



English Housing Survey

Dissemination strategy



English housing survey dissemination strategy

1. This note sets out current proposals for the release of information from the new English Housing Survey launched in April 2008 which brought together the two former surveys - the Survey of English Housing (SEH) and the English House Condition Survey (EHCS).
2. Proposals here reflect feedback from a user consultation exercise conducted in November 2009.
3. The strategy will be kept under review and users will be consulted on any further proposed changes.

Background

4. Both the SEH and EHCS are long standing and well regarded surveys with a large body of users covering a wide range of interests inside and outside government. An important aim of the dissemination strategy for the new survey is to maintain continuity for existing users while introducing improvements to capitalise on the potential offered by the new integrated survey.
5. The English Housing Survey brings together the methodology for the two former surveys and comprises:
 - a) An interview with approximately 17,000 households a year. This is referred to as the 'full household sample' and equates to the sample of the former SEH and will be analysed on a single financial year basis.
 - b) A follow up physical inspection of 8,000 of these respondents' homes to assess the condition and energy performance of the property. An independent market valuation is also undertaken. This is referred to as the 'dwelling sub-sample' and equates to the sample of the former EHCS and will be analysed on a rolling two-year basis.
6. First results from the 2008-09 EHS were published in February 2010. A range of outputs are planned based on the two main samples above. These include

- Annual headline report
- Annual report on household trends and circumstances
- Annual report on the condition and energy performance of the housing stock
- Annual Technical Report
- Supporting tables on the web
- Publicly available data sets
- Ad hoc analysis

Each of these is outlined briefly below and in the table at Appendix 1.

Annual headline report

7. This short report will present preliminary headline findings including key indicators related to departmental housing policies in areas such as trends in tenure and household composition, overcrowding, housing costs, and the condition and energy performance of the stock covered by the survey, at national level from both the full and paired samples focusing on key trends in tenure, household composition, overcrowding and any topical housing issues such as housing costs. The report will also provide an update on the changing condition and energy performance of the stock by housing sector.
8. This will be a web-only publication normally available to download Jan/Feb each year starting in 2010. The first headline report is now available and includes a brief technical annex presenting the main changes from the former SEH and EHCS.
[English Housing Survey: Headline Report 2008-09 - Corporate - Communities and Local Government](#)

Annual household report

9. Available in the summer/autumn each year this report will follow the pattern of previous SEH *Housing in England* reports and be based on the full interview sample only. ([Publications about the Survey of English Housing - Housing - Communities and Local Government](#)). It will present comprehensive analysis of housing trends across each of the sectors and for different household groups including changing tenure patterns, overcrowding and under occupation, second homes, rents and mortgages. Both national and regional level findings will be presented where possible.
10. Changes to the questionnaire content will mean the coverage of the report will not exactly replicate that of former SEH reports. New topics will also be introduced on a rolling basis reflecting changing policy interests.
11. The report will be available to download from the website. The report will include an overview of the survey methodology with guidance about sampling errors and a glossary of terms.

Annual housing stock report

12. Also available in the summer/autumn each year, this report will broadly follow the pattern of former EHCS reports and be based on the rolling two year sample of paired cases i.e. where a physical inspection has been undertaken. The first results presented for '2008' will cover the fieldwork period April 2007 to March 2009 and will bring together data collected in the final year of the EHCS and the first year of the EHS. Following this transition year all data will come from the EHS paired sample.
13. The overarching focus will remain on housing conditions and energy performance but with other topics introduced each year to reflect emerging policy priorities. The 2007 report published in September 2009 gives a broad indication of the report content.
(<http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingsurveys/englishhousecondition/ehcsreports>)
14. Again changes to the interview survey content may mean not all topics from former EHCS reports can be covered in full but the overall level of continuity with the former EHCS will be high. The report will be available to download from the website. The report will include an overview of the survey methodology with guidance about sampling errors and a glossary of terms.

Launch event

15. We plan to host an annual public seminar or workshop to present the findings of these two annual publications. This is expected to be early autumn each year.

