

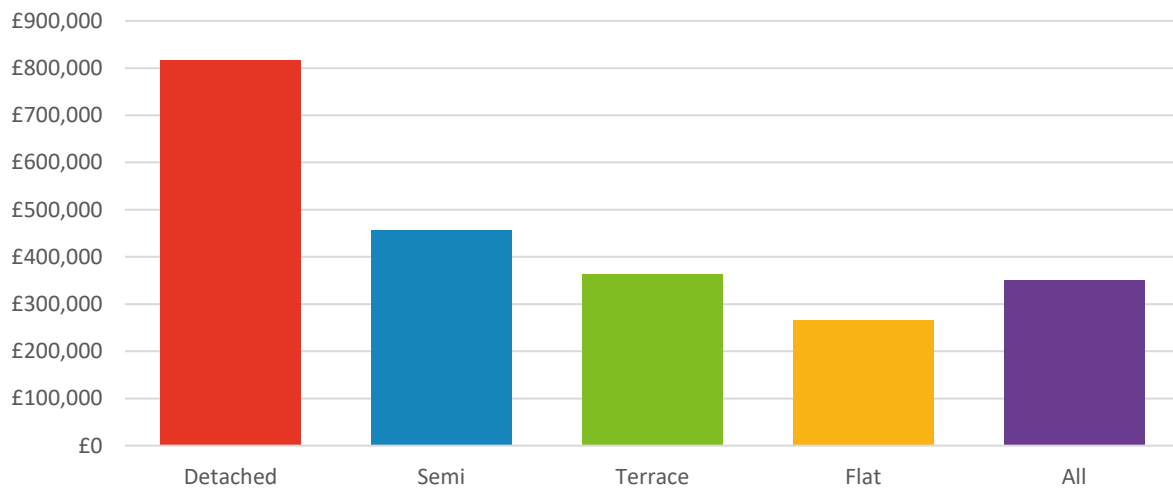
Watford



Residential
Analysts

1. Affordability

Average house prices

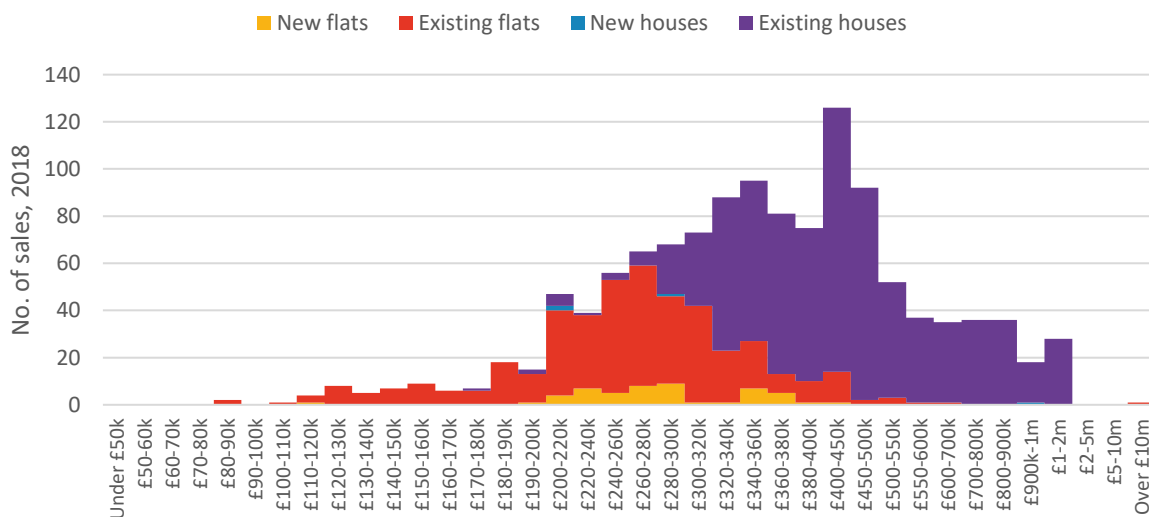


Source: HM Land Registry Price Paid Data

The average house price in Watford in 2018 was £351,000. The median ratio of house prices to local earnings is 11.9. This is much higher than the England average of 8.0, suggesting high house prices are likely to be a significant issue.

According to 2016 ONS data, the average price per square metre was £5,225 with the average price per bedroom £100,000 - the corresponding national average figures were £2,463 and £55,087.

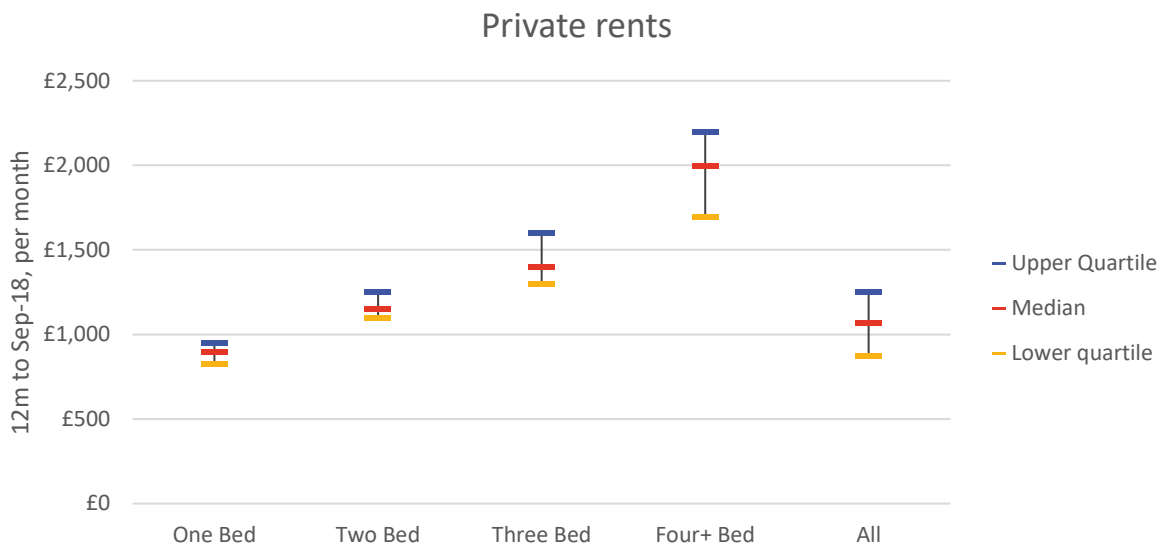
Sales distribution by house price



Source: HM Land Registry Price Paid Data

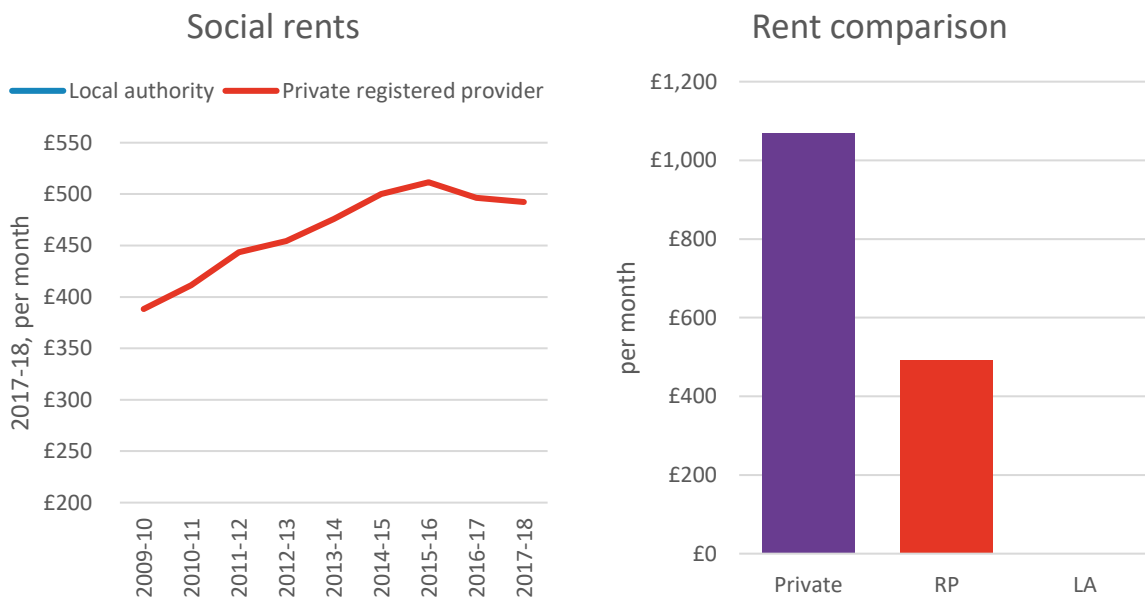
New homes made up 4.5% of the total 1,230 sales recorded by the Land Registry in 2018. 36.7% of total sales were flats, and 29.0% were under £300,000. By comparison, 66.0% of transactions nationally were under £300,000.

1. Affordability



Source: VOA Private Rental Market Statistics

Private rents in Watford in the 12 months to September 2018 ranged from £825 per month for a lower quartile one bed to £2,200 for an upper quartile four (or more) bed property. The overall median private rent was £1,069, which is much higher than the England average of £690, suggesting high private rents are likely to be a significant problem.

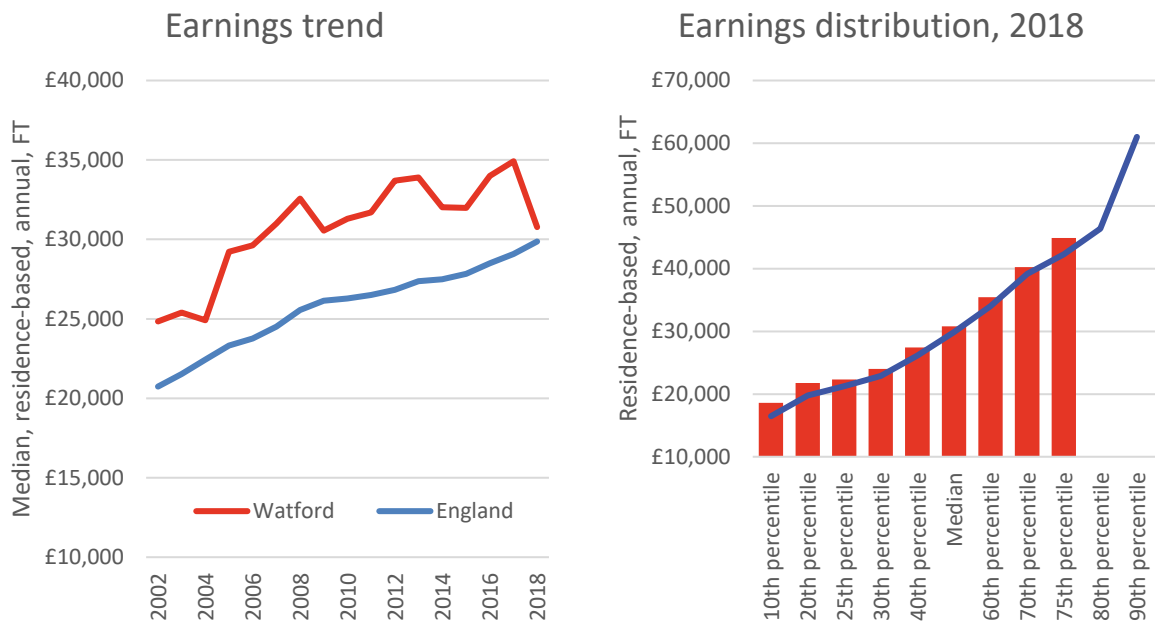


Source: MHCLG Live Tables on Rents, Lettings and Tenancies; VOA Private Rental Market Statistics

Social rents are approximately 46% of private rents in Watford. Average social rents have increased 8.4% over the past five years, compared with 9.3% at national level.

