



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Social Housing Lettings: April 2012 to March 2013, England

- The broad upward trend in social lettings by private registered providers has levelled off, with a 3% decrease in lettings to 258,731 in 2012/13.
- Local authority lettings have also decreased to 120,012 in 2012/13, continuing their long term trend and mainly reflecting stock transfers.
- In this second year of the affordable rent programme, private registered providers let 27,715 properties at affordable rents, now comprising nearly a fifth (18%) of general needs lettings.
- The average net weekly social rent of properties let in 2012/13 was £80, whilst average affordable rents were £114.
- As in 2011/12, affordable rents were, on average, 68% of market rents in 2012/13. In London affordable rents were a lower proportion of market rents (49%).
- The most common type of household taking up a general needs letting continued to be single adults aged under 60, either with or without children (around 60% of lettings).
- Many (31%) of private registered providers general needs lettings were to employed tenants.

Households *Statistical Release*

03 October 2013

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Correction Notice 23rd October 2013:

Two figures have been revised in Table 3.

Introduction

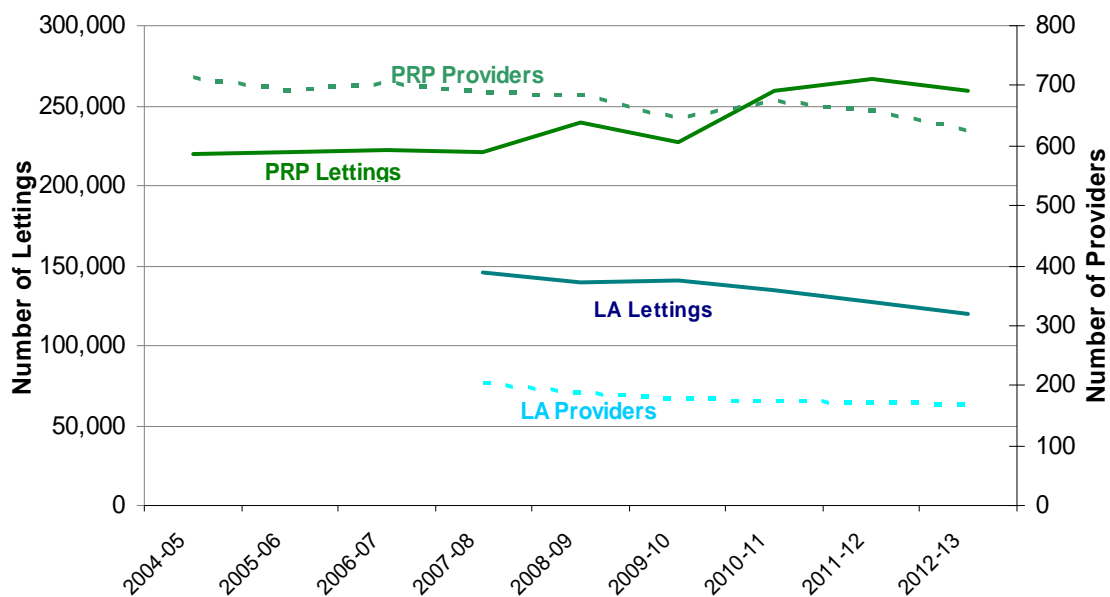
This release provides information on lettings of social housing in England by local authorities and private registered providers (PRPs). Information about the tenancy, the tenants and the property is collected each time there is a new letting. Lets of general needs and supported social housing are collected, and, from 2012/13, both local authority and private registered providers also report their affordable rent lettings (PRPs began this reporting in 2011/12). All data are submitted through the on-line Continuous Recording system (CORE). Definitions of the main terms used in this release are given on page 11.

The latest estimates included in this release reflect data provided for the year ending 31 March 2013. Estimates for 2007/8 to 2011/12 have been revised to reflect new weighting and imputation methodology – see page 13. CORE also collects data on sales by private registered providers – this information is now incorporated into our sister publication on Social Housing Sales. Sales data for 2012/13 will be published on 10th October 2013.

