

# Homes, health and COVID-19

How COVID-19 has exacerbated the link between housing and health, and how the lockdown has impacted those living in poor-quality homes

**Millions of us are living  
in non-decent homes.**

**Of the 23.5 million homes  
in England, 18% are in a  
'non-decent' condition.**

**18%**

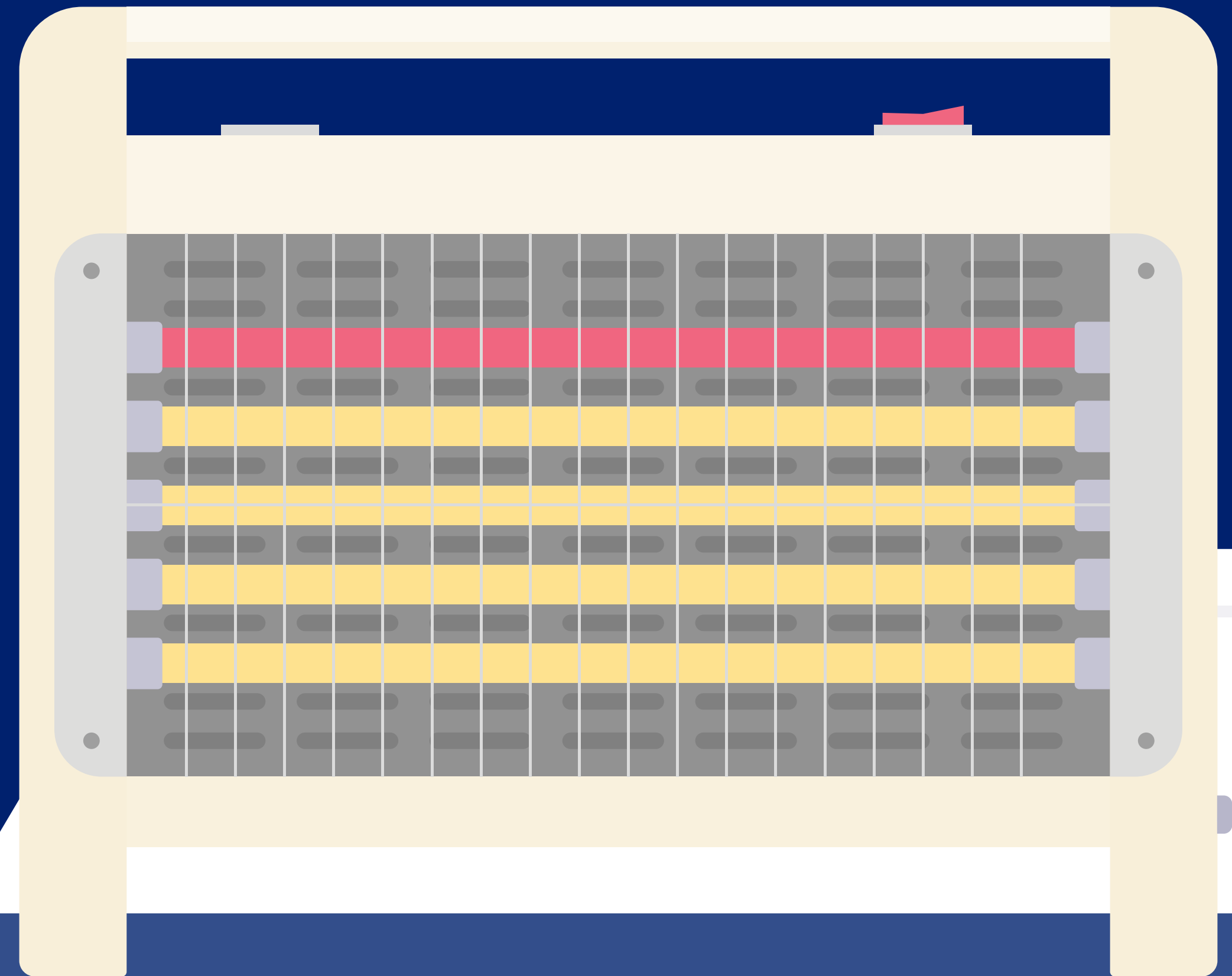


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Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government,  
English Housing Survey: Headline Report, 2018-19 (2020)