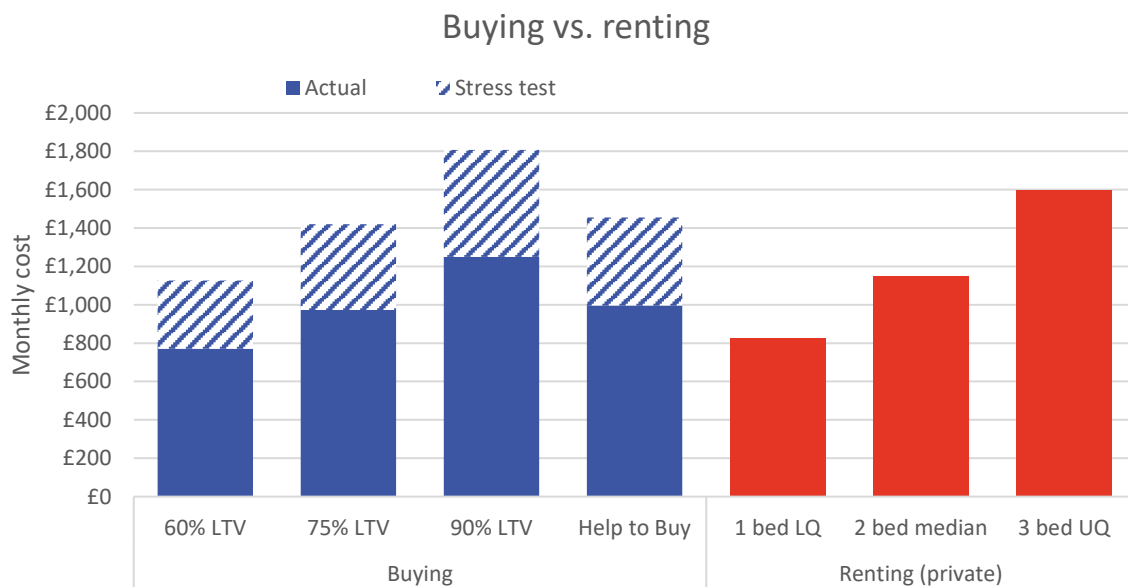
Note: Social rents based on simple average of RP and local authority stock, or RPs only where no local authority stock (e.g. LSVT).

1. Affordability



Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

The median full-time earnings in Watford were £30,779 in 2018, compared to £29,869 in England. Half of local full-time workers earn between the lower quartile of £22,330 and the upper quartile of £44,886, compared to national figures of £21,273 and £42,285.

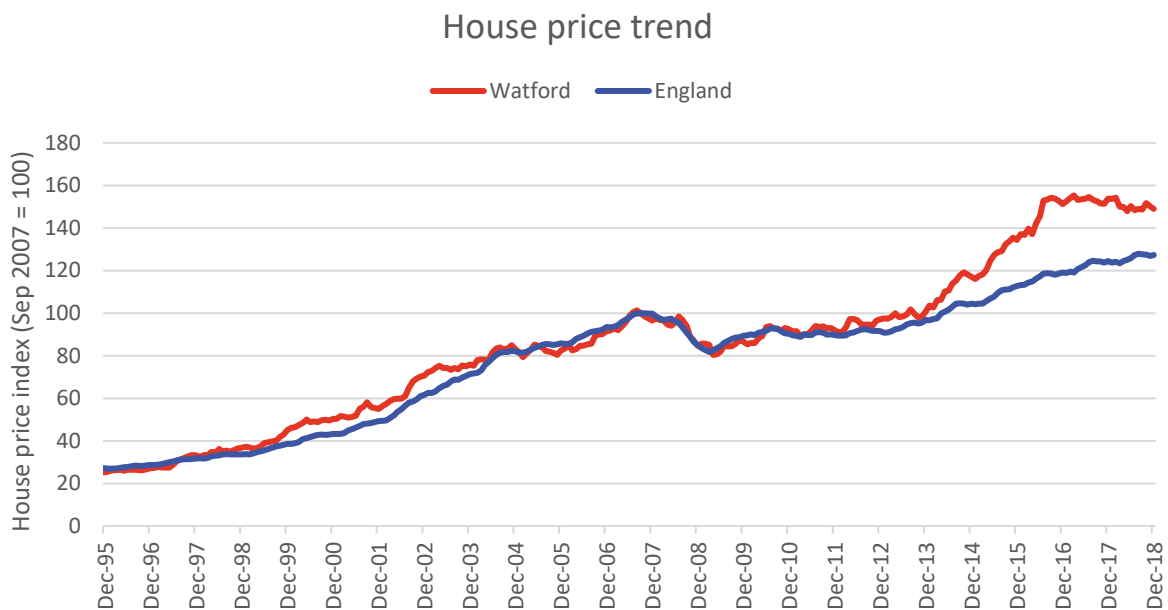


Source: HM Land Registry Price Paid Data; VOA Private Rental Market Statistics; Bank of England

This chart shows a simple comparison of initial mortgage costs and rents for a range of scenarios to represent potential FTB decisions.

Note: Buying scenarios based on average terraced house value (flat in London), lower of £600k (HTB limit) or average new build for HTB, and includes +3% mortgage rate stress test.

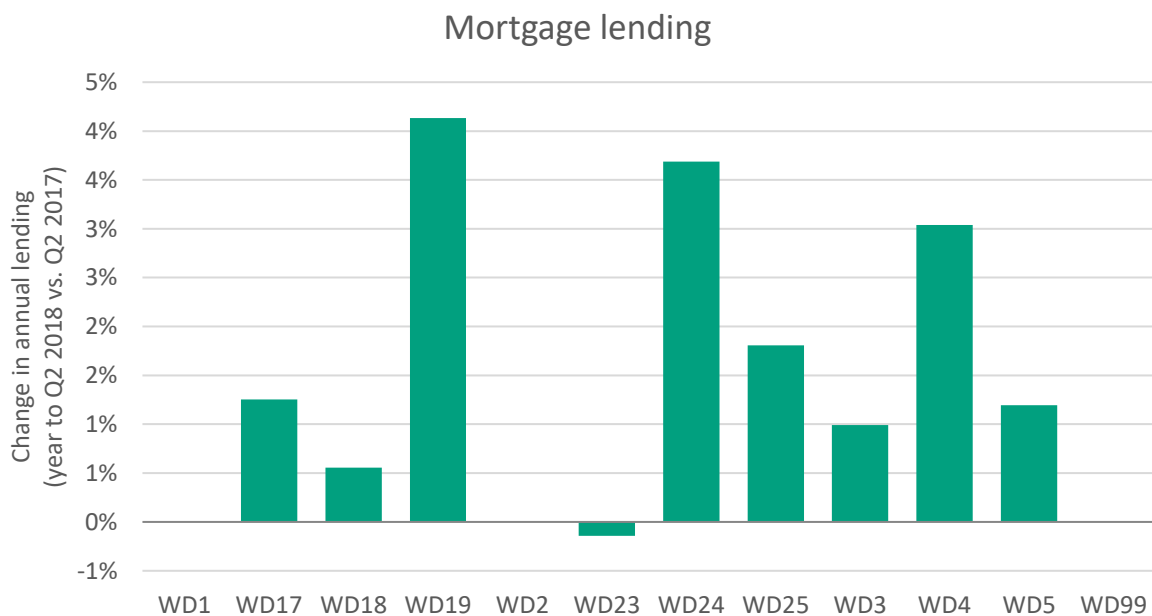
1. Affordability



Source: HM Land Registry UK House Price Index

House prices in Watford in December 2018 are higher than their 2007/08 peak by 47.0%, compared with England at +27.3%. This suggests that rapid house price growth through the current cycle is likely to be a significant local problem. Values in 2018 decreased by 3.1% annually.

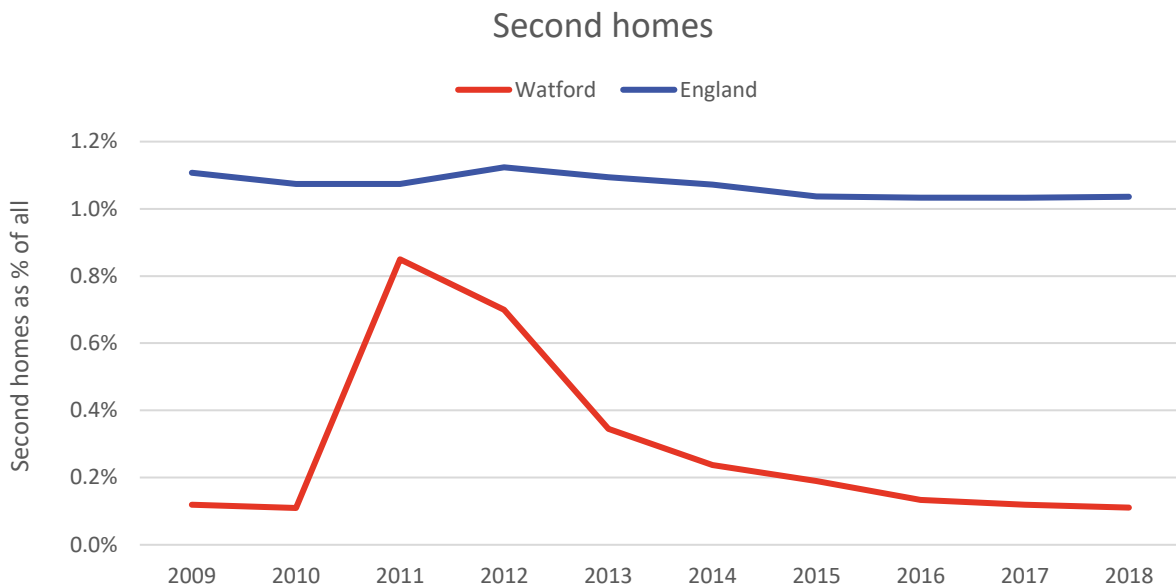
An indicative rental yield (based on ave 2 bed rent vs. ave flat sales value) for Watford is 5.2%, compared with 3.4% nationally.



