

Home Pride Index 2022.

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



Checkatrade

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Mike Fairman

CEO Checkatrade

Introduction

Our homes are much more than just bricks and mortar

2021 saw us rekindle our love of the home, as we waved goodbye to stay at home orders - and embraced the ability to once again use our living spaces as they were originally intended.

It is clear absence made the heart grow fonder. We've increased our investment in home improvements this last year, and even the shortages of skilled trades and raw materials couldn't dampen our desires. In fact, we've been more eager than ever to make changes that drive our neighbours green with envy.

Based on conversations with more than 2,000 homeowners around the UK, we've been able to gauge just how house proud we all are, whilst also learning more about the investments we have made in our homes, the most common home improvement jobs tackled and our key intentions for 2022.

What is clear is that we're keen to keep improving, with an overwhelming 76% of us believing that our homes still have room for improvement. We can believe this, with a staggering 10.3 million calls to Checkatrade members last year.

We hope you find these insights helpful and, whatever 2022 may bring, that you continue to take inspiration and pride in your home.



Mike Fairman, CEO, Checkatrade

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Pride in the Home

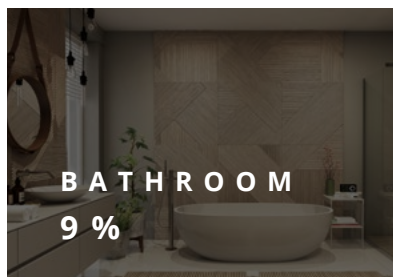
Thanks to fewer months in lockdown and a successful vaccine roll out, 2021 saw us spend considerably less time at home than in 2020. It's clear that absence made the heart grow fonder with research from Checkatrade¹ revealing 35% of us loved our homes even more in 2021 vs. 2020.

In the year that the UK re-opened, our rooms began to return to their intended uses - dining tables were no longer a space for home schooling and living rooms saw fewer at-home work outs.

It was also a year where we no longer saw our homes as something that caged us in, but instead saw them return to being places where we can unwind, entertain and be with others - giving us the perfect opportunity to fall back in love with them.

This renewed love affair is reflected most in the living room, main bedroom and kitchen – highlighted as Britain's most favourite spaces. Being 'most comfortable' (58%), the 'heart of the home' (43%) and 'the space we spend the most time in' (40%) were just some of the reasons why these spaces took a special place in our hearts.