**The homes we live  
in have a profound  
impact on our health.**

**In England, around one in five excess deaths during winter are attributed to cold housing.**

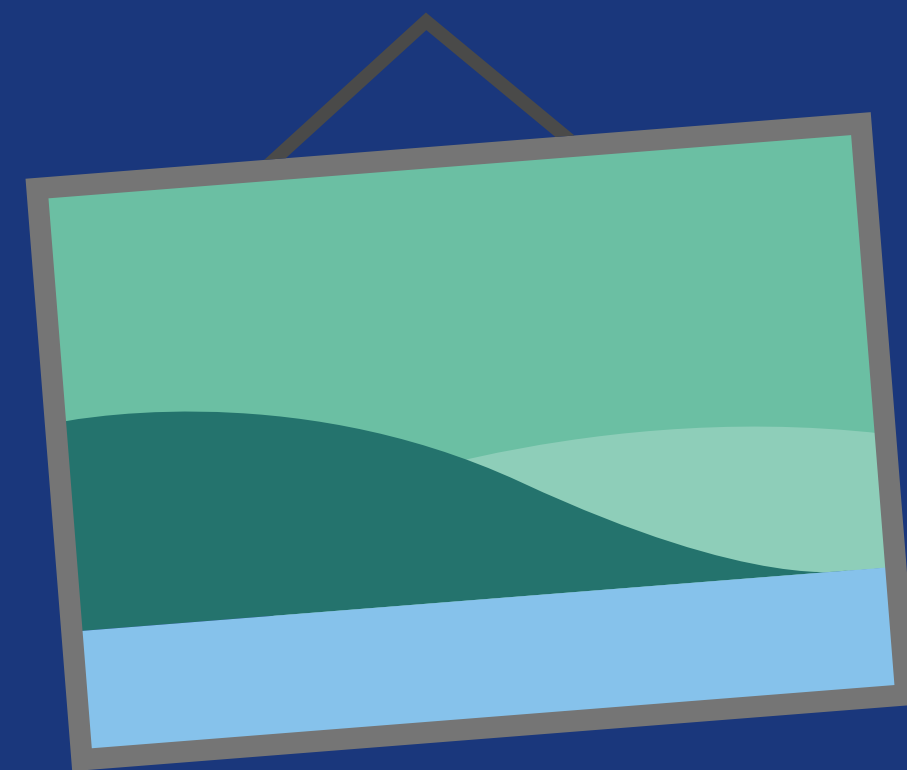


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Source: Geddes et al, The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty (2011)

# £500m

The NHS spends around £500 million on first year treatment costs for over 55s living in the poorest housing.



