

Housing, disability and wheelchair usage

This section considers the sample of individuals with a serious medical condition or disability. It should be noted that the SEH sample is taken from private homes only and therefore excludes those that live in institutions.

Around a quarter (26%) of this group required specially adapted accommodation. Table 1.25 shows the number of individuals in England with a medical condition or disability that required specially adapted accommodation. In total, 1.5 million individuals were reported as having such a disability. Eighty-four per cent were over 45 and over half (55%) lived in owner-occupied accommodation.

Seventy-five per cent lived in accommodation they considered to be “suitable” for coping with the medical condition or disability. Suitability was highest for those who lived in sheltered accommodation (88%) and those aged 65 or more (over 80%). It was lower among private renters (53%) and those aged 15 or less (47%).

Table 1.25: Suitability of accommodation for persons with serious medical condition or disability, by age of individual and by type of tenure			
<i>Disabled persons¹</i>			<i>England 2005/06</i>
Age and tenure	Number requiring specially adapted accommodation (1)	Of (1) number whose accommodation is suitable (2)	Percentage in suitable accommodation (2) as % of (1)
		<i>thousands</i>	<i>percentages</i>
Age of person			
0-15	58	27	47
16-24	26	16	64
25-44	157	97	62
45-64	397	288	72
65-74	301	243	81
75-84	407	330	81
85 and over	158	129	82
Total	1,503	1,132	75
Tenure of household			
All owner occupiers	820	638	78
Rented from:			
council	366	273	75
housing association	243	182	75
All social renters	609	455	75
All private renters	73	39	53
Total	1,503	1,132	75
Persons in sheltered housing¹	160	142	88
¹ Included in above totals			
Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing			

Table 1.26 gives an overview of the trend in the estimated total of people in England who are disabled (and/or have a serious medical condition) *and* require specially adapted accommodation *and* live in private homes. The overall proportion of homes that are suitable has remained stable at between 70 and 80% over the last six years. As might be expected, the proportion of “sheltered homes” that meet the needs of the disabled/serious ill occupants is generally much higher than that of other homes.

Table 1.26: Trend in number of people with serious medical condition/disability by age/tenure and whether accommodation meets their needs, 2000/01 to 2004/05

<i>Disabled persons¹</i>							<i>England 2005/06</i>					
	Persons with a serious medical condition or disability requiring specially adapted accommodation						Percentage of people with serious medical condition or disability who say that their current accommodation is suitable					
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005-06
<i>Age of person</i>	<i>thousands</i>						<i>percentages</i>					
0-15	70	70	54	55	57	58	47	51	50	53	68	47
16-24	26	29	34	34	26	26	73	53	55	61	87	64
25-44	124	135	124	111	139	157	63	66	60	66	76	62
45-64	351	345	358	364	367	397	71	69	71	75	75	72
65-74	328	282	265	315	301	301	75	80	75	79	81	81
75-84	332	403	372	373	350	407	82	84	83	82	85	81
85+	118	108	145	116	139	158	85	87	82	85	84	82
Total	1,349	1,370	1,353	1,368	1,380	1,503	74	76	74	77	80	75
Tenure												
Owner occupiers	713	702	660	660	753	820	76	78	77	79	82	78
Social renters	568	606	622	624	556	609	73	75	72	76	79	75
Private renters	67	63	71	84	71	73	55	59	65	67	63	53
Total	1,349	1,370	1,353	1,368	1,380	1,503	74	76	74	77	80	75
Number of persons in sheltered housing²	116	145	102	129	103	160	82	92	93	93	95	88

¹ Persons with a serious medical conditions or disability
² Included in above totals
Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing

Table 1.27 focuses particularly on wheelchair users. Seventy-one per cent of wheelchair users only used their wheelchair outdoors. However, respondents who required adapted accommodation were likely to be more frequent wheelchair users (25% used their wheelchair all the time compared with just 7% of those that did not need specially adapted accommodation). Table 1.27 also shows that one in five (20%) of wheelchair users who needed adapted accommodation did not live in suitable accommodation.