Favourite rooms of the house 2021





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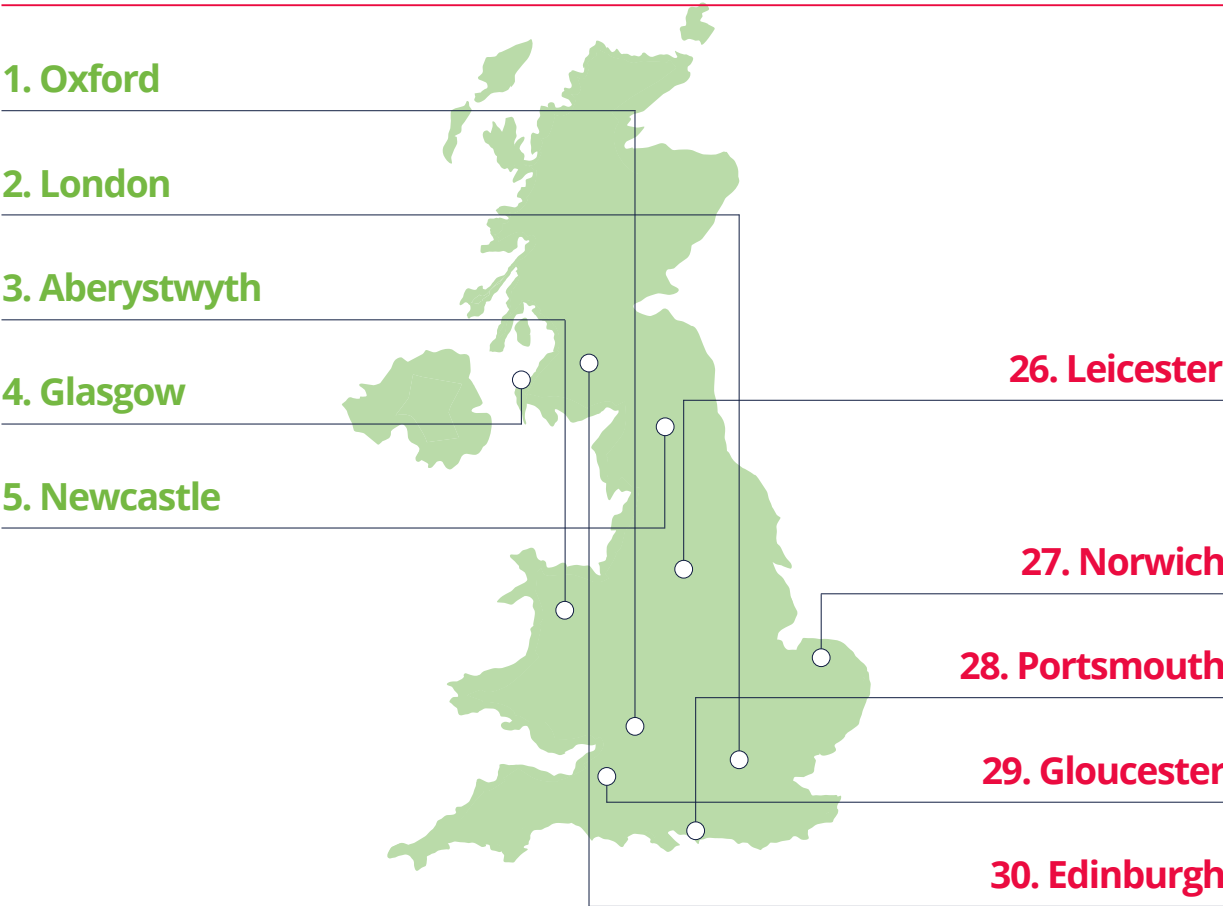
2020 put a strain on our homes, as we repurposed rooms and pushed their space and robustness to its limits. As we returned to a more ‘normal’ way of living in 2021, it’s not surprising that almost a third of us have re-evaluated the relationship we have with our homes. This has no doubt contributed to why we’re all so loved- up - and we’re expecting this to be reflected in continued home improvement investment in 2022.

Mike Fairman
CEO of Checkatrade

House proud cities

Homeowners from Oxford, London and Aberystwyth are more house proud than any other area of the UK. Edinburgh, Gloucester, and Portsmouth came bottom of the list – with Edinburgh scoring in the bottom set for the second year running.

Based on the responses of nearly 2,400 homeowners, 30 cities were awarded points based on money spent on home improvements, time spent doing DIY, and the number of unfinished jobs.



1. Oxford	11. York	21. Chelmsford
2. London	12. Wolverhampton	22. Birmingham
3. Aberystwyth	13. Cambridge	23. Coventry
4. Glasgow	14. Aberdeen	24. Swansea
5. Newcastle	15. Cardiff	25. Wrexham
6. Leeds	16. Plymouth	26. Leicester
7. Brighton and Hove	17. Belfast	27. Norwich
8. Southampton	18. Sheffield	28. Portsmouth
9. Worcester	19. Liverpool	29. Gloucester
10. Manchester	20. Bristol	30. Edinburgh

Homeowners from Oxford spent more on transforming their homes than any other city, investing £9,329 on average, while also spending more time looking for more home décor inspiration and ideas than any other location, and calling on the most tradespeople to help tackle the work.

Whilst adults from Wolverhampton may not have been the biggest spenders, they did invest the most time cleaning and tidying their homes last year – a total of 4 hours and 41 minutes per week. In comparison, homeowners in Edinburgh set aside just 2 hours and 59 minutes each week – the least amount of any area.

Third-placed Aberystwyth also fared well, taking the number one slot for both greenest homes and feelings of being house proud.



Investment in the home

2021 was also a year where we spent more on sprucing up our homes, with homeowners around the country spent on average £2,706 on home improvements - £98 more than in 2020.

Homes in the North East saw the biggest increase in investment, followed by those from the West Midlands and Wales.