Technical documentation

16. Documentation on technical aspects of the survey will be published on the CLG website to support users of the survey outputs. It is expected this will be published as a series of technical advice notes covering key aspects of the survey methodology. These will be updated whenever there is any significant change of which users need to be aware. Initial documents will also provide guidance on any discontinuities resulting from the survey merger including differences in approach and the impact on results. One note will cover the survey sampling and grossing strategy. Information will be provided on sampling and other sources of error so that users can derive confidence intervals for any given measure.
17. Information will also be provided on how the key derived measures used for analysis are created and any significant changes to the way these have been computed as a result of either a change in the data collected or to the approach to modelling.

Web tables

18. Currently both the SEH and EHCS present additional information via a large number of supporting tables on the CLG website. ([Housing surveys - Housing - Communities and Local Government](#))
19. Under the EHS we plan to:
 - Review the content of the web tables and continue those from both former surveys where consistent data is being collected and there is an on-going demand.
 - Where there has been a minor change to survey content or methodology the tables affected will be flagged with a 'health warning' to inform users of possible discontinuities.
 - Begin new supporting tables where a change to the survey content means a former SEH or EHCS table cannot be reliably continued.
 - Introduce new tables as normal to reflect the changing content of the reports.
 - Provide full cross referencing between the EHS tables and those from the former SEH/EHCS.
20. The tables will be posted as early as possible each year after the publication of the main annual reports.
21. A limited range of EHS tables will also be included as part of the annual Housing Statistics publication – and will appear in the Housing Statistics web tables.
22. Information will be provided on the SEH and EHCS web pages about which tables are to be continued with a cross reference to the new EHS Table.

Public datasets

23. We will continue to release both the 'full interview sample' and 'dwelling sub-sample' datasets via the UK Data Archive (UKDA) and to encourage secondary analysis. They will be anonymised SPSS datasets with full user technical documentation. All data sets will include grossing weights that users must apply to the data to generate nationally representative results. Any potentially disclosive information will have been removed and only regional level geographic identifiers included.
24. The 'full interview sample' dataset data will be released on a single financial year basis and be deposited at the UKDA shortly after the annual publication each year.
25. The 'dwelling sub-sample' data will continue to be released as a two-year rolling sample. We would expect to have the combined '2008' dataset available together with the fuel poverty data by summer/autumn 2010 to coincide with the annual publication. Variable naming has been retained

from former EHCS/SEH variables where there has been no significant change to the data collected. Checks will be undertaken prior to release to avoid the release of disclosive information via, for example, string variables.

26. Currently a complete EHCS data set (SPSS format) together with historical data is also available on CD directly from CLG or the data sets can be downloaded individually from the UKDA. CLG have also deposited a data set at the UKDA holding a sub-set of data variables from 15 years of the SEH from 1993 to 2008. We are currently considering whether the SEH15 data set will be updated on an annual basis. The provision of an on-going EHCS-EHS data set is also being considered and we will keep users posted on decisions.
27. We also plan to deposit the EHS data sets complete with detailed geographic identifiers via the ONS Virtual Microdata Laboratory (VML) or a similar facility offered at the UKDA. These facilities give researchers access to sensitive information in a secure environment so that confidentiality requirements are met. The disclosive EHS data set would only be available to approved researchers who would be screened by ONS/UKDA and who have agreed to abide by strict disclosure control principles. Data will be provided only to researchers who can justify their need for access to the data and outputs are checked before release. The 2008/09 data set should be available by the end of 2010 subject to internal resources and discussions with the VML.