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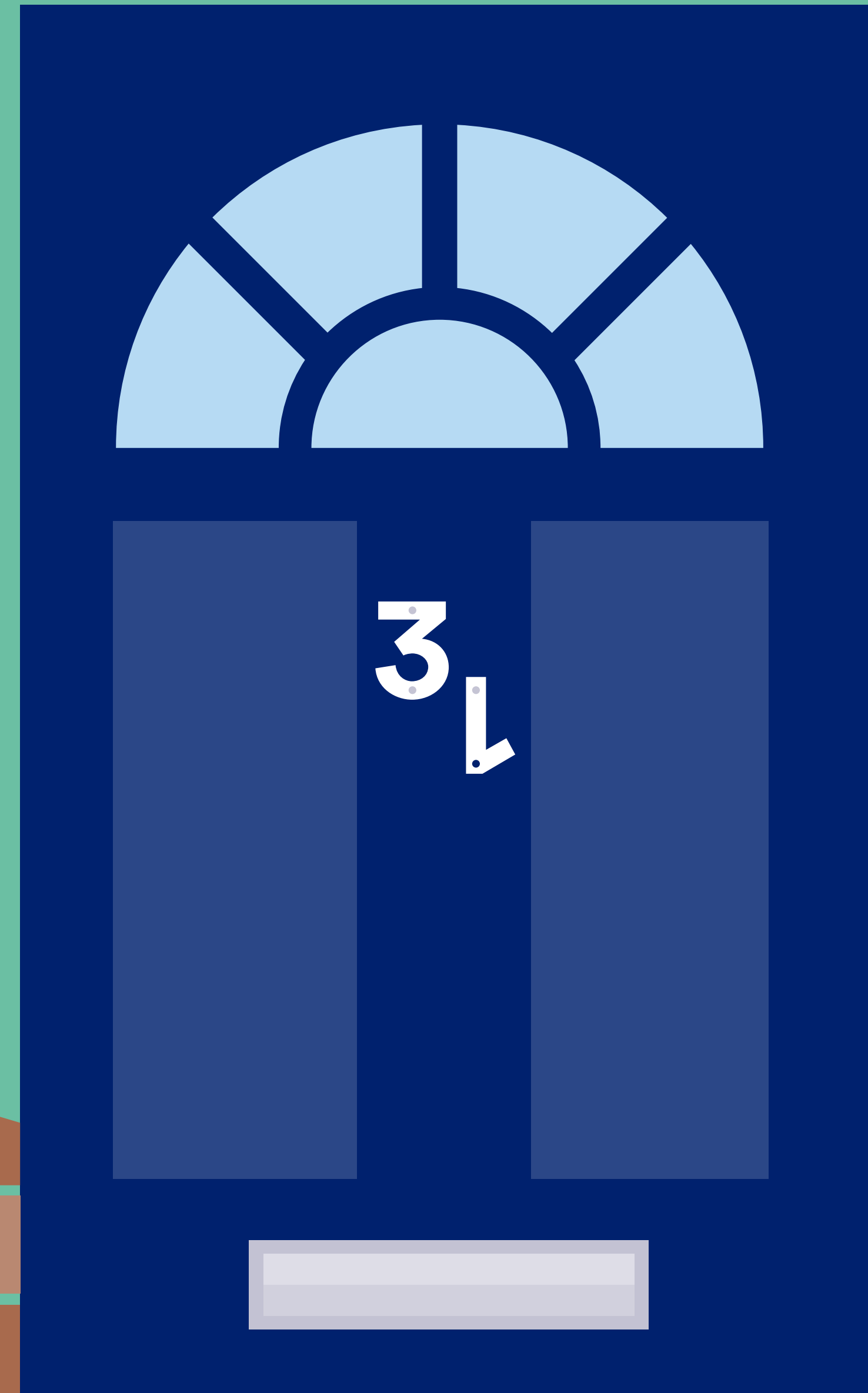
Source: Centre for Ageing Better, Home and dry:  
The need for decent homes in later life (2020)

**COVID-19 has shone a  
light on poor housing  
and its effect on health.**

**Nearly a third of adults in Britain (31%) reported having physical or mental health problems because of the condition of their homes during lockdown.**

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Source: National Housing Federation, Housing issues during lockdown: health, space and overcrowding (2020)