REGION	TOTAL SPENT ON HOME IMPROVEMENTS*		
	2020	2021	% change YoY
London	£4,154	£3,859	-7%
West Midlands	£2,356	£3,438	+46%
North East	£2,004	£3,320	+66%
South East	£2,665	£3,012	+13%
Yorkshire and Humber	£2,929	£2,850	-3%
Wales	£2,156	£2,698	+25%
North West	£2,400	£2,645	+10%
Scotland	£2,936	£2,538	-14%
South West	£2,829	£2,409	-15%
East Midlands	£2,118	£2,165	+2%
East Anglia	£1,754	£2,111	+20%
Northern Ireland	£1,635	£1,820	+11%



Where are we investing?

With kitchens and gardens adding to a home's potential value, homeowners have continued to prioritise investment in these areas with an average spend of £404 and £402 respectively.

Homeowners from the West Midlands clearly have the greenest fingers, spending more on revamping their gardens than any other region in the UK. In fact, they spent an average £631 on their gardens in the last year – a whopping 57% more than the national average of £402.

Room	TOP 10 SPACES BRITS SPENT MONEY IMPROVING YEAR-ON-YEAR		
	2020	2021	% change
Kitchen	£435	£404	-7%
Garden	£392	£402	+3%
Living Room	£311	£372	+20%
Bathroom	£333	£349	+5%
Bedrooms	£302	£306	+1%
Utility Room	£204	£183	-10%
Hallway	£168	£180	+7%
Driveway	£223	£178	-20%
Home Office	£222	£165	-26%
Loft	£163	£153	-6%



Meanwhile, investment in our living rooms has seen the biggest growth with spend up 20% year-on-year further suggesting our shift to investing in the spaces we use to entertain or unwind.

Although home offices may have dominated our spending habits in 2020, these spaces no longer took priority in 2021 with the category seeing a 26% decrease in investment. Londoners previously spent the most money on renovating or converting a space into a home office, with an average spend of £621 in 2020 – a figure which dropped by over half to £306 in 2021.

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Our research shows that while investment in our homes has increased, there has been a marked shift towards focussing this investment on areas we entertain in, a trend we expect to continue to see in 2022. It's surprising to see that the new style of 'hybrid homeworking' hasn't encouraged more of us to invest more in our office spaces, which could be a sign that employees don't see this as a trend which is set to last.

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CEO, Checkatrade

Case study: Justin Trowse, Surrey

One person who has made home improvements to aid entertaining is Justin Trowse from Surrey. His previous home had a separate kitchen and living space, which always made it difficult when entertaining friends and family. Having recently purchased a new renovation project it was essential that the kitchen/living room could be made into an open plan space, so the area felt integrated when hosting.



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Living in a small two-up two-down home always made it difficult when we had small get togethers with friends and family. With the kitchen and living room being separate, it completely took away the social aspect of having people round as we were always having to go back and forth between each room.

...



With our new home, one of the main reasons we fell in love with the house was because it had the potential to knock through the wall between the existing kitchen and living area, as well as extend out the back, which meant we could create the open plan living space we'd always dreamed of having.

It's been a long road to get where we are today, and we still have a way to go, but we're finally in a position where we can entertain again, and the new space makes such a difference. We've also had aluminium sliding doors put in at the back and one of our next jobs is to finish off the patio in the garden. Once the space is complete it'll become the perfect indoor/outdoor area for hosting during the summer as well.

Justin used Checktrade to source multiple trades for their house renovation which saw a complete rewire, replumbing and building work.

Top tips from the trades: Affordable changes that could boost your home's value



Sean Saunders, Painter at Sean Saunders Painting, Dorset has identified adding feature walls and painting kitchen units as two of the simplest and most cost-efficient ways to revamp your home.

Instead of decorating a whole room, you can do a feature wall with a different colour or wallpaper and change the room's cheap old doors to oak laminate – it's surprisingly cheaper than you would think. Another tip is to paint kitchen units with the latest colours – it can really lift a kitchen.



Jason Webb, Painter and Decorator at AJW Painting Contractors Ltd., Surrey says his customers often updating the paint colours in their home as a quick and easy way of sprucing up their living spaces.