Table 1.27: Wheelchair use by suitability of accommodation

<i>Disabled persons¹ using a wheelchair</i>				<i>England 2005/06</i>
Whether needs specially adapted accommodation	When uses wheelchair			Total
	all the time, indoors & outdoors thousands	occasionally indoors	outdoors only	
<i>thousands</i>				
Needs specially adapted accommodation:				
Current accommodation suitable	97	38	251	386
Current accommodation not suitable	24	8	65	97
All needing adapted accommodation	121	46	315	482
Does not need adapted accommodation	12	12	142	166
Total	133	58	457	648
<i>percentages</i>				
Needs specially adapted accommodation:				
Current accommodation suitable	25	10	65	100
Current accommodation not suitable	25	8	67	100
All needing adapted accommodation	25	9	65	100
Does not need adapted accommodation	7	7	86	100
Total	21	9	71	100

¹ Persons with a serious medical condition or disability
Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing

Table 1.28 examines the manoeuvrability of wheelchairs around the home. Fifty per cent of respondents reported that it was “very easy” or “fairly easy” to manoeuvre their wheelchair, with a slightly smaller proportion (42%) saying that it was “fairly difficult” or “very difficult”. Respondents who lived in suitable accommodation (i.e. with special adaptations) were more likely to report satisfaction with manoeuvrability. Ninety per cent of wheelchair users living in unsuitable accommodation reported that it was “fairly difficult” or “very difficult” to manoeuvre their wheelchair.

Table 1.28: Manoeuvrability of wheelchair around the home by whether accommodation suitable						
<i>Disabled persons¹ requiring specially adapted accommodation² using a wheelchair indoors</i>						<i>England 2005/06</i>
Whether accommodation suitable³	Ease of manoeuvring wheelchair around home					Total
	Very easy	Fairly easy nor difficult	Neither easy	Fairly difficult	Very difficult	
						<i>thousands</i>
Not suitable	31	51	11	19	22	134
	0	1	2	13	15	31
Total	31	52	13	32	37	165
						<i>percentages</i>
Suitable	23	38	8	14	16	100
Not suitable	0	3	7	42	48	100
Total	19	31	8	20	22	100

¹ Persons with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.
² In households where there is a person with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity requiring such adaptation
³ Whether accommodation suitable for the person or persons in the household who have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity
Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing

Overall, disabled respondents who required specially adapted accommodation were more likely to report that it was suitable if they were owner occupiers. This finding is shown separately for wheelchair users (Table 1.29) and non-wheelchair users (Table 1.30).

Table 1.29: Whether require specially adapted accommodation by tenure					
<i>Disabled persons¹ using a wheelchair</i>					<i>England 2005/06</i>
Tenure	Requires specially adapted accommodation?				All disabled¹ persons using wheelchair
	Yes			No	
	Accommodation suitable	Accommodation not suitable	Total	Total	
					<i>thousands</i>
Owner occupied	231	49	279	94	373
Social and privately rented ²	155	48	203	72	275
All tenures	386	97	482	166	648
					<i>percentages</i>
Owner occupied	83	17	100		
Social and privately rented	76	24	100		
Total	80	20	100		

¹ Persons with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.
² The 275 thousand in rented accommodation include 240 thousand social renters and 35 thousand private renters. There are too few private renting wheelchair users in the sample to provide estimates of the need for specially adapted accommodation for private renters alone.
Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing

Table 1.30: Whether require specially adapted accommodation by tenure

*Disabled persons¹ not using a wheelchair**England 2005/06*

Tenure of household	Whether accommodation suitable		Total
	Yes	No	
			<i>thousands</i>
Owner occupied	407	131	539
Social/private rented	339	141	480
All tenures	746	272	1,018
			<i>percentages</i>
Owner occupied	76	24	100
Social/private rented	71	29	100
Total	73	27	100

¹ Persons with a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity.

Source: DCLG Survey of English Housing