



Checkatrade

Home Pride Index 2023

Checkatrade's report on the
value Brits place on their homes





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Introduction

More than just a home

2022 saw us shake off lockdown living and embrace a hybrid work lifestyle. Home offices became a focus again as workers balanced work at home and the office, whilst economic uncertainty saw us invest in smaller, affordable ways to freshen up our spaces.

Yet despite the cost-of-living crisis, our love for our homes remained, with over half of those polled (55%) proud of their home.

Speaking to almost 2,600 homeowners around the UK, we discovered why we spent what we have on renovating, furnishing, or decorating the home in the past year. We also examined the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on people's home improvements and looked at our plans for the future with eco-living on the horizon for many.

Despite taking more pride in our homes than ever before, a huge 87% of us thought there was still room for improvement. And that's what we at Checkatrade are here to help with, from inspiration to emergency repairs to tackling the tasks no one has the time – or perhaps lacks the confidence or ability – to deal with themselves.

Although the rollercoaster of 2022 is now behind us, there are still challenges ahead – however our trusted, vetted tradespeople are here to help households all around the country with their home repair and improvement jobs – no matter how big or small.

We hope you find these insights and tips helpful and whatever is in store for the year ahead, you continue to take pride in your home.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Fairman'.

Mike Fairman, CEO, Checkatrade

Home is where the comfort is

Throughout a year of change, our pride in our homes has remained stable. In fact, 55% say they are proud of their home – versus 49% the year before – a sign of how the current economic environment is making us appreciate what we have more than ever before.

Our love affair with our living rooms also continues, with the area topping the list of favourite spaces of the house.

Considered to be the ‘most comfortable’ (53%), where people spend the most time in (44%) and being the ‘heart of the home’ (39%) are amongst the reasons why these rooms evoke such love.

Meanwhile, a further 28% cited a recent redecoration as a key reason for having a favourite room, highlighting how changes we make at home can positively affect how we view that space.



Favourite rooms of the home 2022



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We're a nation of home improvers, and redecoration can be an affordable way to update a room quickly. It also has the potential to turn an unloved corner or under-used space into a favourite. The one in ten homeowners who view the office as their favourite room are a clear example of how, with a simple refresh, a functional space can become a favourite room.