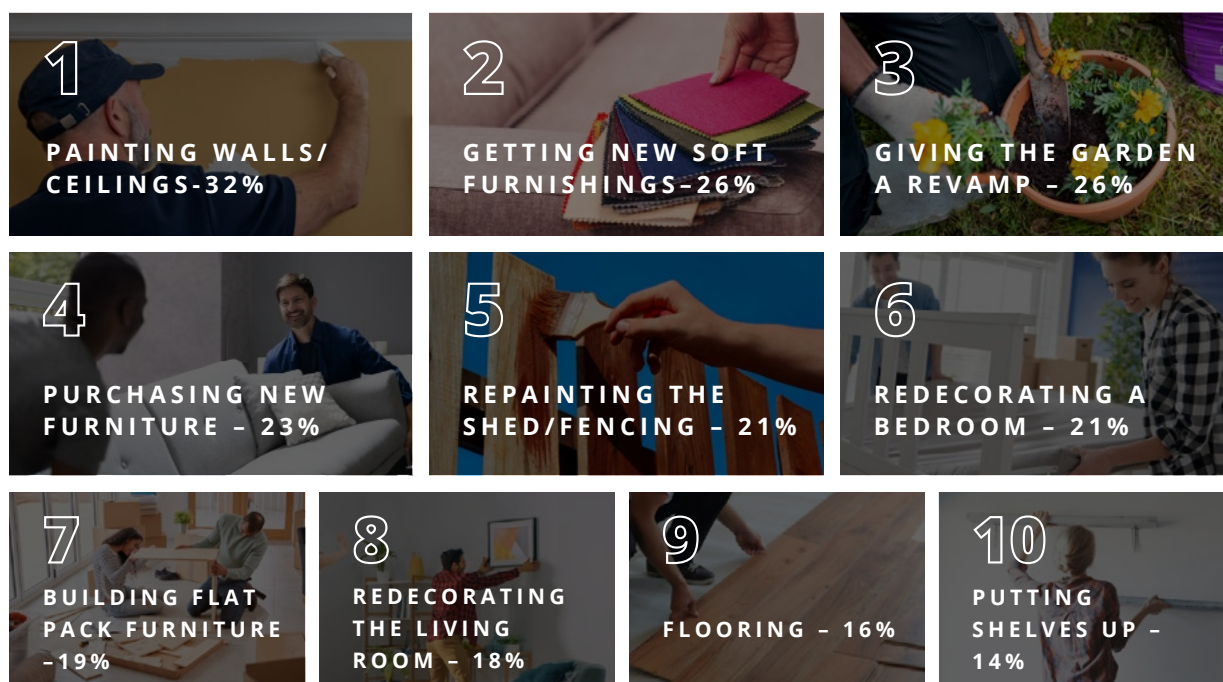
Changing the paint colour in a room is a simple and affordable home improvement that can transform your mood and brighten your life and outlook.

Changing rooms

Reflecting on the changes we have made in our homes this past year, it's been less about switching up the purpose of a space (e.g. shoffice – shed office) and more about bettering our existing areas with 35% of us spending the last year getting rid of clutter around their home.

Painting walls and ceilings, getting new soft furnishings and revamping the garden were the most popular changes made at home in the last year with homeowners seemingly looking for new ways to breathe more life and comfort into their space.

Most popular changes made at home in 2021



A nation of DIY-ers

Despite us experiencing more freedoms in 2021, these didn't seem to deter us from tackling DIY at home with over a third (37%) of homeowners more eager than ever to roll up their sleeves and carry out work on their homes.

In fact, 30% of homeowners reported fewer unfinished DIY jobs in the last year than in 2020, thanks to having more free time (44%), motivation (30%) and money (21%).

But with this comes green-eyed envy, as a third of people admitted to being jealous of other people's home improvements - likely adding to the reasons why we're investing more in home improvement projects.