**Around 30,000 people were living in a home consisting of one room during lockdown.**

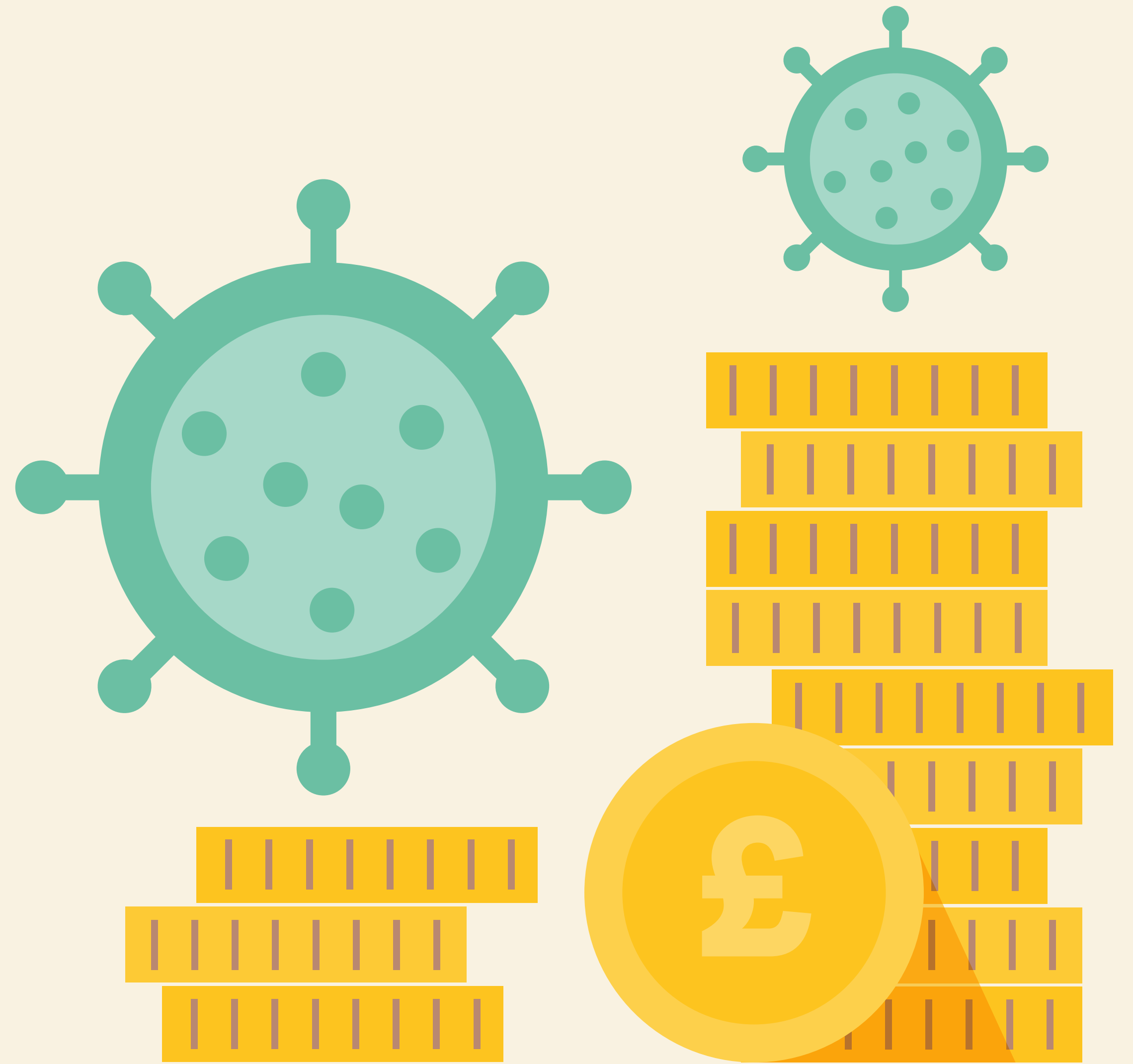


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Source: National Housing Federation, Housing issues during lockdown: health, space and overcrowding (2020)

**The people most vulnerable to COVID-19 are also the most likely to be living in poor quality housing:** older people, those with existing health conditions, people on lower incomes and those from ethnic minority groups.

**People living in the most deprived areas died of COVID-19 at twice the rate of those living in the wealthiest areas.**



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Source: Office for National Statistics, Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation: deaths occurring between 1 March and 31 July 2020 (2020)

**Of the 20 local authorities with the highest COVID-19 mortality rates, 14 also have the highest percentage of households living with fewer bedrooms than needed.**

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Source: Inside Housing, The housing pandemic: four graphs showing the link between COVID-19 deaths and the housing crisis (2020)



**Overcrowded homes pose a significant health risk by increasing likelihood of spreading COVID-19.**

**30% of Bangladeshi households, 18% of Pakistani and 16% of Black African households experience overcrowding. This compares to 2% of White British households.**



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Source: Office for National Statistics, Overcrowded households (2018)

**Digital exclusion may also be impacting on mental and physical health. Online access is increasingly important for accessing health care and other types of support.**

# Four out of five people agree that using technology has been a vital support during the coronavirus outbreak.



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Source: Lloyds Bank, Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 (2020)