Source: UK Finance

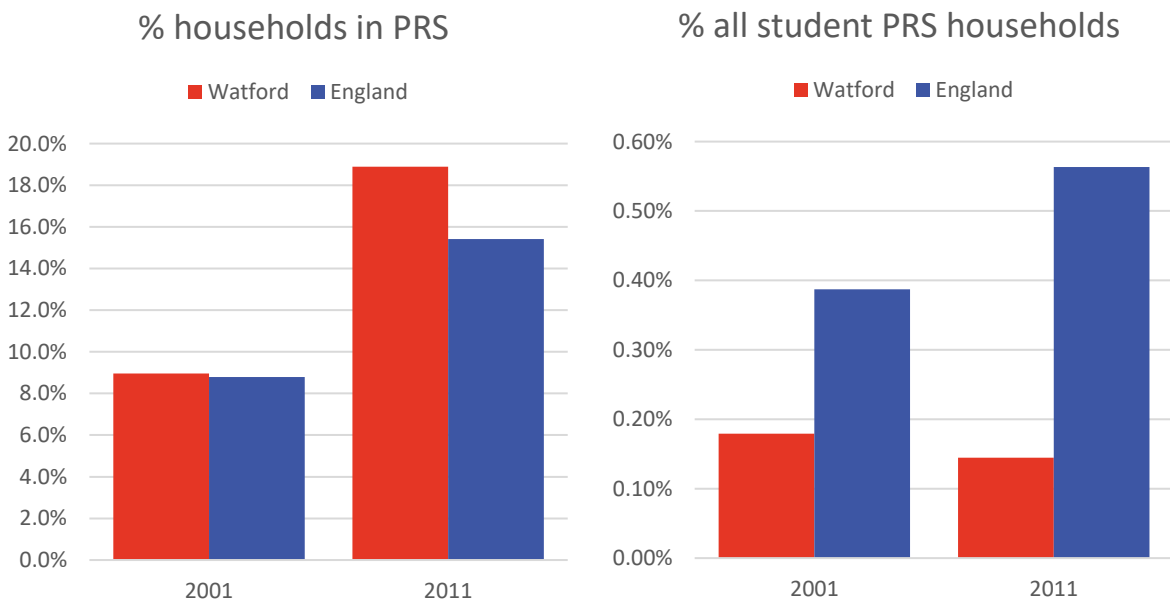
This chart shows the change in mortgage lending across the postcode districts in Watford. The total volume of lending in the 12 months to Q2 2018 was £5,976 million, compared with £5,880 million a year earlier, a change of +1.6%.

1. Affordability



Source: Council Tax Base

0.1% of residential properties in Watford were recorded as second homes in 2018 according to Council Tax Base data. This is significantly lower than the England average, suggesting high levels of second home ownership are unlikely to be a problem, though other sources should be considered.

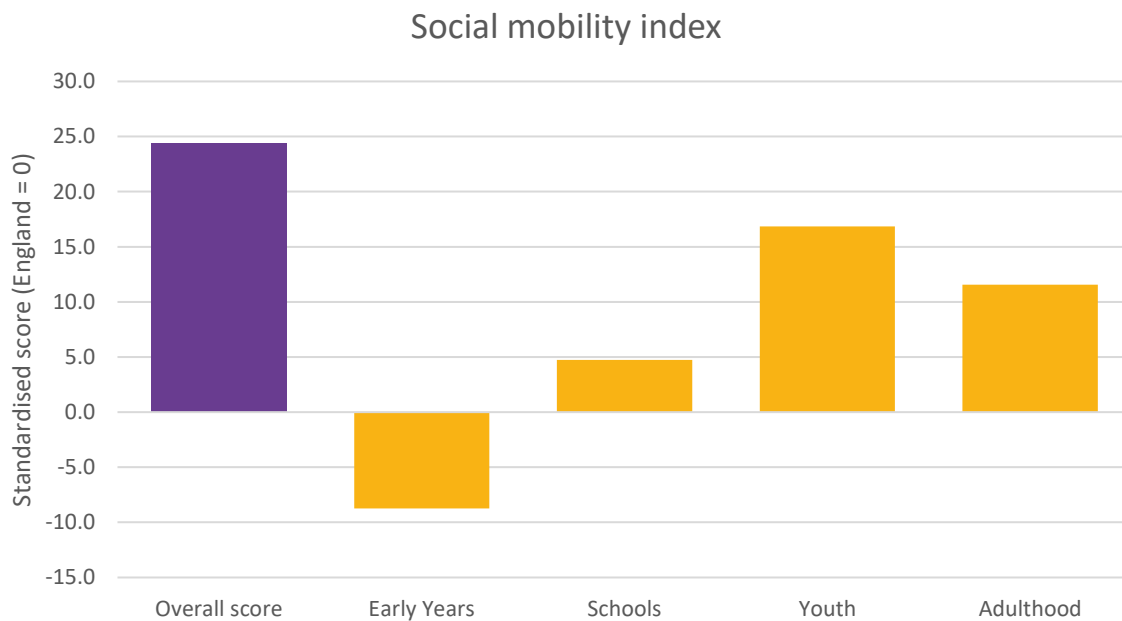


Source: 2001 and 2011 Census

18.9% of households in Watford were rented privately according to the 2011 Census, compared to 9.0% in 2001. The England average changed from 8.8% to 15.4% over the same period.

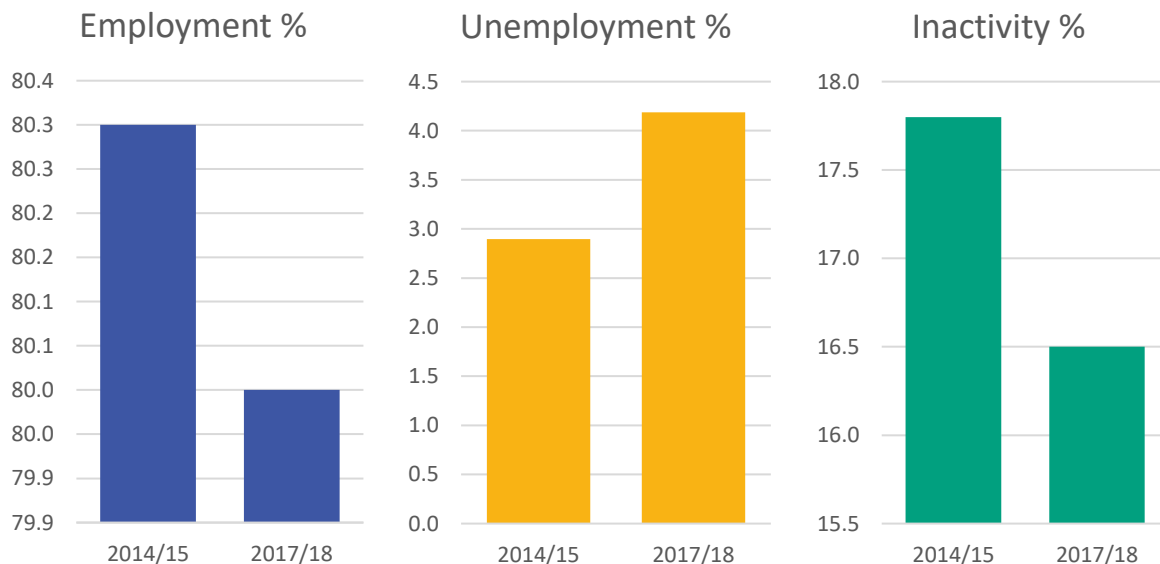
0.8% of the PRS households in Watford comprised only students in 2011, compared with 3.7% in England, suggesting students are not a significant part of the local PRS market.

1. Affordability



Source: Social Mobility Index

Watford received an overall standardised score of 24.4 in the 2017 Social Mobility Index, compared to the England average of zero. Watford ranks as 77/324 for overall score across all English local authorities for which data is available. Local house price affordability is likely to be a further barrier to social mobility in this area.

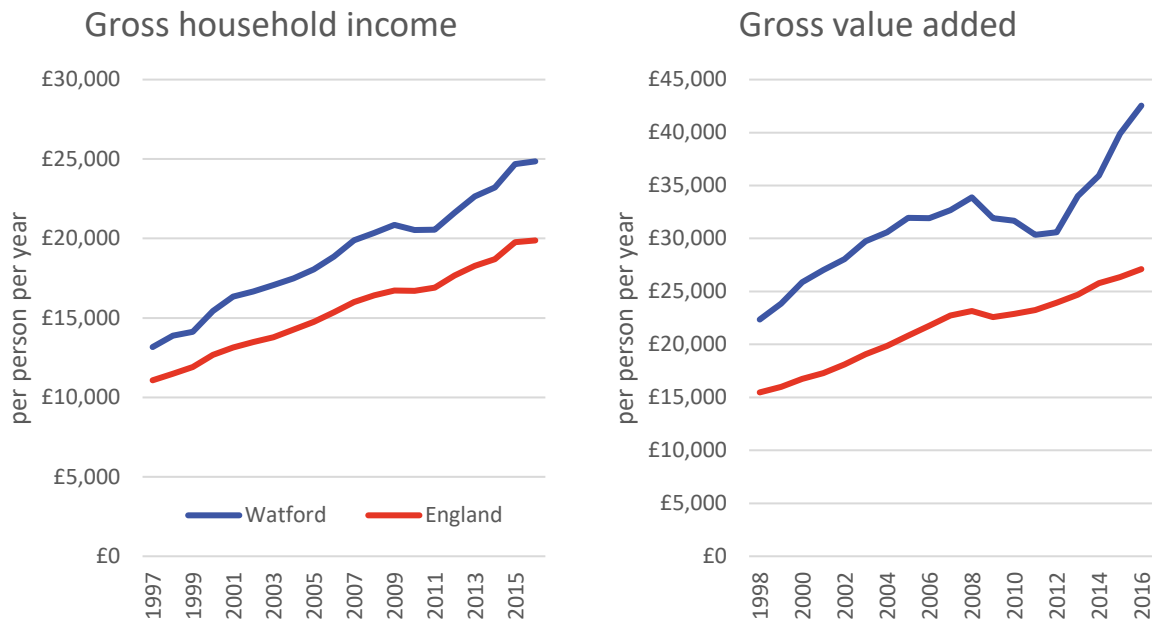


Source: ONS Local Labour Market Indicators

Employment in Watford changed from 80.3% in 2014/15 to 80.0% in 2017/18; unemployment changed from 2.9% to 4.2%; and economic inactivity changed from 17.8% to 16.5%.

By comparison, employment in England changed from 73.6% in 2014/15 to 75.3% in 2017/18; unemployment changed from 5.3% to 4.2%; and economic inactivity changed from 22.2% to 21.3%.