Calling in the trades

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

Checkatrade's Trending Services – 2020 vs. 2021

	2020 Most Searched For Services	2021 Most Searched For Services
1	Plumber	Builder
2	Builder	Plumber
3	Electrician	Roofer
4	Roofer	Electrician
5	Painter/Decorator	Painter / Decorator
6	Carpenter	Carpenter
7	Plasterer	Windows/Doors/Conservatories
8	Gardener	Driveways/Patios/Paths
9	Roofing Repairs	Central Heating
10	Boiler Repairs/Servicing	Plasterer

As we spend less time at home, demand for repair-based services has dropped out the top 10, being replaced by cosmetic changes such as windows, doors and pathways. The trend for investment in driveways may reflect a rise in electric vehicles sales in the last 12 months³ and the need to have charging access nearby.

Despite not being in the top ten, insulation (+61%) and renewable energy searches (+59%) have reassuringly also seen growth, showing that households are interested in exploring green changes to their homes.



The background image shows a residential property. The upper portion features a red-tiled roof with several blue solar panels installed. Below the roofline, a white-framed conservatory with large glass panels is visible, situated on a paved patio. To the left of the conservatory, there are several tall sunflower plants in terracotta pots. To the right, a wooden garden gate is partially visible, surrounded by greenery and purple flowers. The sky is clear and blue.

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It's clear to see the knock-on effect for home improvements as people continue to make the most of having extra time at home to get jobs done. We expect to see demand for core trades continue in 2022, and will be watching closely to see if this is also reflected in our emerging green home categories.

Mike Fairman
CEO of Checkatrade

2022 Trends

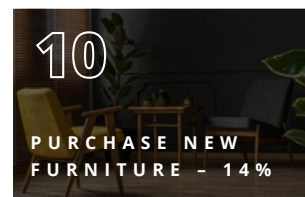
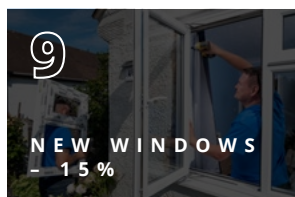
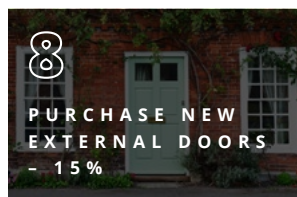
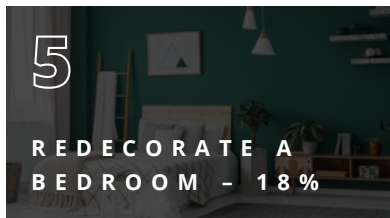
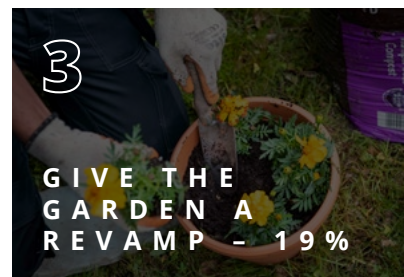
Future home improvements

With house sales 30% higher in the first 11 months of 2021, many more homeowners will be wanting to use the year ahead to make improvements.

In fact, an overwhelming 76% believe their homes have room for improvement - with a quarter (23%) planning to make more improvements and / or renovations to their property than in 2021. This suggests homeowners are not willing to compromise and give up on home spending, even as it becomes easier to spend money elsewhere.

Topping the list for improvement plans are new kitchens, bathroom makeovers and redecorating the living room - with over half of homeowners wanting to prioritise these spaces in order to give their homes a refresh (56%). An additional 43% are also prioritising these spaces as they need to be repaired or replaced, while a fifth (21%) want to add value to their home.

Top renovations and home improvements homeowners are planning to make in the future





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Homeowners are seeing the value in making improvements to the spaces that have seen them through the last two years. If you're part of the 38% wanting to enlist the support of a professionally trained tradesperson this year, then it's important you go with an approved, checked and guaranteed trade to ensure a job well done.

Mike Fairman
CEO, Checkatrade

Cosmetic changes

Bolder and brighter aesthetics are on the horizon this year, with research showing maximalism (36%), coloured mood lighting (30%) and statement furniture (28%) amongst the top intentions.

Interestingly, 48% of homeowners are still keen to focus on an industrial aesthetic, something which was predicted by industry professionals to be a decorative feature of the past, whilst 36% weren't quite ready to let go of the boho vibe.

