MONTHLY INDUSTRY OUTLOOK

England Bricklaying Outlook

A weaker housing pipeline, with regional differences that matter.

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About this report
This report provides general industry information and commentary to help readers understand market conditions. It is not a rate guide, quotation, valuation or guarantee of available work. Any prices or pay figures are dated examples, not recommended rates. Check current project details, local conditions and supplier quotations before making decisions.

The month in perspective

Evidence released during October pointed to pressure on the housing pipeline, rather than a uniform change in work for every bricklayer. Regional differences, construction methods and the stage of each scheme remain important.

NHBC reported 26,231 UK new-home registrations in Q3, 13% below the same quarter of 2025. Registrations are an early indicator within NHBC's coverage; they are not all English housebuilding or confirmed starts. [1]

The OBR reduced its forecast for cumulative net additions to the housing stock by 190,000 compared with its March forecast. This is a projection over the forecast period, not a count of October cancellations. [2]

Our interpretation is a cautious outlook for private housing, with individual affordable-housing and regeneration schemes still moving. It is not evidence of an England-wide measured decline in bricklaying output.

Three signals to keep in view

Demand indicators are softer. The 15 October ONS release put GB construction output down 1.0% in the three months to August, with private new housing down 3.2%. These are broader construction measures. [3]

Policy support has a longer timetable. The Budget announced another £1.5 billion for around 10,000 social and affordable homes in England, with allocations across 2027-28 to 2030-31. This is announced support, not homes already started. [4]

Regional signals are not interchangeable. Registrations and Energy Performance Certificates describe different stages and populations of housing delivery. Compare their context before drawing conclusions. [1][5]

Regional picture: why the indicators differ

NHBC's Q3 registrations rose 27% year-on-year in Yorkshire and the Humber and 10% in the West Midlands, while the South East fell 32%. These changes describe NHBC registrations, not all new homes. [1]

By contrast, the government's Q3 new-dwelling EPC figures showed the South East up 9% and East Midlands up 4%, London broadly unchanged, and falls elsewhere. Yorkshire and the Humber fell 19%, West Midlands 15%, East of England 9%, North West and South West 8% each, and North East 1%. England recorded about 46,000 new-dwelling EPCs, down 4%. [5]

EPCs include conversions and changes of use as well as new builds, and generally appear later than registrations. Opposite movements need not be contradictory. Neither series identifies the number of bricklayers required on a particular site.

Projects at different stages

West Midlands - developer-reported start. Vistry announced the start of work on 177 affordable homes at Chelmsley Wood on 27 October. The scheme uses off-site timber frames. Timber frame does not itself establish whether external brickwork is required; the masonry specification and package allocation remain unverified. [6]

South West - developer-reported start. Treveth announced on 27 October that construction was getting under way on 46 homes at Gwel an Pras, Newquay, with Gilbert & Goode. This is a project announcement, not a verified recruitment opportunity. [7]

North East - planning consent. Vistry reported consent for 361 homes across three Gateshead sites on 28 October. Consent is distinct from mobilisation, and the report does not establish an October masonry start. [8]

North West - contractor delivery announcement. HG Construction's 23 October statement describes delivery of 895 homes across Red Bank Riverside plots NT02 and NT03 and says Gateway 2 approval has been secured. It does not establish open brickwork packages. [9]

What the project examples tell us

They demonstrate continuing activity alongside weaker aggregate indicators. They are selective examples, not a complete opportunity directory. A housing scheme can be large yet offer little immediate work to a particular subcontractor because of its design, procurement route or construction sequence.

Labour, materials and site considerations

ONS estimated UK construction vacancies fell by 7,000, or 20.5%, between April-June and July-September. This covers construction as a whole, not bricklayers alone. [10]

CITB's 2026-2030 outlook estimates an average need for 41,200 additional UK construction workers each year, including replacement needs. A medium-term forecast can coexist with weaker current recruitment; it is not today's unfilled-job count. [11]

The 7 October materials release showed August GB brick deliveries down 10.1% year-on-year and blocks down 6.5%; the UK new-housing materials price index rose 5.6%. These do not specify local merchant prices, stock or delivery reliability. [12]

HSE launched a noise and vibration campaign on 13 October. It reinforces existing workplace responsibilities rather than creating new October legislation. The official campaign is the appropriate starting point for checking current guidance relevant to powered tools. [13]

Practical direction

Check the site programme. Ask about confirmed starts, construction methods and masonry sequencing rather than relying on announced home totals.

