

## When it comes to the home, size does matter...

- **Nearly 20,000 homes were extended in England in the last year\***
- **Outside of London, Leeds is striving to develop faster than any other city in the country**
- **Councils most likely to accept or decline planning permission revealed**

Struggling to find the house of your dreams, in a neighbourhood you love, at a price you can afford?

Extending your home may be the answer; 75% of all residential applications in England were approved in 2016, with 91% of these applicants receiving their answer within 13 weeks.

Online furniture retailer, [Furniture Choice](#), has uncovered which councils are the most and least likely to grant planning permission, highlighting the best areas for those looking to extend their property as well as determining England's fastest developing cities.

Between 1st March 2016 – 28th February 2017, 18,087 home extensions were carried out across England. 12,567 (70%) of these had 'permitted development rights' and therefore did not require planning permission [1], offering even more hope for homeowners looking to increase their living space with minimal hassle.

However, for those that do need permission, the chances of having an application granted varies dramatically depending on which local planning authority has the final say. Just 14% of applications, across both commercial and residential developments, were approved in Bradford in 2015 and 2016, whereas 100% of applications made in another Yorkshire city - Barnsley - in the same period were approved.

The councils which are most likely to approve planning permission are\*:

1. Barnsley (100%)
2. Wigan (95%)
3. North Tyneside (92%)
4. St Helens (90%)
5. Salford (88%)
6. Wirral (86%)
7. South Tyneside (82%)
8. Dudley (82%)
9. Leeds (80%)
10. Bolton (80%)

Those councils which are most likely to reject planning permission are\*:

1. Bradford (86%)
2. Calderdale (76%)
3. Rochdale (70%)
4. Coventry (68%)

5. Wakefield (62%)
6. Sheffield (61%)
7. Newcastle upon Tyne (58%)
8. Knowsley (54%)
9. Birmingham (49%)
10. Kirklees (48%)

When making their decision, local planning authorities need to abide by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), a guide which outlines the ways that any developments must advance the UK economically. [4]

Semsettin Karahan, Architectural Designer at ZanoPLY, advises on how to increase the likelihood of achieving planning permission for an extension: “A successful extension design should be influenced by local and national planning policies; the local planning policies should inform the appearance, and the national planning policies should inform the scale of the extension. The site also plays a crucial role; check if your immediate neighbours have also built an extension.”

### **Five top tips to consider when extending your home**

- *Cellar opportunities* - Converting an existing cellar doesn't normally require planning permission, although always check when adding in windows
- *Right to light* - Your neighbours have light rights, and can oppose an extension if it blocks daylight from their property. Avoid doing so to improve the chances of being approved
- *The finer details* - Ensure all conservatories and lean-tos are separated from the home with good quality exterior doors to please insurers
- *Insurance* - Make sure to get site insurance while any work is ongoing, to cover both the works and your existing home during construction
- *Permitted development* - Even if you think your extension doesn't need permission, always check before work begins!

Furniture Choice also analysed the data to find out where England's fastest developing hotspots are. Leeds is attempting to expand its cityscape faster than any other city outside of London, with more applications for commercial and residential developments than any other city or town - 80% of all residential and commercial applications in Leeds in 2016 were approved, with 119 developments granted in 2016 alone.

Over the past decade, Leeds has seen £3.8bn worth of major property schemes, with £2.6bn in the city centre alone [2]. And with £7.35bn commercial property schemes currently under construction and planning throughout wider Leeds [3], as well as South Bank's regeneration project which will create over 35,000 jobs, it's not surprising that more and more people are choosing to create homes and businesses in this up-and-coming city.

Tom Obbard, Managing Director at Furniture Choice, said: “Finding the right home, in the right area, at the right time can sometimes seem unattainable. As well as being a potentially more affordable way to upsize, extending your home improves your chances of getting the exact house layout you want. Plus, there's no stress of packing everything up and getting to know a new area.

“It's much easier than people think to apply for planning permission and most applications can be carried out online. Depending on the size of your extension, it might even fall under

‘permitted development rights’ with no permission required. Of course, it’s best to speak to your local planning authority just to make sure, in case your house or area has certain rules.”

For advice on how to ensure your planning application gets approved, visit <http://www.furniturechoice.co.uk/blog/guide/tips-home-renovators/>

### **About Furniture Choice**

Founded in 2005, [FurnitureChoice.co.uk](http://www.furniturechoice.co.uk) is an independent furniture retailer. The company combines a deep knowledge of contemporary furniture manufacturing with first-class e-commerce expertise.

With a dedicated UK call-centre and an experienced quality control team in Asia, Furniture Choice is able to offer customers the greatest variety of high quality contemporary furniture and best-in-class customer service, backed-up with fast, free delivery and returns. To find out more visit <http://www.furniturechoice.co.uk/about-us/>.