Mike Fairman, CEO of Checkatrade



House proud cities²

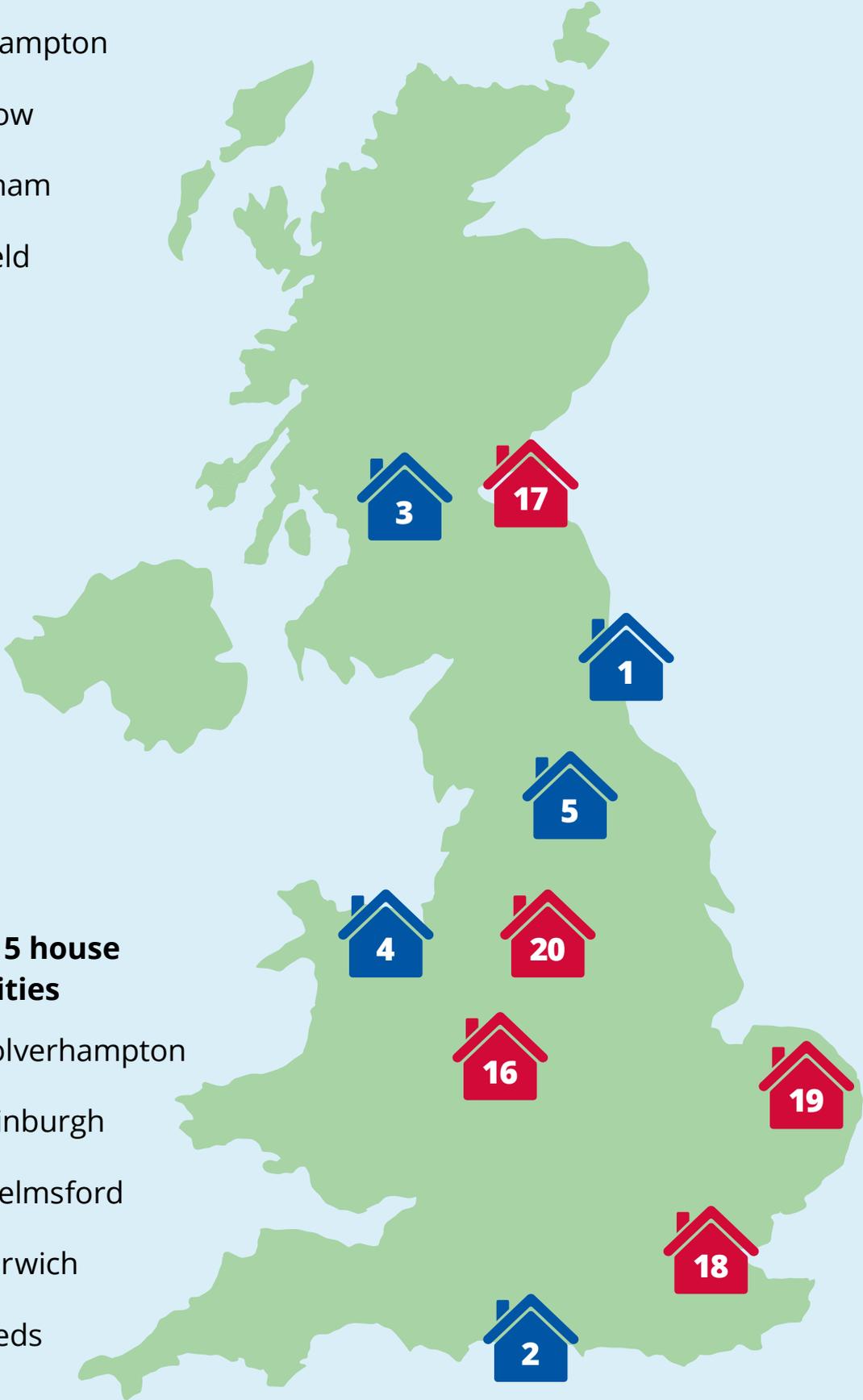
Newcastle, Southampton, and Glasgow are the cities that top the list of the most house-proud homeowners in comparison to the rest of the UK, while Chelmsford, Norwich and Leeds came bottom of the list.

Based on the responses of nearly 2,600 homeowners, 20 cities were awarded points based on money spent on home improvements, time spent doing DIY, and the number of unfinished jobs.

1. Newcastle	11. Cambridge / Leicester
2. Southampton	12. Belfast
3. Glasgow	13. Plymouth
4. Wrexham	14. Bristol
5. Sheffield	15. Brighton & Hove
6. London	16. Wolverhampton
7. York	17. Edinburgh
8. Liverpool	18. Chelmsford
9. Manchester	19. Norwich
10. Cardiff	20. Leeds

Top 5 house proud cities

- 1. Newcastle
- 2. Southampton
- 3. Glasgow
- 4. Wrexham
- 5 Sheffield



Bottom 5 house proud cities

- 16. Wolverhampton
- 17. Edinburgh
- 18. Chelmsford
- 19. Norwich
- 20. Leeds

Homeowners from third-most-house-proud city Glasgow invested the most in updating their homes than any other city, putting in £5,940 on average, compared to the national average of £3,375.

The Scottish city also spent the most time tidying their property – five hours and 43 minutes each week – compared to the national average time spent cleaning, tidying, and organising properties per week (three hours and 48 minutes).

Glasgow also used the most tradespeople (seven) over a period of 12 months, compared to the national average of five.

The time invested in tidying our homes (198 hours a year on average nationally) is a further indication of pride. We value how our home looks and feels, even if we're not spending as much time inside as we did during the lockdown.



Home improvement spending

Despite another tumultuous year, homeowners refused to sacrifice home improvements in 2022.

With the cost-of-living crisis attributing to rises in mortgage costs and the highest inflation rate in 30 years, turning our attentions to improving our homes may have seemed more appealing than ever.

However, increased prices of raw materials, supply chain delays and shortage of available tradespeople meant that homeowners were also spending more on projects than previously.

Insights from Checktrade showed that homeowners around the country spent on average £3,375 on home improvements – £669 more than in 2021.