1. Affordability

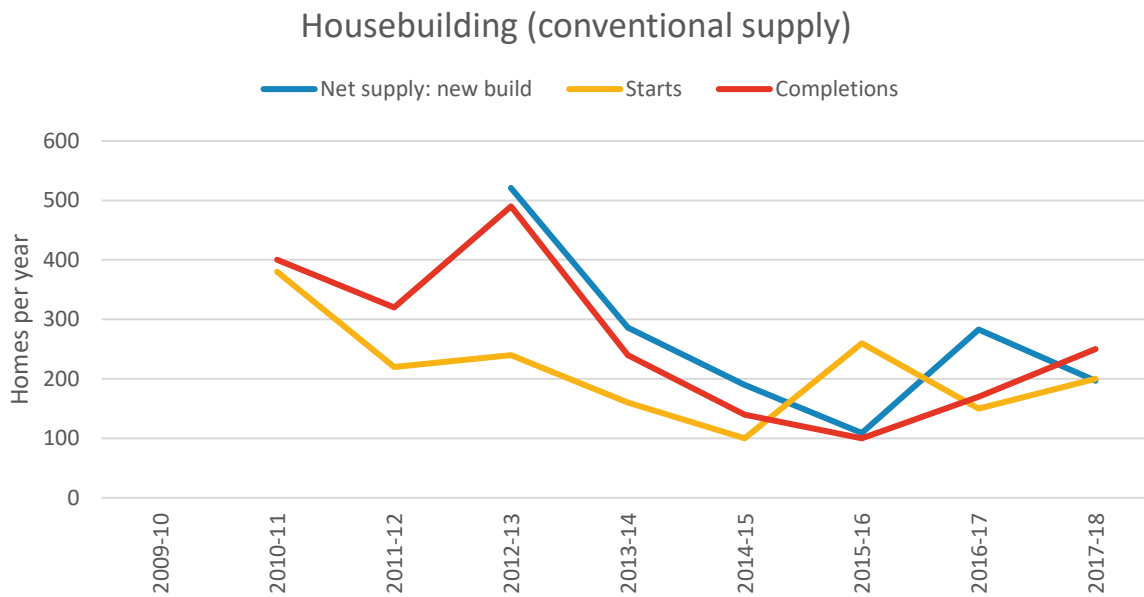


Source: ONS Regional Accounts

Gross domestic household income in Watford was £24,854 per person per year in 2016, compared with £18,856 in 2006. By comparison the figure for England changed from £15,349 to £19,878 over the same period. Based on this measure, Watford is a relatively affluent area.

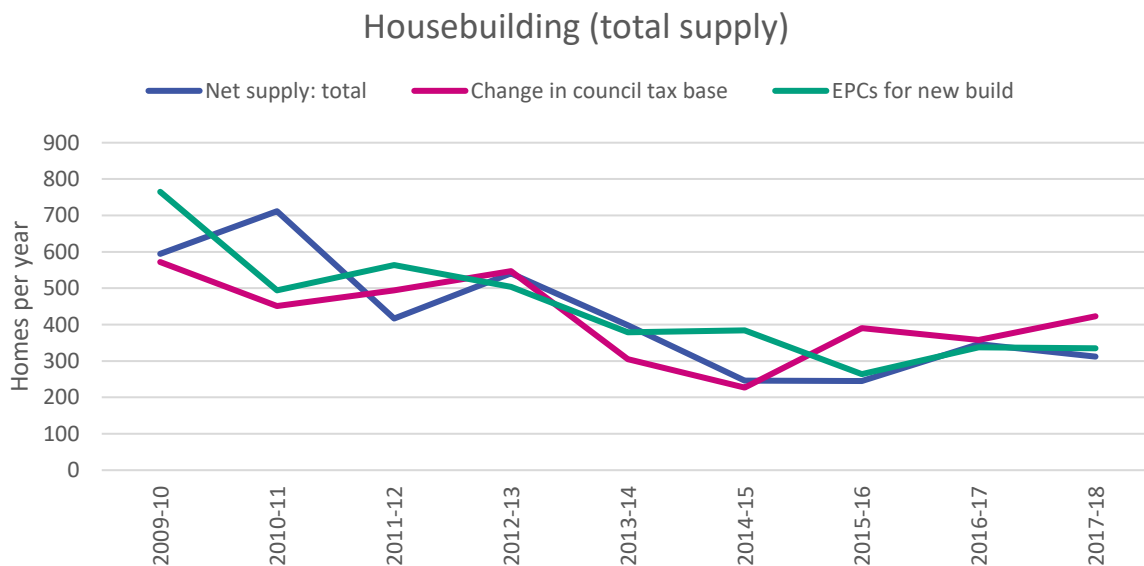
Gross value added at district level was £42,541 per person per year in 2016, compared with £31,909 a decade earlier. By comparison the figure for England changed from £21,773 to £27,108 over the same period.

2. Availability



Source: MHCLG Live Tables 253a and 122

The measures of 'conventional' housebuilding for Watford are shown in this chart. The 'official' MHCLG supply figures for 2017-18 recorded 197 new build completions (excluding any conversions or change of use). Over the same period 250 completions were recorded in the 'unofficial' quarterly data, along with 200 starts.



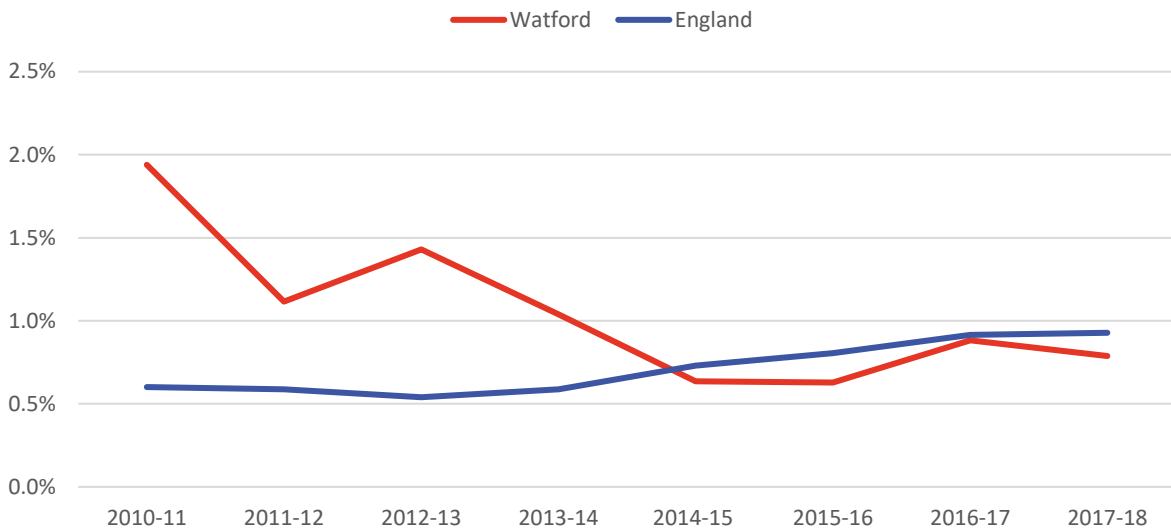
Source: MHCLG Live Table 122; MHCLG Live tables on Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates; Council Tax Base

This chart shows total supply for Watford. The 'official' MHCLG supply figures for 2017-18 recorded 312 net new homes in total (including conversions and change of use, and after demolitions), and the Council Tax Base changed by +423 homes in the same period.

EPCs issued for new homes are used as a lead indicator of supply and can often be used to estimate net supply: 310 were recorded in the 2018 calendar year in Watford.

2. Availability

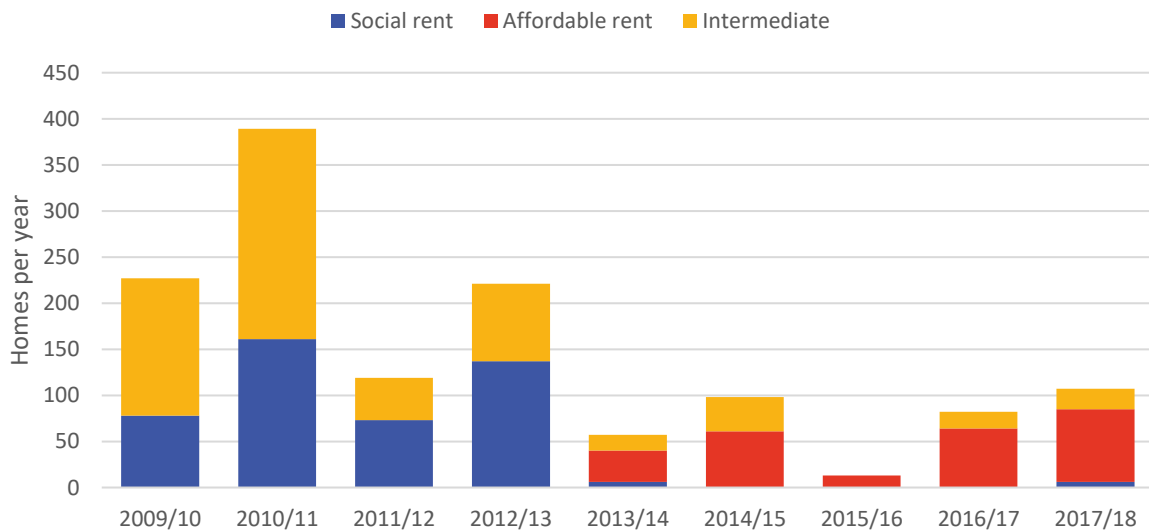
Net additions as % of stock



Source: MHCLG Live Tables 100 and 122

The net new supply in Watford increased the existing housing stock by 0.8% in 2017/18. This is lower than the England average of 0.9%, suggesting the level of local supply is likely to be an issue. Note that the Government's national target of 300,000 homes per year is equivalent to 1.3%.

Affordable delivery

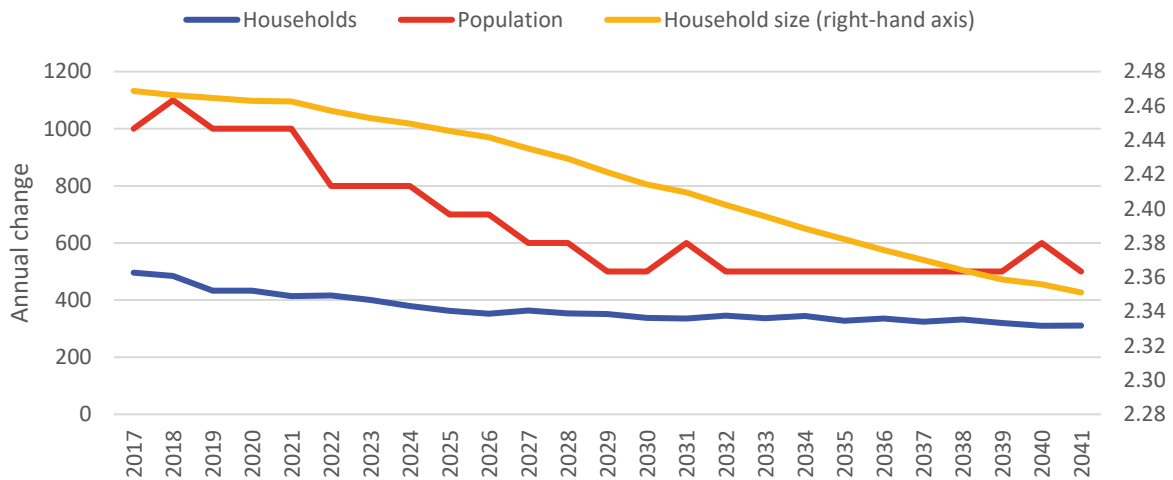


Source: MHCLG Live Tables 1006C, 1006aC and 1007C

The previous analysis in this section covers delivery of all tenures / by all types of developer. This chart shows only delivery of affordable housing. In Watford 107 new affordable homes were completed in 2017/18: 6 for social rent, 79 for affordable rent and 22 intermediate affordable homes.

