.**

3. “Sheltered accommodation”

- a. 2 adults live together in one flat of a purpose built block of flats in which there is a communal lounge and laundry, with a kitchen and dining facilities in each flat: **1 household, 1 unshared dwelling.**
- b. 2 adults live together in a bedroom with en suite bathroom. The bedroom door opens onto a corridor that is shared by 7 other such bedrooms within a house that also comprises a staffed kitchen and shared dining and reception rooms: **1 household, living within communal accommodation, therefore excluded from the dwelling count.**

### Comparability with 2001

Both the definition of a dwelling and the derivation of the number and type of dwellings used in the 2011 Census are very similar to that used in the 2001 Census. The definition of a household has however changed since 2001, as shown in the box below:

Definition of a household	
2001 Census definition	2011 Census definition
One person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping - that is sharing either a living room or sitting room <b>or</b> at least one meal a day.	One person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities <b>and</b> share a living room or sitting room or dining area.

The impact of this change in definition was measured in the ONS Opinions Survey by asking both questions to residents at a sample of addresses. The results showed the impact to be minimal (less than 0.1 per cent of households at the addresses sampled changed classification) and there was no change in the overall number of households under the two definitions. Therefore it is expected that any impact on the balance of shared and unshared dwellings between the two Censuses will be small.