Compared to last year, homeowners in Scotland (+67%), Northern Ireland (+53%) and the North East (+46%) also made the biggest increase in terms of investments in their homes. Homeowners in the West Midlands were the only region to go against the curve, spending 12% less on home improvements in 2022, compared to the year before.



People are wanting to improve rather than move. We're finding more people asking how they can make the best use of the space they have and how best to use it.

Claire Duncan, Founder of Inspirational Interiors and vetted Checktrade member

Region	Total spent on home improvements*		
	2021	2022	% Change YoY
London	£3,859	£4,967	+29%
North East	£3,320	£4,859	+46%
Scotland	£2,538	£4,234	+67%
South East	£3,012	£3,467	+15%
Wales	£2,698	£3,254	+21%
North West	£2,645	£3,238	+22%
Yorkshire and Humber	£2,850	£3,175	+11%
West Midlands	£3,438	£3,011	-12%
East Midlands	£2,165	£2,847	+32%
Northern Ireland	£1,820	£2,790	+53%
East Anglia	£2,111	£2,768	+31%
South West	£2,409	£2,680	+11%

Which rooms saw the biggest investment?

When looking at which rooms in the home saw the greatest investment, loft conversions experienced the biggest spike compared to 2021, with an increase of +432%. Hugely popular, particularly in densely populated urban areas, the difficult property market is likely a contributing factor for Brits wishing to expand space in their current abodes versus selling up and purchasing another property.



We saw a huge increase in loft conversions in 2022, so much so that we had to pause offering them.

Emma Kemp,
Director of i-Furb

On the loft conversion trend, Emma Kemp, director of bespoke building company i-Furb, who has been a verified member on Checkatrade for five years, said, “We saw a huge increase in loft conversions in 2022, so much so that we had to pause offering them. The reason they are popular is because it can be cheaper to add a bedroom and en-suite in the loft instead of moving to a bigger house for the extra bedroom. When moving you must usually factor in estate agent, solicitor, stamp duty and removal fees, plus the upgrade cost to buying a larger property. By adding an extra room onto your current house, you not only increase its value, but you save on moving costs and have the added benefit of staying in the same surroundings.”



Following loft conversions, improvements to our driveway (+399%), utility room (+358%), hallway (+357%) and home office (+347%) saw the biggest spike in investments, compared with 2021. As the hybrid working model continues to stay in force for many workers, investments in home offices are expected to continue.

While still seeing a 106% year-on-year increase, our greener spaces saw the smallest investment from homeowners in 2022. With gardens receiving a lot of attention these last few years namely due to lockdown living, it's no surprise we prioritised other areas in and around the home.



Region**Top 10 spaces Brits spent money improving year-on-year**

	2021	2022	% Change YoY
Kitchen	£404	£1,106	+174%
Living Room	£372	£1,076	+189%
Bathroom	£349	£1,016	+191%
Bedrooms	£306	£996	+225%
Driveway	£178	£888	+399%
Utility Room	£183	£838	+358%
Garden	£402	£830	+106%
Hallway	£180	£823	+357%
Loft	£153	£814	+432%
Home Office	£165	£737	+347%

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Homeowners are more resilient than ever, not letting the cost of living deter them from home improvement projects. With the current uncertainty of the housing market, increased investments in spaces like lofts suggest homeowners are looking to make the most of what they have and are seeking support from experienced tradespeople to help.

Mike Fairman, CEO of Checkatrade

Top tips from the trades: What is the best thing to do to add value to a home?

Claire Duncan, Founder of Inspirational Interiors, says:

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An extra bedroom, if you have the space, as this can double up as a home office or beautiful kitchen as this tends to be one of the largest spends when home renovating.

Lily Struthers, roofer at Bear House Build adds:

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Open up spaces that you know people are looking for when buying. For instance, many buyers will look for properties that have a kitchen/living room already opened up. This is because they then don't need to do the job themselves or increase their mortgage so they can get someone in to take the job on.

Aaron O'Connor, plasterer at Smooth Touch Plastering, says:

“

There are a number of ways to add value to your home as well as adding space – from converting a loft, garage or cellar to building an extension.