2. Availability

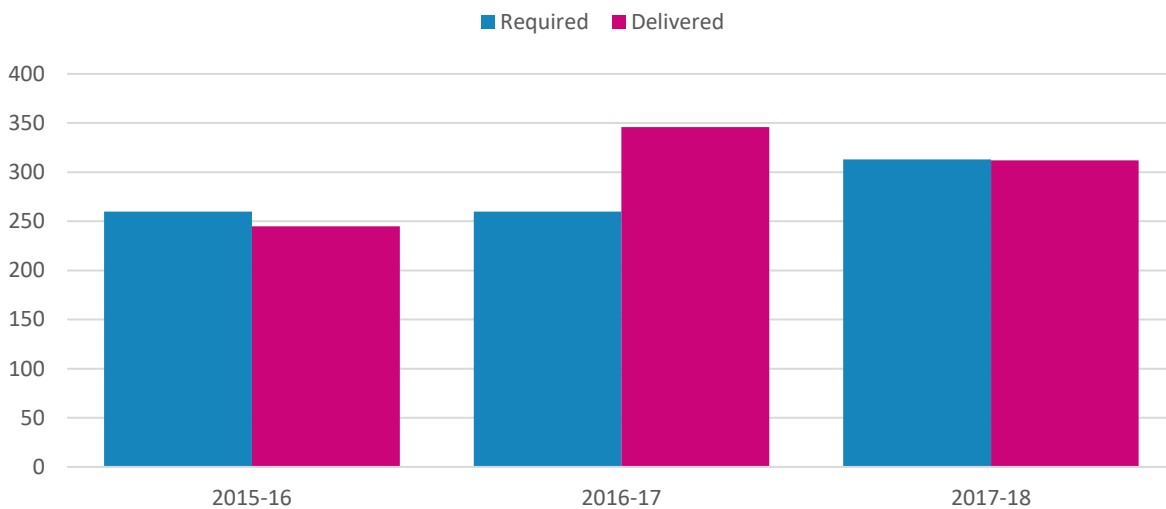
Household and population projections



Source: ONS 2016-based Sub-national Population and Household Projections

Population growth in Watford is set to average 623 people per year from 2020 to 2041, with projected average annual household growth of 354 households over the same period. The average household size in 2020 is projected to be 2.46, and 2.35 in 2041.

Housing delivery test

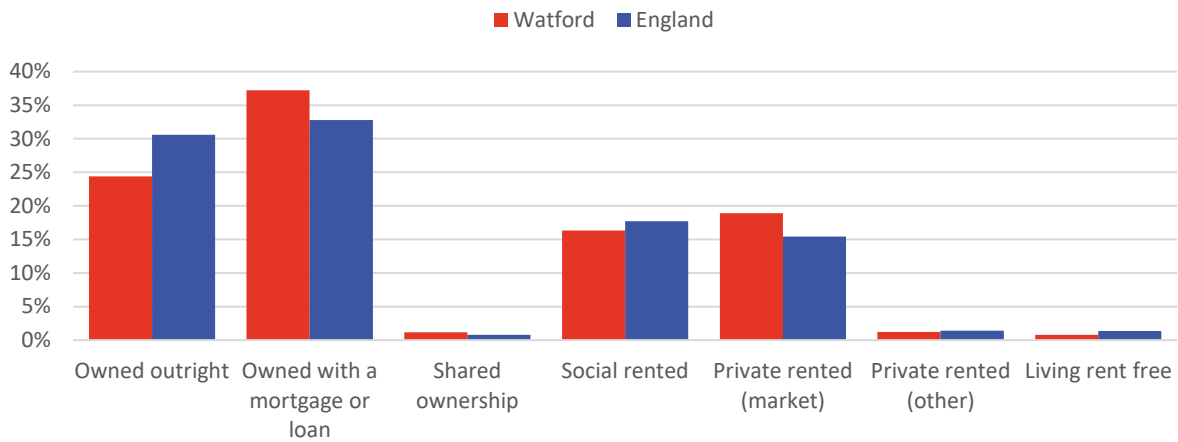


Source: MHCLG Housing Delivery Test 2018 Measurement

The most recent figures show that Watford delivered new homes broadly in line with the numbers required by the MHCLG Housing Delivery Test. 903 net new homes were supplied over the past three full years, compared with the 833 required. The result of the test is that no action is required.

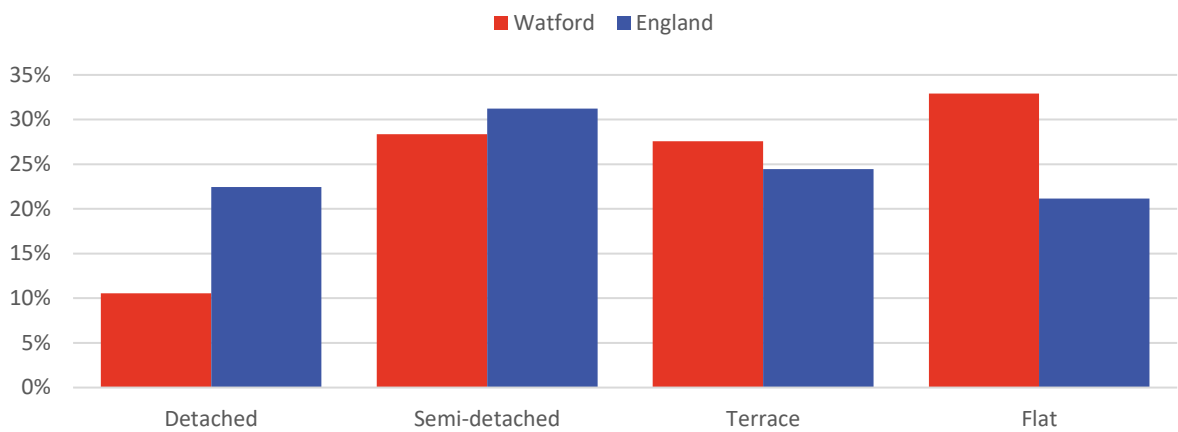
2. Availability

Tenure



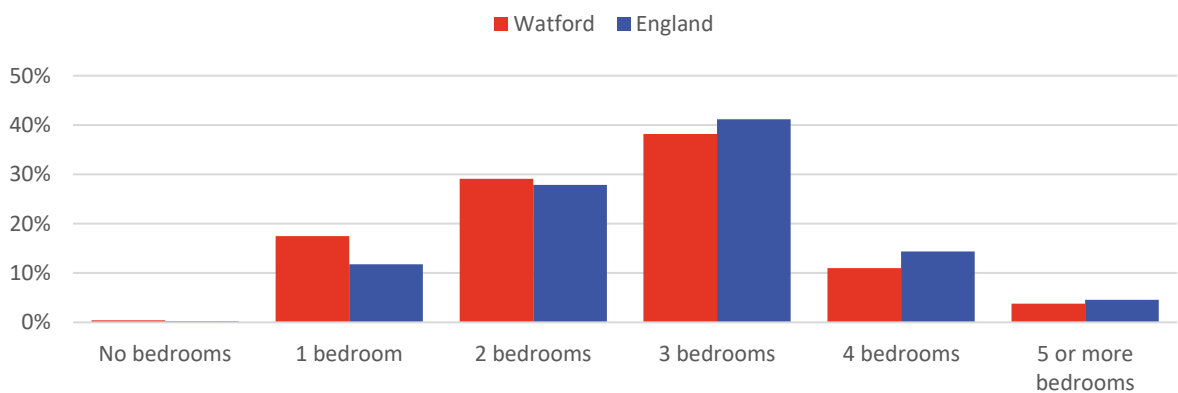
Source: 2011 Census

Property type



Source: 2011 Census

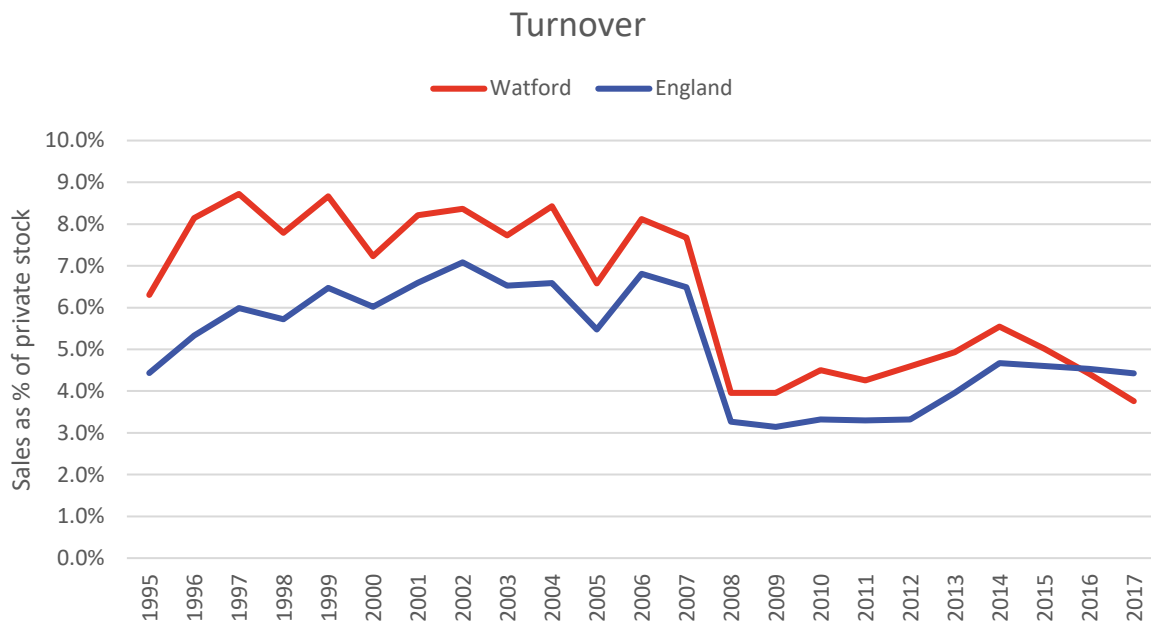
Number of bedrooms



Source: 2011 Census

These three charts show property characteristics for Watford from the 2011 Census, compared to the national averages.