1. Annual social lettings

In 2012/13, there were 258,731 lettings by private registered providers and 120,012 lettings by local authorities. This is a 3% decrease in private registered provider lettings from 2011/12 and shows a flattening of the longer term upward trend. Local authority lettings have continued their downward trend, decreasing by 6% in 2012/13 (see Figure 1). The decrease in local authority lettings over time reflects the reduction in stock holding authorities as they transfer some or all of their stock to private registered providers. The turnover of lettings as a proportion of stock is similar for PRPs (8%) and local authorities (7%) and has remained stable over time.

Figure 1: Number of lettings and providers from 2004/05 to 2012/13



1. Local authority estimates for 2007/8 to 2011/12 have been revised as data have been weighted to take into account different response rates over time. Data are not shown prior to 2007/8 as response rates are insufficient to provide weighted estimates. Estimates for 2012/13 are provisional.
 2. The dip in 2009/10 may reflect a change of contractors collecting the data.
 3. Estimates include reported affordable rent lettings from 2011/12.

The majority of social housing lettings are made by private registered providers - in 2012/13, PRPs supplied 68% of the social lettings recorded. This share has increased gradually over time from 60% in 2007/8. The average number of lettings per private registered provider in 2012/13 was smaller than for local authorities; PRPs let an average of 413 lettings per provider compared to 714 lettings per local authority. Lettings were less evenly spread across PRPs – in 2012/13, 80% of general needs social lettings were provided by 30% of PRPs whilst nearly half of local authorities accounted for 80% of their lettings.

Figures on numbers of social providers and their lettings over time are given in Accompanying Tables 1a to 1c.

Housing type

Social lettings can be for either general needs housing or supported housing (housing with special design facilities or features targeted at a specific client group requiring support, for example, housing designed for older people). Around two-thirds of social lettings are for general needs housing. Both supported housing and general needs lets have shown similar longer term trends, growing by 3% between 2007/8 and 2012/13. Supported housing lets in the local authority sector fell by 37% in this period, balanced by a 12% growth in PRP supported lettings.

Most lettings are at social rents; information about affordable rent lettings has been collected since providers started to sign contracts with the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver affordable rent properties during 2011/12. As of 1 April 2012, local authorities were able to offer affordable rent and flexible tenancies. 2012/13 is therefore the first year of affordable rent data for local authorities, and the second year for PRPs. The decrease in general needs lettings at social rent from 2011/12 to 2012/13 reflects some properties instead being let at affordable rent.

During 2012/13, 254 PRPs reported 27,715 affordable rent lettings, accounting for nearly a fifth (18%) of general needs lettings. For local authorities, information on 193 affordable rent lettings was provided by 6 providers. The vast majority (97%) of affordable rent lettings are for general needs.