Elevating the everyday

From celebrating the Lionesses winning their first Euros football championship last summer to welcoming friends and family back into the home for a restriction-free Christmas, Brits were keen to entertain and invest in their homes.

But with six in ten (61%) saying they spent less money on their home than they would have liked because of the cost-of-living crisis, homeowners prioritised smaller, more affordable changes to refresh their living spaces, including painting walls and ceilings (29%) and getting new soft furnishings (26%).

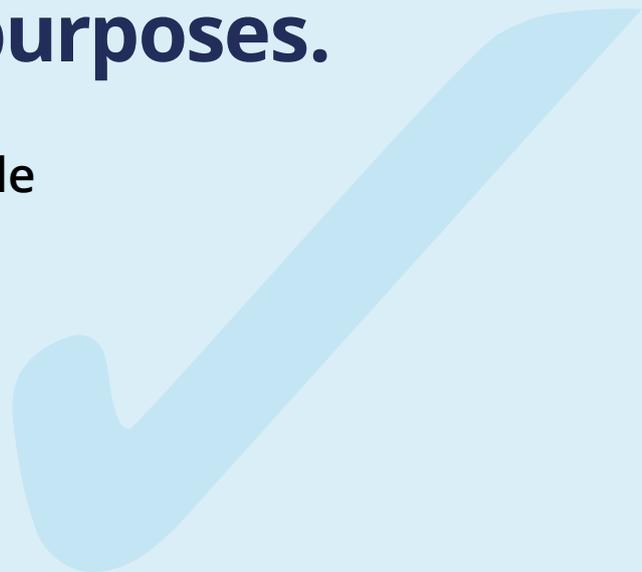
Most popular changes made at home in 2022

- 1** | Painting walls / ceilings – 29%
- 2** | Redecorated the living room – 26%
- 3** | Got new cushions and soft furnishings – 26%
- 4** | Redecorated a bedroom – 24%
- 5** | Repainting the shed / fencing – 23%
- 6** | Gave the bathroom a makeover – 22%
- 7** | Purchased new furniture – 22%
- 8** | Revamping the garden – 22%
- 9** | Installed new windows – 21%
- 10** | Building flatpack furniture – 21%

“

With cosmetic changes topping the list over the past 12 months, it's clear that the nation has started to become more creative in how they update the spaces they live and work in. While comfort is key, the focus on aesthetic over function could be down to the increase in households hosting family and friends at home more regularly and updating their spaces to make them more suitable for entertainment purposes.

Mike Fairman, CEO of Checkatrade



The most popular reason for spending money on renovating, furnishing, or decorating the home in 2022 was due to spending more time at home, with 32% wanting to improve their surroundings. Alongside this was fixing wear and tear (30%), while 23% cited the energy crisis as a key driver, hoping to add energy efficiency measures to their homes to save money in the long run.

Some of the eco-focussed changes made in the last year included installing electric charging points (18%), adding solar panels, and installing heat source pumps (17% respectively).

And when it comes to inspiration, one in ten (10%) who invested in updating their home cited TV shows like *The Great British Bake Off* and *Selling Sunset* as inspiration for doing so. The most popular was *Grand Designs*, which influenced 14% of people's home renovation choices.





DDIY – Don't Do It Yourself

With this focus on getting creative with how we update our spaces come DIY attempts, which aren't always successful. Just under half (46%) of homeowners admit that they have the same amount of unfinished DIY jobs when comparing 2022 to 2021, with one in five (22%) having more unfinished DIY jobs.

17% also confess to calling upon a professionally trained tradesperson in the last 12 months to fix a DIY job they attempted themselves. The most common faux pas that homeowners ended up calling in an expert to fix are plumbing (17%), fitting new door handles and changing locks (17%), measuring up for renovations (14%) and hanging new doors (14%).

Over a third (37%) of homeowners admit that they would rather invest in a professionally trained tradesperson than attempt to carry out the home improvement job themselves – showing the value in hiring a skilled person to complete the job accurately and efficiently.

When it comes to calling in the experts, the average homeowners sought the support of five different trades in the last year. Checkatrade's own data shows an increase in searches for reputable skilled trades with builders, roofers and plumbers in the highest demand– the same as last year.