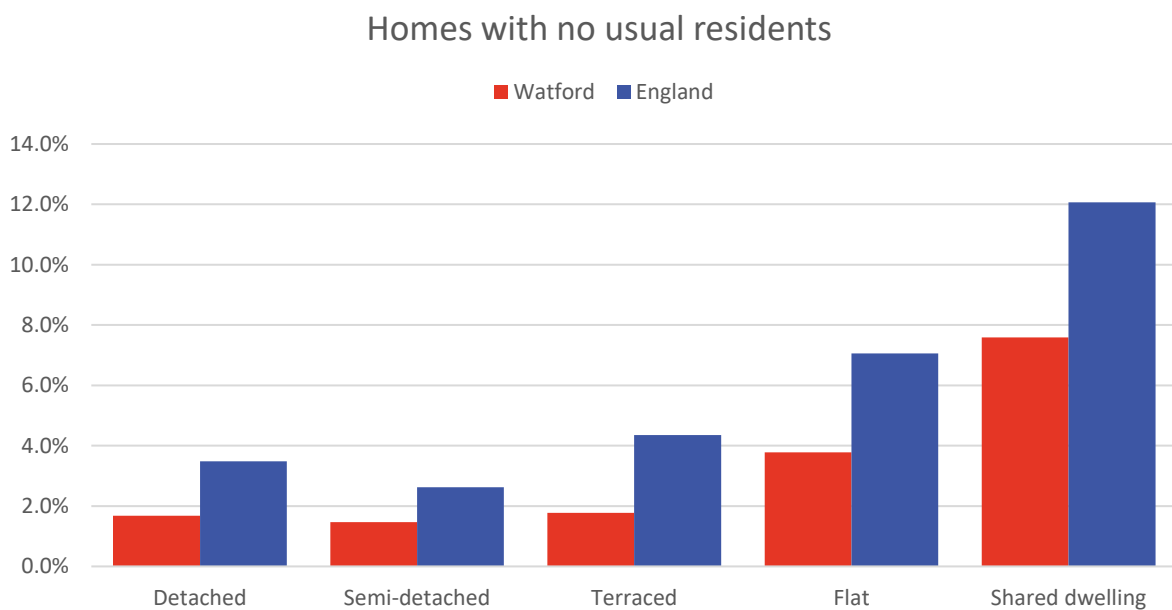
2. Availability



Source: HM Land Registry Price Paid Data

Turnover in Watford was 3.8% in 2017 (the latest year with full data). This is significantly lower than the average before the global financial crisis (turnover from 2001-05 averaged 7.9%). For comparison turnover in England was 4.4% in 2017.

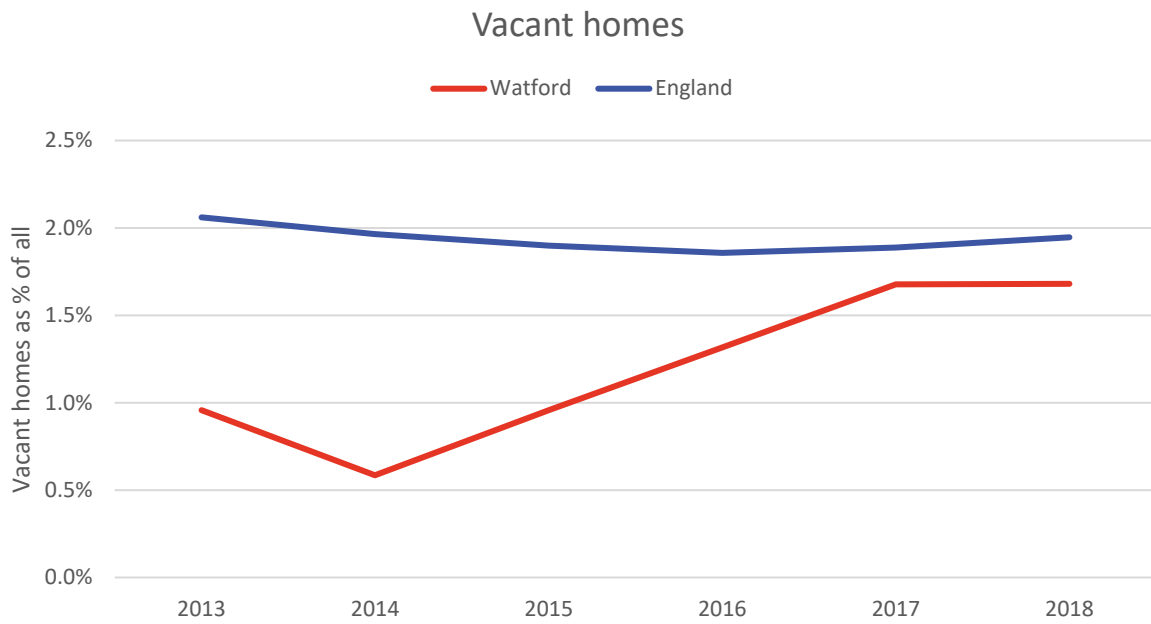
Note that the above analysis includes both standard Land Registry 'A' data and additional 'B' data (which covers repossessions, mortgaged buy-to-let and corporate transactions). In Watford in 2017 there were 148 'B' sales, 11.9% of the total.



Source: 2011 Census

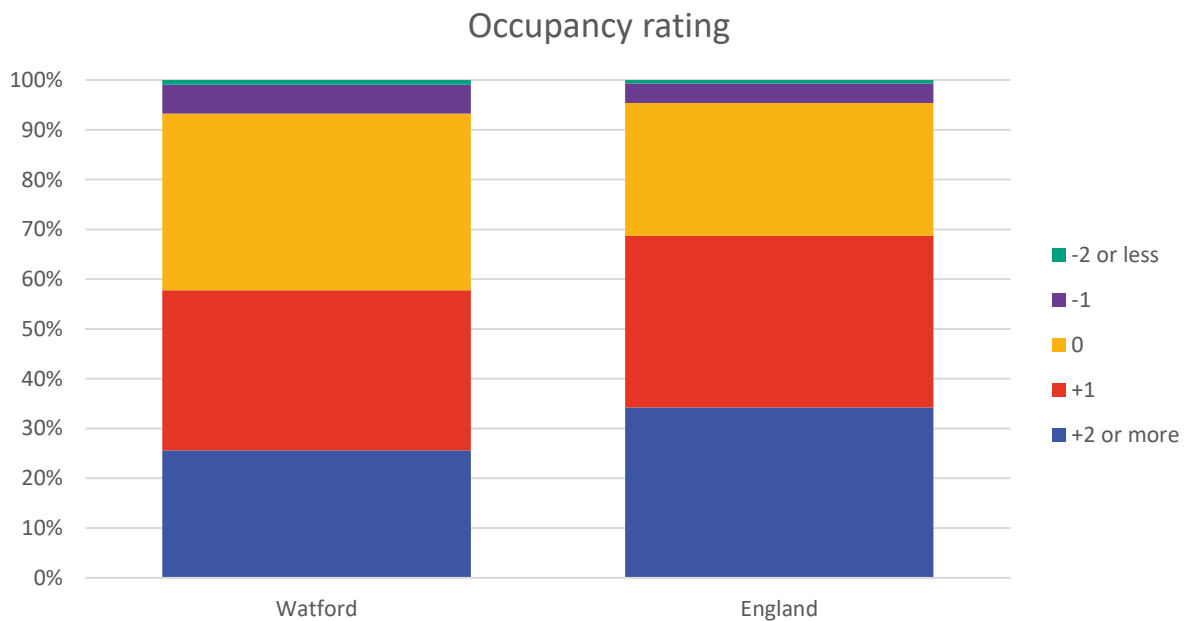
The proportion of homes with no usual residents in Watford was 2.4% according to the 2011 Census. This level is significantly lower than the England average of 4.3%.

2. Availability



Source: Council Tax Base

1.7% of residential properties in Watford were recorded as vacant in 2018 according to Council Tax Base data. This is lower than the England average, suggesting high levels of vacant homes are unlikely to be a significant problem.

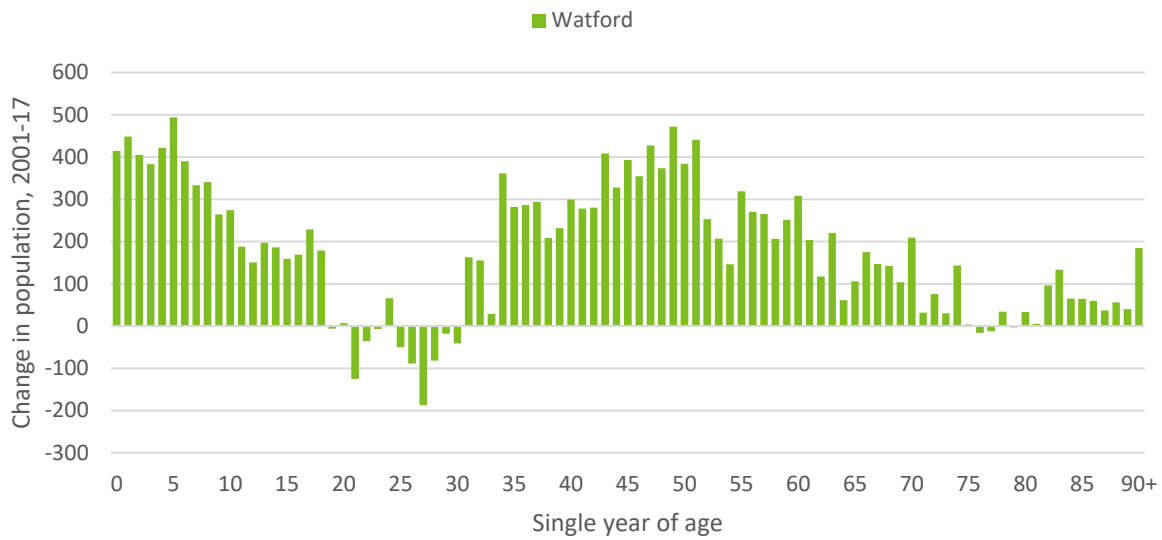


Source: 2011 Census

25.6% of homes in Watford had two or more spare bedroom, according to the 2011 Census. This is lower than the England average, suggesting the distribution of housing is unlikely to be a significant problem.

2. Availability

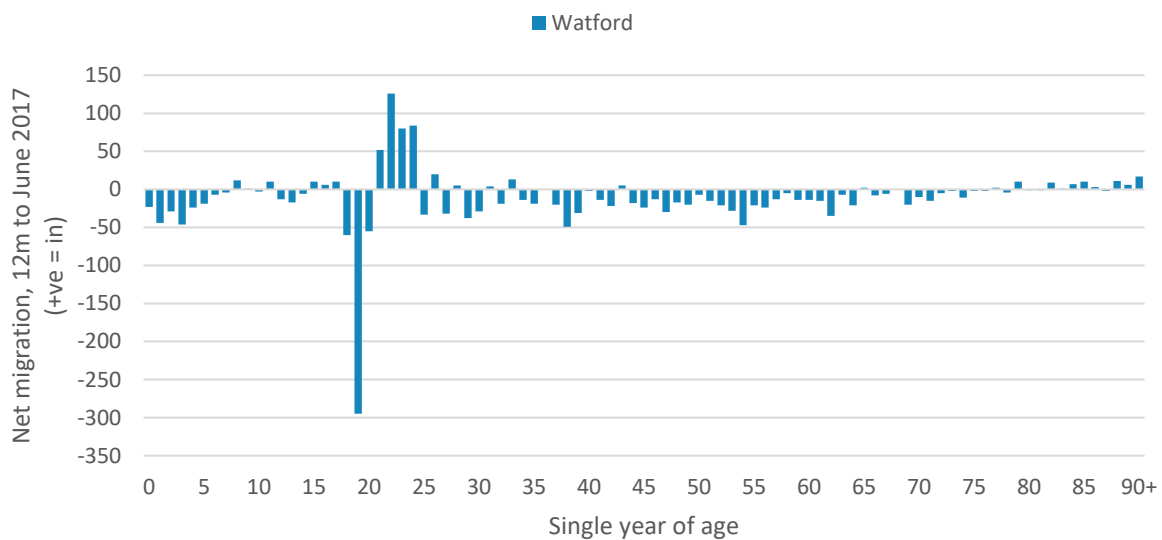
Population change by age, 2001-17



Source: ONS Population Estimates

Overall, the population of Watford grew strongly between 2001 and 2017, changing by +20.2%. Overall growth at national level over the same period was +12.5%. By age, the largest single contribution to growth was from 5 year olds.