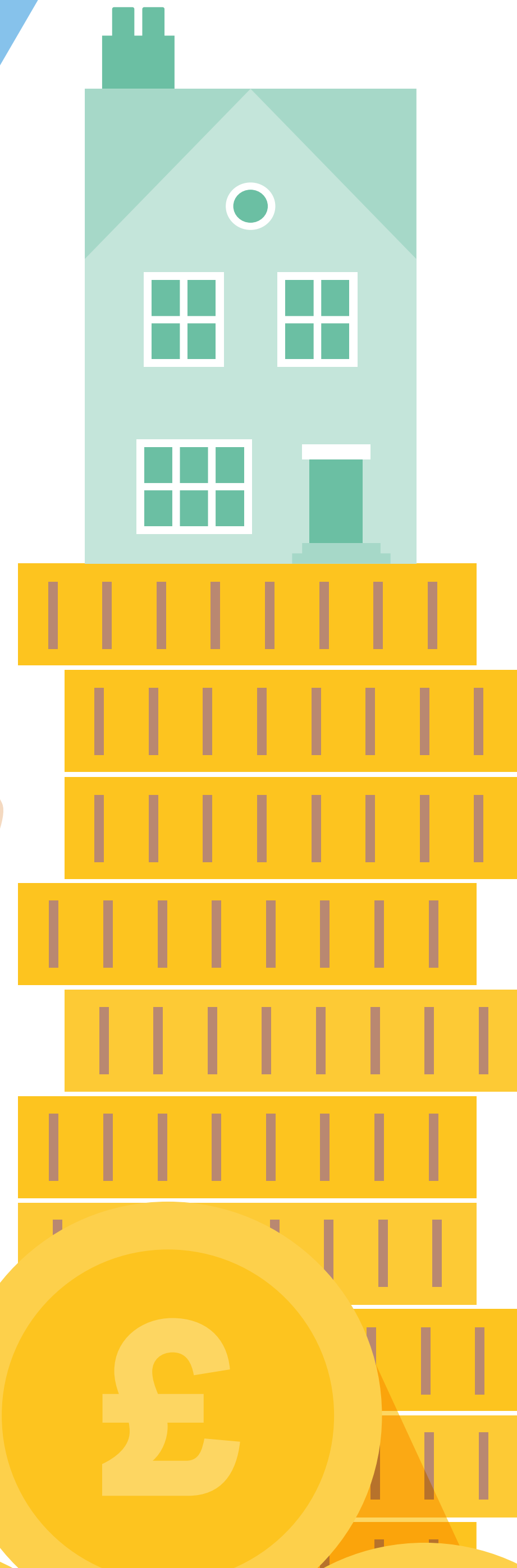
**The financial impact of the pandemic has also increased housing insecurity.**

# 2.5m

people in England are  
unable to afford the  
rent or mortgages of  
their homes.

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Source: National Housing Federation, 1 in 7 people  
in England directly hit by the housing crisis (2019)



**Improvements to our homes can be both beneficial to individuals and highly cost-effective.**

# 26%

**Some low-cost adaptations to the home can result in a 26% reduction in number of falls.**



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Source: Centre for Ageing Better, Room to improve:  
The role of home adaptations in improving later life (2017)

**Every £1 spent on improving warmth in homes occupied by 'vulnerable' households can result in £4 of health benefits.**



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Source: Watson, Housing and health: a case for investment (2019)

**The health of our population is  
linked to the health of our homes.**

**Spending extended periods exposed to damp and mould is likely to exacerbate or induce respiratory and cardiovascular conditions, in turn increasing the risk of contracting COVID-19.**

**Reducing the negative impact of poor-quality housing on health requires immediate and long-term intervention.**



**More collaboration is needed across the health and housing sectors to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable population groups.**

The logo consists of a white square divided into four quadrants by a diagonal line from the top-left to the bottom-right. The top-left and bottom-right quadrants are white, while the top-right and bottom-left quadrants are dark blue.

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Ageing Better**

Action today for all our tomorrows

[ageing-better.org.uk](https://ageing-better.org.uk)