Checkatrade's trending services – 2021 vs. 2022

Most searched for services	2021	2022
1.	Builder	Builder
2.	Plumber	Roofer
3.	Roofer	Plumber
4.	Electrician	Electrician
5.	Painter / decorator	Windows / doors / conservatories
6.	Carpenter	Central heating
7.	Windows / doors / conservatories	Carpenter
8.	Driveways / patios / paths	Painter / decorator
9.	Central heating	Plasterer
10.	Plasterer	Driveways / patios / paths

Searches that have seen the biggest year-on-year increase are windows/doors/conservatories (+22%) and central heating (+17%), perhaps a sign of people's growing awareness of the importance of installing energy efficient measures.

This is also evidenced by the 23% of homeowners who made changes to their home with energy efficiency in mind, to save money in the long run.

Top tips from the trades: What is the best thing to do to add value to a home?

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One change could be oversizing your heating system by replacing your radiators to allow for a larger heat output by increasing the size, or simply replacing single panel radiators to double panel ones. This means your home can be heated effectively even by running the boiler at a much lower flow temperature, thus saving money on gas year after year.

New heating systems should now be designed to heat the home at a flow temperature as low as 50 degrees Celsius – not only will this save on your gas consumption but it also 'future proofs' your system as things like Air/Ground Source heating are only capable of running at lower flow temperatures compared to gas boilers.

Daniel Khanlarpour, a gas engineer at Gas Guru



Demand for core trades has soared throughout 2022 as Brits look to invest in the basics, making sure the foundations of their homes are solid. Homeowners are also looking ahead for ways in which they can future-proof their home to help save on rising energy costs. For instance, we're seeing year-on-year increase in searches for solar panel installations (78%) and ground source heat pumps (37%) plus with the aid of government backed schemes we expect this demand to continue throughout the year ahead.

Mike Fairman, CEO of Checkatrade

2023 Trends

Room for improvement

While pride in the home seems to be at an all-time high, nevertheless a huge 87% believe their homes have room for improvement – an increase of 11% compared

to the previous year – with one third (33%) planning to make improvements to their property in 2023.

The home improvements and renovations that are top of the to-do list for 2023 are:

- 1** | Painting & decorating – 31%
- 2** | Updating carpet & upholstery – 17%
- 3** | Kitchen renovation – 15%
- 4** | Bathroom renovation – 15%
- 5** | Eco friendly updates to the home (i.e., heat pumps, solar panels, loft installation) – 14%
- 6** | Landscaping – 13%
- 7** | Building somewhere for storage e.g., a shed – 10%
- 8** | An extension – 9%
- 9** | Build a home office – 8%
- 10** | Install an at home bar – 8%

These indicate how homeowners are gravitating towards making smaller changes to transform their spaces, versus people's plans for 2022, where a new kitchen and a bathroom makeover were top of the list for 23% , followed by a garden revamp for 19%.

Motivating factors for making these updates in 2023 range from giving the home a refresh or a new look (37%) to fixing something that needs repairing or replacing (32%) to adding value to the home (30%), suggesting that households are not only looking to make their homes comfortable now, but also in the future.