Net migration by age

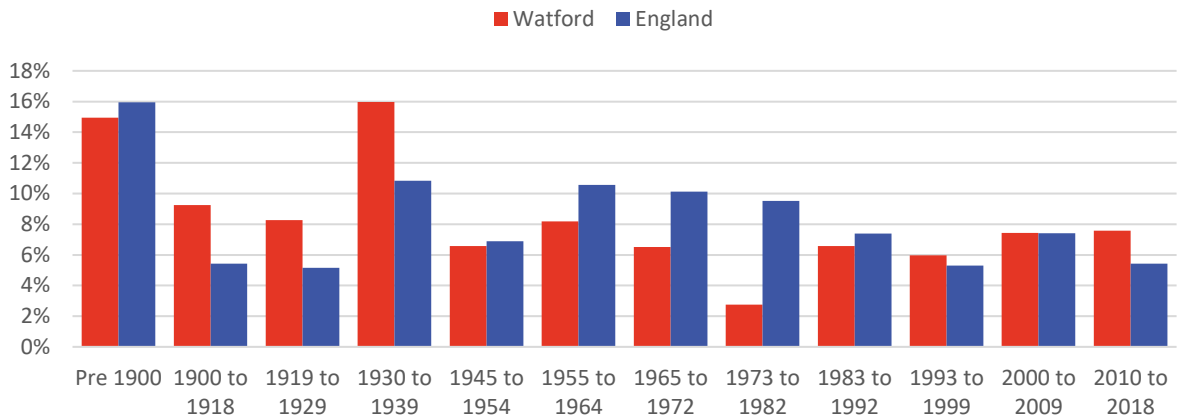


Source: ONS Local Area Migration Indicators

The overall population in Watford changed by -0.6% due to migration in the 12 months to June 2017: -1.0% from domestic sources and +0.4% from international. By age, the largest single contribution to growth was from 22 year olds.

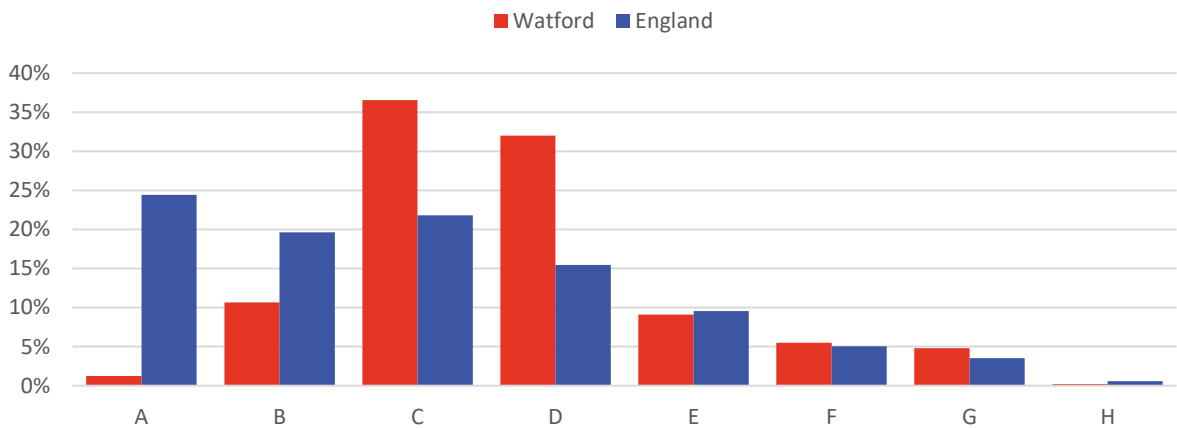
3. Suitability

Age of housing stock



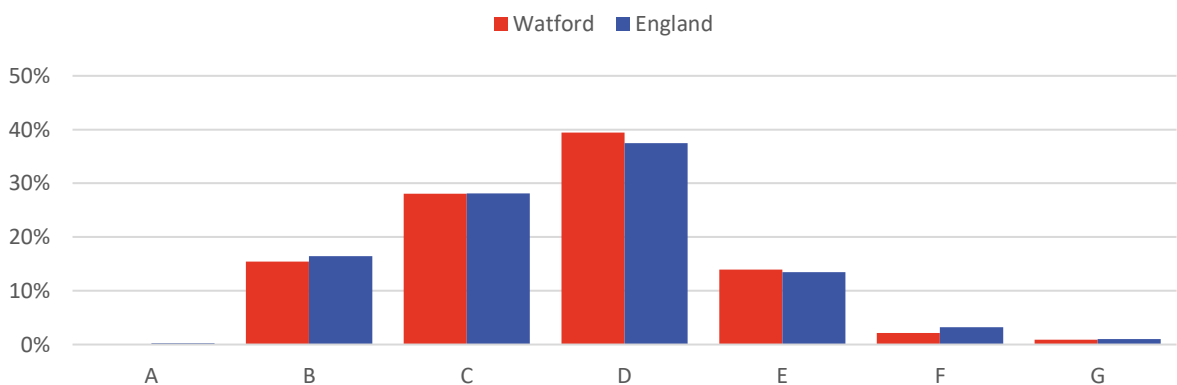
Source: Council Tax Base

Council Tax band



Source: Council Tax Base

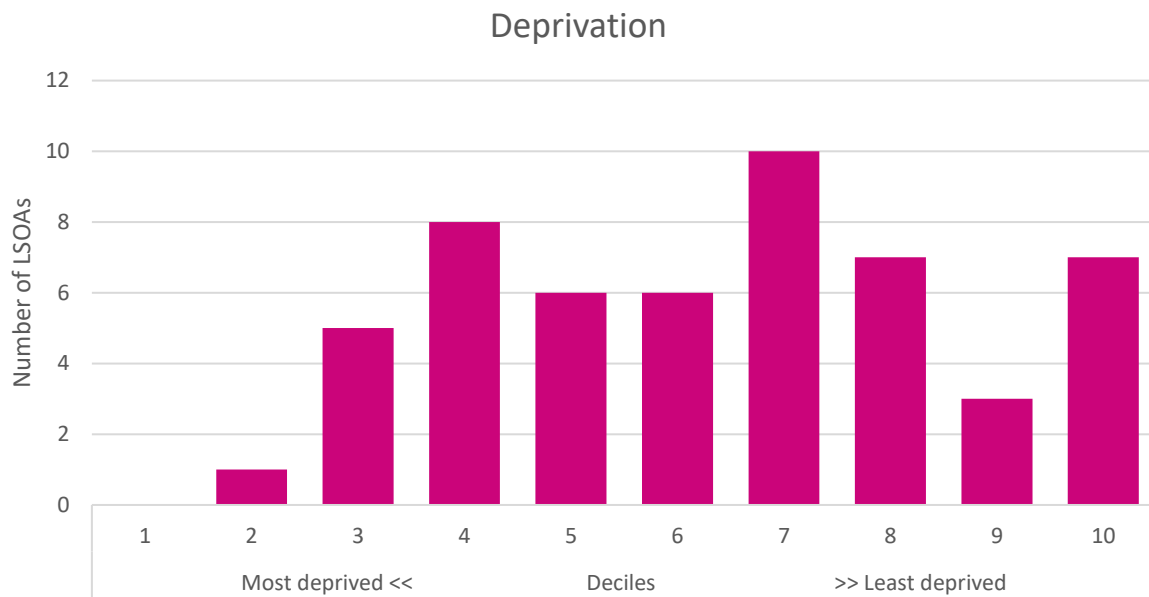
EPC rating



Source: Council Tax Base

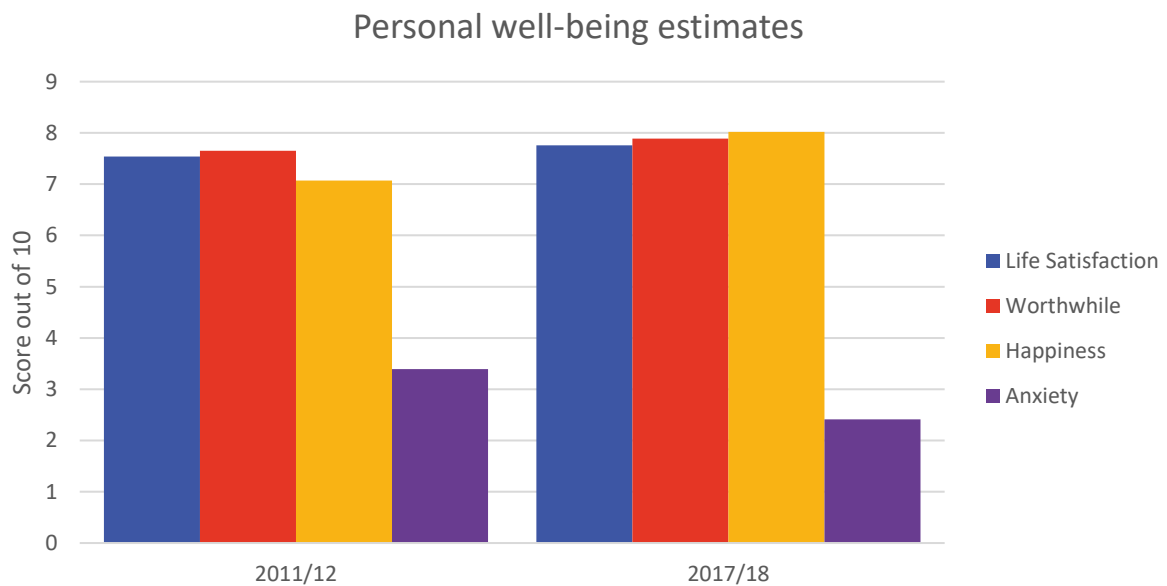
These three charts show property characteristics for Watford from the 2018 Council Tax Base, compared to the national averages.

3. Suitability



Source: 2015 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

11% of the LSOAs in Watford are in the three most deprived deciles, based on the 2015 indices of multiple deprivation. This suggests it is an area of low relative deprivation (the national average is 30%).



