

20<sup>th</sup> May 2022

## **DATA: ONS reported UK house prices rose 9.8% in the year to March 2022**

This was slightly lower than the previous month's revised figure of 11.3% though this data is being regularly revised at the moment – it was reported as 10.9% last month.

## **DATA: ONS reported on the UK labour market**

The number of payrolled employees is well above pre-pandemic levels and the unemployment rate (3.7%) is well below pre-pandemic rates. However, the employment rate is still below pre-pandemic rates and real basic earnings were negative - though this turns positive when bonuses are included.

## **DATA: ONS reported a 9.0% annual rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)**

This was the highest rate recorded by this measure since it began in January 1989 (based on constructed historic data). RPI rose 11.1% over the same period.

## **DATA: Zoopla reported UK private rents rose 11% in the year to Q1 2022**

They reported “Rental demand is particularly acute in city centres as students, office workers and international demand returns”. Rents in London rose 15.7% over the same period though this partly reflects the bounce back from falls during the pandemic.

## **DATA: UK Finance reported a fall in number of mortgage arrears in Q1 2022**

The number of owner-occupier mortgages in arrears of over 2.5% of their balance fell 10% to 75,970 and arrear rates are still around record lows. The number of BTL arrears fell 5% over the same period.

## **DATA: MoJ reported rapid growth in mortgage and landlord possessions**

However, this reflects the bounce back from very low levels during the pandemic and all measures are still well below pre-pandemic levels.

## **DATA: DLUHC published Building Safety Programme release**

The release states that, at the end of April 2022, 88% of identified buildings no longer have unsafe ACM cladding. Meanwhile, a Home Office consultation [response](#) suggests it will ignore a recommendation of the Grenfell inquiry and not make personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for those with limited mobility a legal requirement.

## **REPORT: DLUHC on “Estimating the prevalence and costs of external wall system life-safety fire risk in mid-rise residential buildings in England”**

See Chart of the Week for more detail.

## **REPORT: NHBC published new home statistics for Q1 2022**

The report shows a big increase in new homes registered during the quarter (up 25% compared to Q1 2021) though completions were 4% lower over the same period. This data is no longer a meaningful indicator for housebuilding activity due to market share issues.

## **NEWS: MoneyFacts report the average two-year fixed rate “breaches 3% for first time in over seven years”**

The data, an average for all loan-to-value ratios, shows an increase in the average rate to 3.03%, the highest since March 2015.

## Chart of the Week

This week DLUHC [published](#) details on their estimates for the number of mid-rise (11-18m high) buildings and the work required to fix external wall fire risks. Their analysis found that the majority of residential buildings (89-91%) do not have an external wall system that poses a life-safety fire risk. However, it estimated that around 6,220 to 8,880 buildings do require remediation with the majority having at least one external wall that requires full remediation. They conclude that “The costs to alleviate external wall system life-safety fire risks for leasehold dwellings in mid-rise residential buildings is estimated to be between £3.1 billion and £5.3 billion”. However, there is some debate about the exact number of buildings affected given the challenges with the underlying data. Perhaps this would be an ideal time to create an open-source database of residential buildings across the country, though restrictions around Ordnance Survey data and other sources is a barrier.

### Mid-Rise Residential Dwellings in England & External Well System Life-Safety Fire Risk

Source: DLUHC