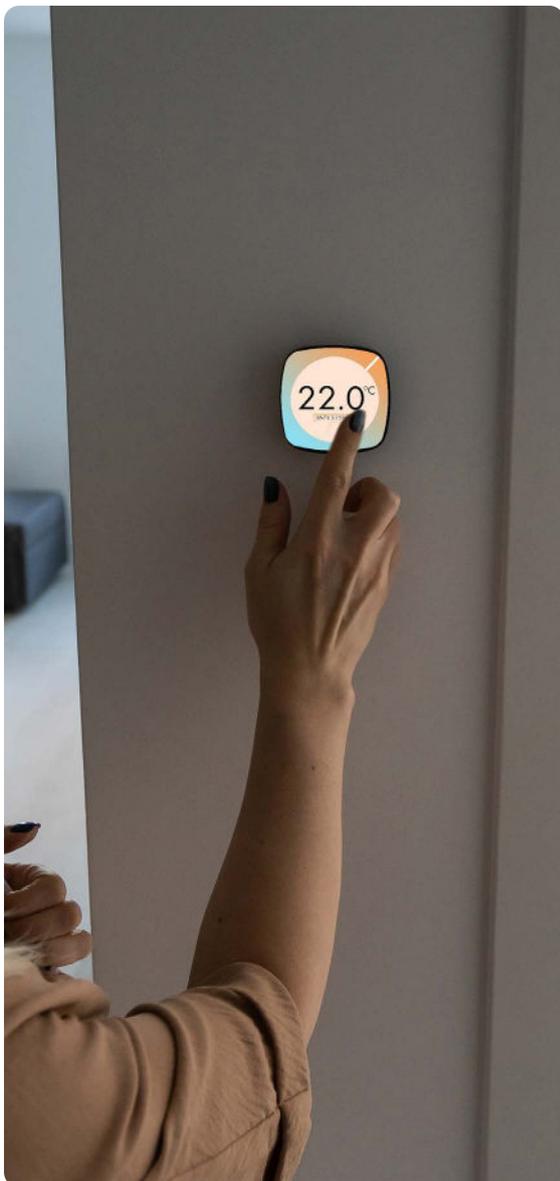


Greener living

With eco-friendly updates to the home coming out in the top five improvements people are aiming to make in 2023, it's clear that homeowners are committed to make their homes greener.

Of the range of sustainable solutions homeowners are looking to make the most of, solar panels (23%) and smart thermostats (also 23%) are the most in demand.

The most wanted energy efficient changes are:



- 1** | Solar panels – 23%
- 2** | Smart thermostat – 23%
- 3** | Electric vehicle charging – 22%
- 4** | Double or triple glazing – 21%
- 5** | Ceiling insulation – 20%
- 6** | Heat pumps – 20%
- 7** | Wall insulation – 19%



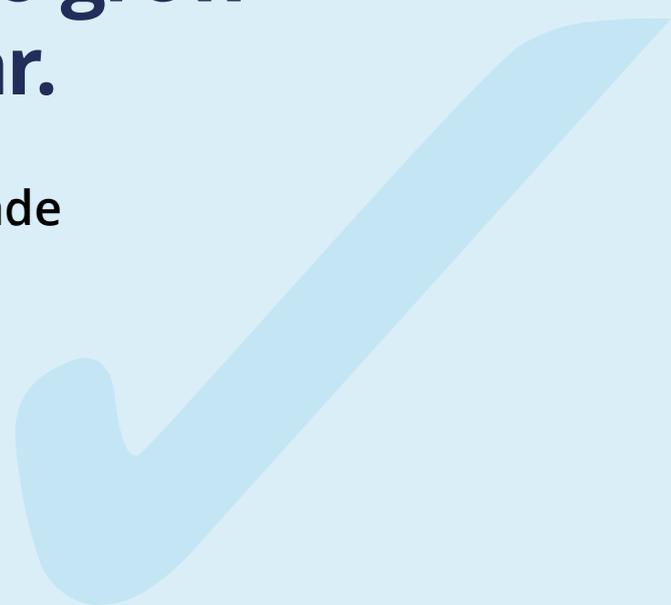
When it comes to the inspiration behind making more environmentally conscious and green home renovation choices, environmental activists such as David Attenborough and Greta Thunberg are cited as the biggest influences (23% respectively), followed by wildlife/nature documentaries (21%) and social media (14%).

However, despite Government initiatives such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme and the Energy Security Bill, designed to help reduce installation costs and support households that are looking to upgrade their boilers, the installation costs associated with making wider eco home changes may mean these are kept on the radar but on the back burner for 2023 while the cost-of-living crisis is ongoing.

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It's clear that the year ahead will contain numerous challenges, but the nation appears to be willing to meet them head on. With high-profile environmental activists and the government's aim to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 helping to galvanise people into considering eco changes, we expect to see interest in sustainable solutions for the home to continue to grow throughout the year.

Mike Fairman, CEO of Checkatrade



Cost-of-living considerations

It's inescapable that the cost-of-living crisis is influencing how people are thinking about their future home improvement plans and will continue to do so throughout 2023.