Keep several markets in view. Affordable housing, regeneration and repair work may merit investigation, but the evidence does not prove that workloads are transferring to those sectors or that they offer more dependable earnings.

Keep pricing separate from the outlook. Obtain current quotations and agree scope, access, logistics and extras. The report provides context, not recommended rates.

Use regional evidence carefully. Local project knowledge and several indicators are more useful than extrapolating one percentage to the whole trade.

Update since month-end

The 4 November materials release reported September GB brick deliveries down 15.4% year-on-year and block deliveries up 0.5%. On 12 November, ONS put GB Q3 construction output down 0.7% versus Q2, private new housing down 4.7%, and repair and maintenance up 0.5%. These are later releases, with revisions, rather than information available in October. [14][15]

Our interpretation is that this later evidence supports continued caution about private housing. It does not establish identical conditions across England or measure masonry-specific profitability.

What to watch next

As listed at the 14 November cut-off: the next ONS vacancies release is 17 November; England's annual net additional dwellings statistics are scheduled for 26 November; and ONS October construction output is scheduled for 11 December. Scheduled dates can change. [10][16][17]

Sources & methodology

Prepared from the supplied research drafts and checked against the sources listed below on 14 November 2026. This is a review edition, not a published report. Project announcements describe what their publishers reported; no site inspection, procurement audit or independent TallyTrowel market survey was undertaken. Statistical series differ in coverage and timing and may be revised. Interpretation is identified separately from measured results. Source checks do not guarantee subsequent project delivery.

[1] NHBC - House building faces mounting pressure as new home registrations slide 13%. 26 October 2026. UK, Q3 2026.
Open source - www.nhbc.co.uk

[2] Office for Budget Responsibility - Economic and fiscal outlook, October 2026. Published 28 October 2026; GOV.UK updated 30 October. UK forecast period to 2031-32.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[3] ONS - Construction output in Great Britain: August 2026. 15 October 2026. GB, three months to August.
Open source - www.ons.gov.uk

[4] HM Treasury - Budget 2026. 28 October 2026. Housing measures and planned implementation.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[5] Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates: July to September 2026. 29 October 2026. England and Wales, with separate England regional data.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[6] Vistry - Vistry and partners break ground on 177 affordable homes in Chelmsley Wood. 27 October 2026. West Midlands.
Open source - www.vistry.co.uk

[7] Treveth - Construction begins on 46 new homes at Gwel an Pras, Newquay. 27 October 2026. Cornwall.
Open source - www.treveth.co.uk

[8] Vistry - Planning consent secured for three Gateshead developments delivering 361 new homes. 28 October 2026. North East England.
Open source - www.vistry.co.uk

[9] HG Construction - HG to deliver 895 homes at Red Bank Riverside, Manchester. 23 October 2026. North West England.
Open source - www.hgconstruction.co.uk

[10] ONS - Vacancies and jobs in the UK: October 2026. 20 October 2026. UK vacancies, July-September 2026.
Open source - www.ons.gov.uk

[11] CITB - Construction Workforce Outlook 2026-2030. 2026 edition; precise page publication date not displayed. UK and regional forecasts. Older background.
Open source - www.citb.co.uk

[12] Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade - Construction building materials: commentary September 2026. 7 October 2026. GB delivery volumes and UK indices, principally August data.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[13] Health and Safety Executive - Noise and vibration: HSE warns employers not to wait until the damage is done. 13 October 2026. Existing workplace safety duties.
Open source - press.hse.gov.uk

[14] Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade - Construction building materials: commentary October 2026. 4 November 2026. GB delivery volumes and UK material indices, mainly September. Post-month-end.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[15] ONS - Construction output in Great Britain: September 2026, new orders and construction output prices. 12 November 2026. GB/UK, Q3 and September. Post-month-end.
Open source - www.ons.gov.uk

[16] MHCLG - Housing supply: net additional dwellings, England, 2025 to 2026. Release announcement, last updated 13 November 2026. Scheduled for 26 November.
Open source - www.gov.uk

[17] ONS - Construction output in Great Britain: October 2026. Scheduled release: 11 December 2026, as checked 14 November.
Open source - www.ons.gov.uk