Ad hoc analysis

28. The Department wishes to support all users in making use of the EHS but has limited resources available to undertake bespoke survey analysis for third parties. Any request that we receive which can be readily handled within 15-20min we will endeavour to respond to as quickly as possible. We will of course continue to meet all our commitments under the Freedom of Information Act to release information where this already exists.
29. Users should contact CLG in the first instance. If CLG are unable to take on their requests they will be able to advise on two alternative routes:
 - Downloading the EHS data set from the UKDA ESDS Government datasets portal and undertaking their own analysis. The EHS will be an Economic and Social Data Service Large scale data set. ESDS will provide help and support to any users wishing to undertake analysis on the EHS. This will take the form of a helpdesk, newsletters, help in finding your way through the dataset and possibly workshops on the EHS. Some type of users will be charged for this service. The scope of the support service available is currently under discussion and further developments will be communicated via the EHS Bulletin.
 - Contacting the Building Research Establishment who offer a bespoke analysis service from the EHCS/EHS on a cost recovery basis. They are able to offer expert guidance and can discuss how the survey can

be used to meet individual information needs. The average cost for a piece of work taking half a day of an analyst's time at BRE would currently cost about £300.

30. Ad hoc analysis will normally be undertaken on the latest publicly available data set. In the period between the release of the annual Headline Report and release of the main Annual Reports data for the current year will still be subject to development and cleaning being carried out alongside detailed analysis required for the reports and will not normally be used for ad hoc analysis requests. Internal resources in this period will also be more limited as they will need to be focused on the main publication releases rather than undertaking ad hoc analysis for users. Ad hoc requests handled by BRE will always be based on the most recent public data set available.

Building the user community

CLG wish to expand the number of active users of the English Housing Survey and its forerunners, and in particular encourage greater use of EHS data in research and teaching. The EHS Advisory Group includes users from a wide range of housing organisations including the academic community and we will consult with them about any ways in which we might build the user community. The EHS website will include a range of documents to help support external users of the data including survey documentation; a User Engagement strategy, Advisory Group papers; EHS Revisions Policy and EHS Security Strategy. We will continue to keep users informed of developments via the EHS Bulletin newsletter.

Housing Analysis and Surveys Division

Communities and Local Government

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Appendix 1

English Housing Survey – dissemination strategy summary

PRODUCT	DATE AVAILABLE	SAMPLE*	Geography	MEDIA	CONTENT
Headline report	Jan/Feb 2010 and annually thereafter	Full household and dwelling sub-sample	National	Web based only	Key findings on housing tenure, household composition, stock condition and energy performance
Annual household report	Autumn 2010 and annually thereafter	Full household sample	National with some regional	Web report and hard copy to purchase	Similar to former SEH reports. Comprehensive analysis of housing trends across each of the sectors and for different household types. Both national and regional level findings presented where possible.
Annual housing stock report	Autumn 2010 and annually thereafter	Dwelling sub-sample	National with some regional groups	Web report and hard copy to purchase	Similar to 2007 EHCS report. Focus on wide ranging aspects of stock condition and energy performance.
Technical advice notes	From autumn 2010 with updates as	All	n/a	Web based only	A series of guidance notes on survey methodology covering sampling and weighting

	required				strategy, data collection and validation; creation of derived measures and data quality. Survey questionnaires also to be made available annually.
Web tables	Autumn 2010 and annually thereafter	All	National. Some regional	Web based only	Maintaining key SEH and EHCS time series. Possible minor discontinuities to be flagged. New tables introduced to reflect new report content. Index available to cross-reference to former EHCS/SEH tables
Public datasets	Summer/autumn 2010 and annually thereafter	All	National with GOR identifiers	Electronic SPSS data base	Anonymised data set released via the UKDA with user documentation. Disclosive data set available to approved researchers through the Virtual Microdata Laboratory or UKDA Secure Data Service by end 2010
Information and advice	Ongoing	All	All	Dedicated website	Details being finalised but likely to include advisory service via the Economic and Social Data Service and tabulation service via BRE from autumn 2010

***sample**

'Full household sample' is the sample of c.17,000 households interviewed each year. Data set is analysed on a single financial year basis.

'Dwelling sub-sample' is the sample of households where both an interview and an inspection of the property are completed. There are approximately 8,000 paired cases completed each FY and the sample is analysed on a rolling two-year basis i.e. information for the period April 2007 to March 2009 will be reported on together and presented as '2008' findings.

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