Gen Z leads the way to more sustainable living

Despite the upcoming green deadlines and new incentives such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme being announced, there is still a job to do in convincing homeowners to embrace a greener way of living. Despite the upcoming green deadlines and new incentives such as the Boiler Upgrade Scheme being announced, there is still a job to do in convincing homeowners to embrace a greener way of living. Of those who don't already have them, only 26% would consider installing a smart thermostat in 2022, whilst 18% would consider solar panels and 17% would consider electric vehicle charging points.

Gen Z (18 to 24-year-olds) have the biggest desire to make eco-friendly updates to their homes with a third (31%) of those who don't already have them planning to add heating pumps, solar panels and loft insulation to their homes.



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Whilst we've seen signs of increased insulation and renewable energy searches over the past year, it's clear homeowners still need a lot of convincing that green changes are the right thing to invest in. 55% of people don't want to make green changes to their properties over the next 12 months, particularly those in the over 55 age bracket.

There are real benefits to making simple green changes, for instance adding a smart thermostat to your home is relatively inexpensive and goes a long way in helping to reduce energy consumption. With the roll out of the impending government grants this spring, more needs to be done to educate homeowners around the green deadlines and we hope to see demand grow for green solutions as the year progresses.

Mike Fairman
CEO, Checkatrade

2022 trends according to the trades



Wayne de Wet at Wayne de Wet Painting has identified upcycling as a continued trend for 2022, with a focus on giving old furniture a new lease of life.

Upcycling once loved furniture to create a new love affair with it and bringing it up to date will be popular throughout 2022. Other trends will include feature walls which use panelling, bold colours and digital wallpapers.



Emma Kemp, Director at I-furb Bespoke Construction has identified an increased focus on **sustainable materials** on heritage properties.

What we are seeing is that customers are more astute about the build process - specifically where planning stipulates an older or Heritage property. Here we are being asked to source sustainable materials and request fittings, such as ground source heat pumps and triple glazing.

But outside of this, we are also seeing more customers wanting to spend their money on fancy bespoke kitchens, media walls, cinema rooms and lighting too.

Conclusion

Whether you're taking on a huge kitchen makeover, or just giving a living room a new lick of paint - any project, big or small can inject a renewed sense of pride and enjoyment into a space.

Despite another year of uncertainty, homeowners have continued to love their homes and invest in them wisely, knowing renovations of our personal spaces and favourite rooms help us to prioritise ourselves and our wellbeing.

As we look to 2022, the continuing focus on prioritising spaces for us to unwind and entertain looks set to continue and we look forward to seeing how homeowners use these spaces and continue to take pride in their homes throughout the year ahead.



Notes to editors

¹Consumer Research

2,399 British Homeowners were surveyed online between 9th – 20th December 2021 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.

30 points were given for the highest average total, 29 for the second highest, 28 for the third highest and so on - right through to one point for the lowest.

The categories cities were scored on included money spent on renovation and furnishings and aesthetics in 2021, 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 30 most house-proud cities:

1.	Oxford - 227 points	16.	Plymouth - 125 points
2.	London - 193 points	17.	Belfast - 119 points
3.	Aberystwyth - 188 points	18.	Sheffield - 117 points
4.	Glasgow - 172 points	19.	Liverpool - 111 points
5.	Newcastle - 157 points	20.	Bristol - 107 points
6.	Leeds - 150 points	21.	Chelmsford - 106 points
7.	Brighton and Hove - 146 points	22.	Birmingham - 103 points
8.	Southampton - 146 points	23.	Coventry - 101 points
9.	Worcester - 144 points	24.	Swansea - 94 points
10.	Manchester - 141 points	25.	Wrexham - 86 points
11.	York - 139 points	26.	Leicester - 71 points
12.	Wolverhampton - 131 points	27.	Norwich - 69 points
13.	Cambridge - 130 points	28.	Portsmouth - 66 points
14.	Aberdeen - 128 points	29.	Gloucester - 65 points
15.	Cardiff - 127 points	30.	Edinburgh - 61 points

³<https://www.smmmt.co.uk/2022/01/covid-stalls-2021-uk-new-car-market-but-record-ev-sales-show-future-direction>

⁴<https://www.nationwidehousepriceindex.co.uk/reports/uk-house-prices-end-the-year-at-a-record-high-with-annual-price-growth-in-double-digits>

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