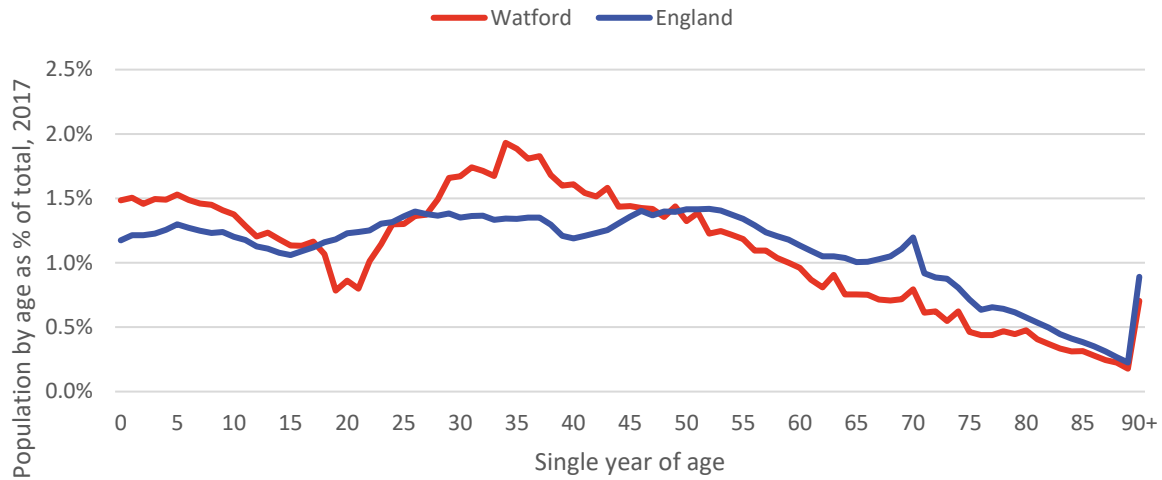
Source: Annual Population Survey (Headline estimates of personal well-being)

Residents of Watford scored their life satisfaction at 7.76 out of 10 on average in 2017/18, compared to the England average of 7.68. The corresponding figures for 2011/12 were 7.54 and 7.41 respectively.

Over all four categories combined, local people have significantly higher than average levels of well-being in 2017/18, compared to the national figures.

3. Suitability

Population structure

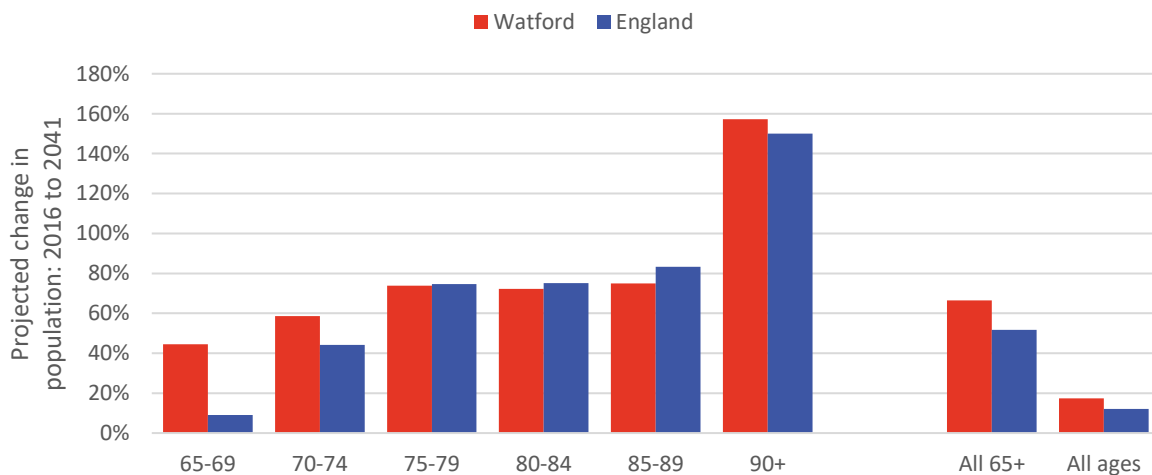


Source: ONS Population Estimates

The population structure of Watford comprised 7.0% aged 18 to 24, 55.6% aged 25 to 64, and 12.9% aged 65 and over in 2017. The corresponding figures for England were 8.7%, 51.9% and 18.0%.

This suggests that the local population may include a lower than average level of students, along with a lower than average level of older people.

Population growth: older people

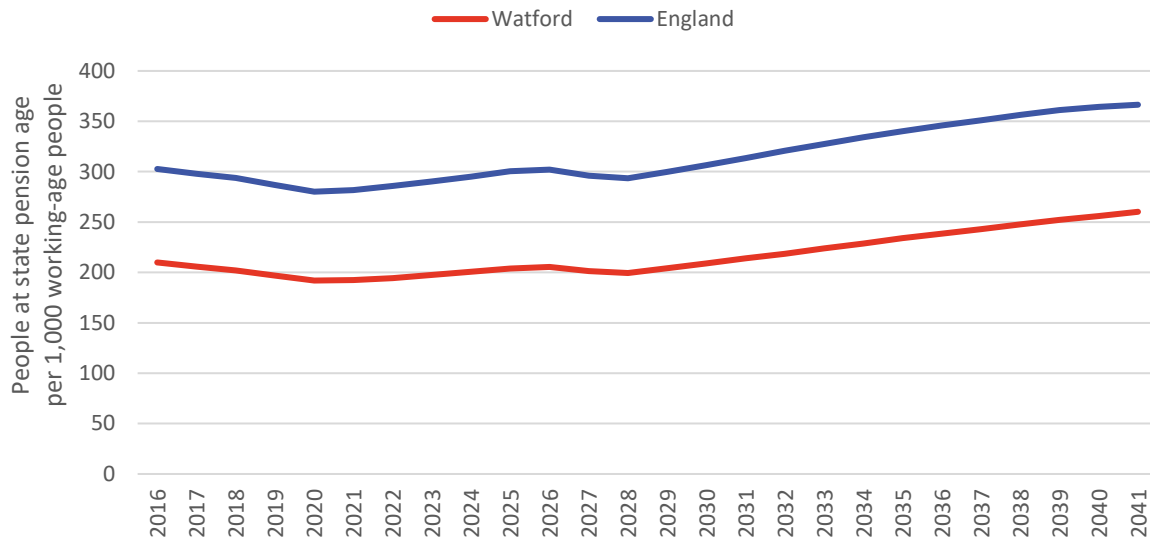


Source: ONS 2016-based Population Projections

The 65 and over population of Watford is expected to grow by 66.4% from 2017 to 2041, according to the latest ONS population projections. This is compared to an overall population change of +17.4%. The corresponding national figures are growth of 51.7% and 12.1% respectively.

3. Suitability

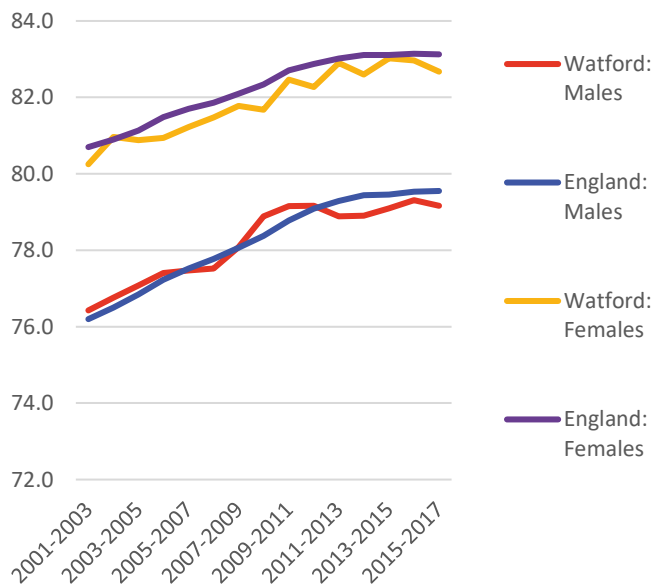
Old age dependency ratio



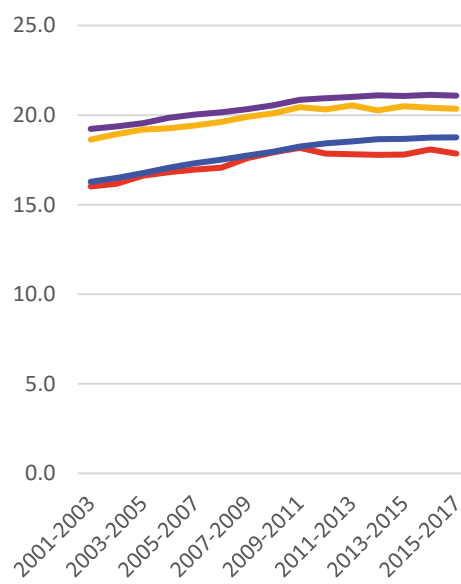
Source: ONS Old Age Dependency Ratios

In Watford in 2019 there are expected to be 197.0 people of state pension age for every 1,000 working-age people, compared to an average of 286.8 at national level. By 2041 these rates are projected to reach 260.2 and 366.4 respectively.

Life expectancy at birth



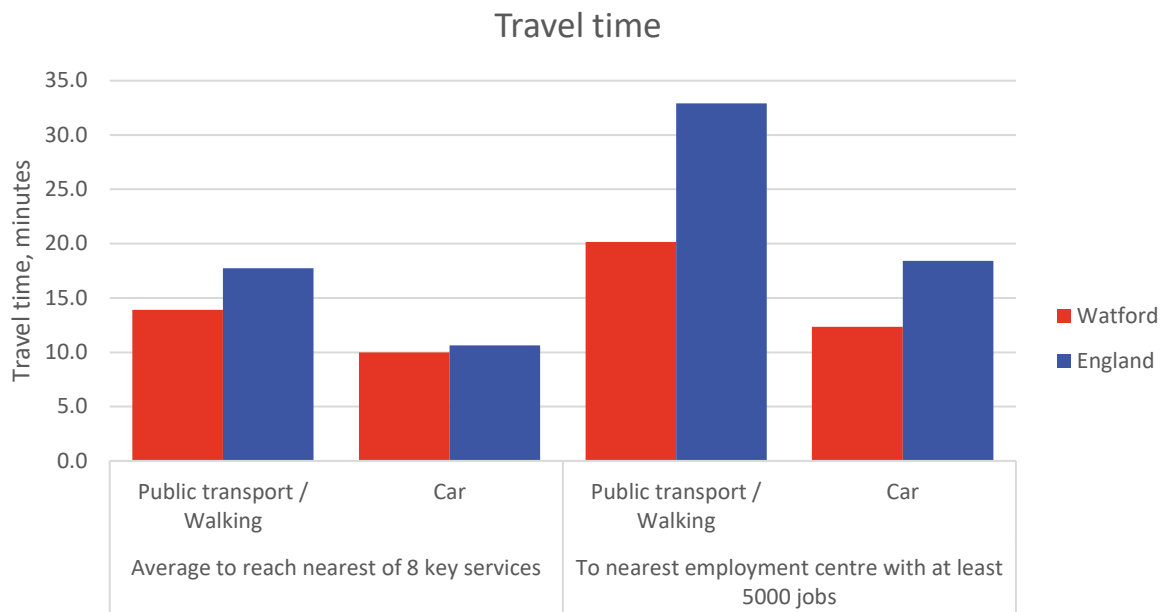
Life expectancy at age 65



Source: ONS Life expectancy at birth and age 65

The average life expectancy for people born in 2015-17 in Watford is 79.2 years for men and 82.7 years for women. The equivalent national figures are 79.6 and 83.1 respectively.

3. Suitability



Source: DfT Journey Time Statistics

Watford has above average public transport connectivity compared to the national figures, with an average travel time to reach the nearest 8 key services of 13.9 minutes (England average = 17.7).