69% of homeowners are set to be more considered when selecting the home improvement jobs, they want to invest in because of it. With the government's monthly statistics of building materials and components³ showing a clear upward trend in costs for these materials, households are sure to keep costs front of mind throughout the year.

Meanwhile, almost half (48%) of homeowners also cite the rise in energy prices as the reason for making their home more energy efficient their number one priority in 2023.

And yet, with 40% seeing spending on home improvements as a vital expense despite the current tighter purse strings, it looks like home improvements will still be on the agenda for households around the UK in 2023 – though perhaps not to the same extent as previously.



2023 trends from the trades

Claire Duncan, Founder of Inspirational Interiors has predicted three potential trends:

1 | Bringing colour into interiors: “People are bored of grey, I’ve been bored of it for ever! and they want to have a bit of fun, whether that’s by incorporating bright prints, a colourful armchair or going all out with a bold paint colour.”

2 | Comfort is key: “People want their homes to feel like a haven, whether this is by having a luxurious spathroom (spa-bathroom) or a cosy corner in their living room where they can kick back and relax. Warm tones will also be in – think warm neutrals, wood tones and lots of cosy layering with accessories.”

3 | Separate living areas: “It’s great to have an open plan kitchen/diner/living area, but people now want another space where they can close the door and relax in the evening. Particularly true if they have kids, parents want an adult space away from the clutter, and this can be created by having bi folding doors off the kitchen or having a completely separate room.”

Jason Webb, AJW Painting & Decorating:

“I feel that the ‘hotel theme’ will be big this year, and those with a large budget will continue to look at open plan living and will think of innovative ways to bring the outside in. Those with a smaller budget are likely to decorate with a focus on incorporating copper lights and upgrading everything from door handles and hinges to side tables from polished chrome to gold.”

Lily Struthers, Roofer at Bear House Build further adds:

“The continuing trend of an in-home office will stay for another two to three years. Fireplaces being opened back up in homes is something that is on the rise too. So many new homeowners are ripping out those old electric heaters from fireplaces to reveal lovely open flues behind or to fit log burners inside. In terms of small budget trends, panelling will continue to be popular while homeowners looking for more affordable roofing options will pivot to EPDM rubber roofs.”



Conclusion

It's indisputable that a house is more than a home, and the nation's pride in where they live remains despite the numerous challenges faced over the years.

Whether it's injecting colour into the living room, implementing some sustainable changes or undertaking a loft conversion, taking care of your home can help your home take care of you.

The nation's growing focus on making smaller, everyday changes to give spaces a refresh is set to continue throughout 2023 and we cannot wait to see what new (and old) trends this year brings.



Notes to editors

¹Consumer Research

2,597 British homeowners were surveyed online between 20th December 2022 - 4th January 2023 by OnePoll

2House Pride Index Methodology

To determine how house proud the cities polled are, each location was awarded points based on the responses from those residing in those areas.

15 points were given for the highest average total, 14 for the second highest, 13 for the third highest and so on – right through to one point for the lowest.

This is with the exception of the number of DIY jobs left on to do lists where 15 points were awarded to the lowest average figure.

The categories cities were scored on included money spent on renovation and furnishings and aesthetics in 2022, number of tradespeople used and unfinished DIY jobs remaining.

Other categories included the proportion of respondents who are looking for home décor inspiration and points were also awarded for time spent cleaning, tidying, and organising their homes, and greenest homes too.

Top 20 most house-proud cities:

1. Newcastle – 88 points
2. Southampton – 82 points
3. Glasgow – 80 points
4. Wrexham – 74 points
5. Sheffield – 72 points
6. London – 70 points
7. York – 68 points
8. Liverpool – 65.5 points
9. Manchester – 65 points
10. Cardiff – 62 points
11. Cambridge – 54 / Leicester – 54 points
12. Belfast – 51 points
13. Plymouth – 50 points
14. Bristol – 48 points
15. Brighton & Hove – 47.5 points
16. Wolverhampton – 47 points
17. Edinburgh – 46 points
18. Chelmsford – 43 points
19. Norwich – 41 points
20. Leeds – 29 points

³ <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/75ee36ed-21f7-4d7b-9e7c-f5bf4546145d/monthly-statistics-of-building-materials-and-components>

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