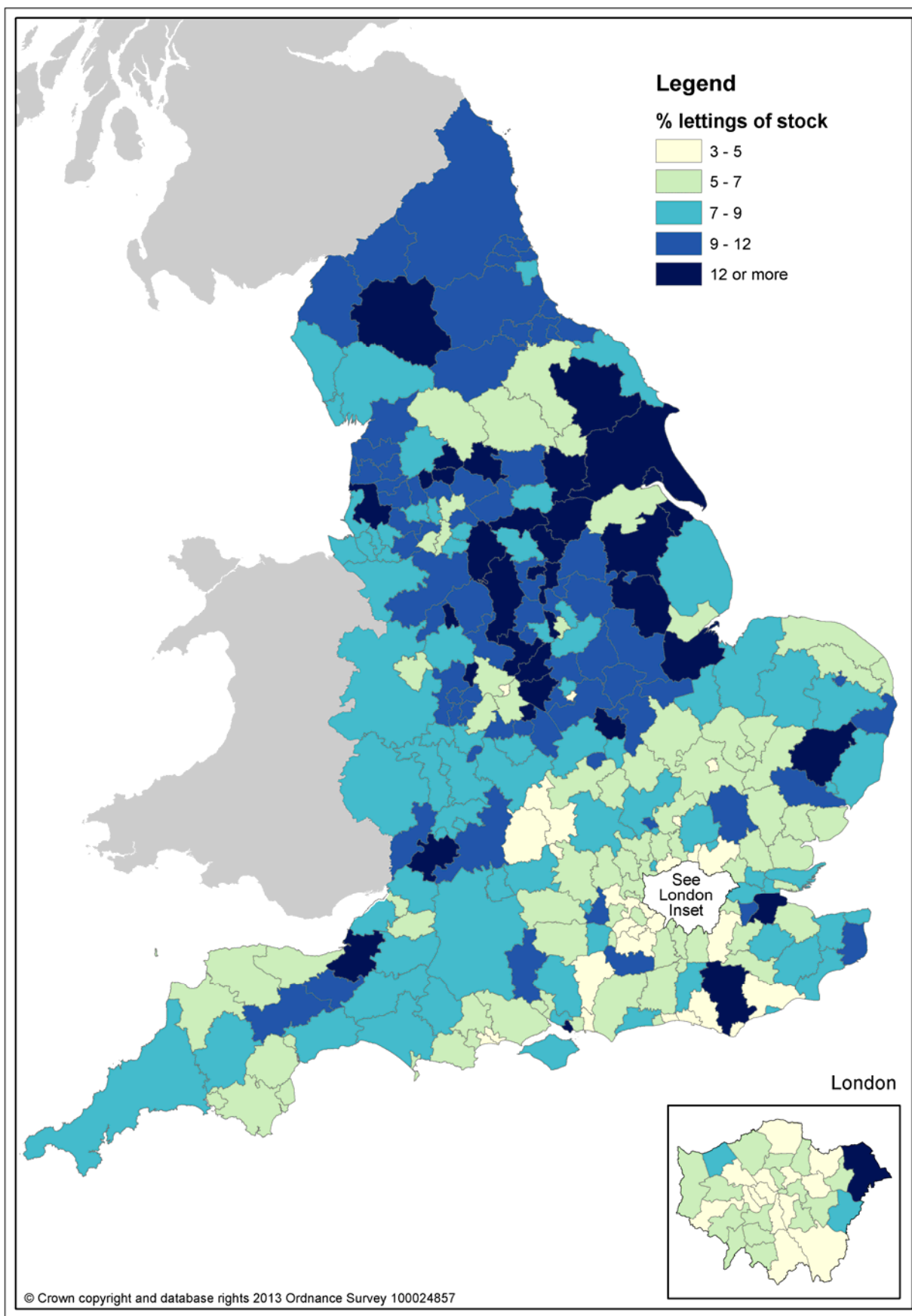
Table 1: Social lettings by housing type and provider, 2007/08 to 2012/13

Year	General Needs Social Rent			Supported Housing SR			Affordable Rent (GN & SH) ²		
	PRP	LA ^{PR}	Total	PRP	LA ^{PR}	Total	PRP	LA	Total
2007-08	127,290	124,709	251,999	94,127	20,694	114,821	..	..	..
2008-09	143,086	121,704	264,790	96,468	17,824	114,292	..	..	..
2009-10 ¹	137,819	122,416	260,235	88,767	18,753	107,520	..	..	..
2010-11	151,289	117,898	269,187	108,273	16,165	124,438	..	..	..
2011-12	152,923	113,143	266,066	109,604	14,135	123,739	4,679	..	..
2012-13	126,476	106,858	233,334	104,540	12,961	117,501	27,715	193	27,908

1. The dip in 2009/10 may reflect a change of contractors collecting the data.

2. The Affordable Rent Programme was introduced in 2011/12. Local authorities are able to provide affordable rent lettings from April 2012. The majority of affordable rent lettings were for general needs housing (27,003 of PRP lettings and all of local authority lettings in 2012/13).

Map 1: Private Registered Provider general needs lettings as a proportion of general needs stock, 2012/13



Map 1 shows private registered providers' general needs lettings as a percentage of their stock, illustrating a generally higher turnover in northern England than in the south. In many areas in and around London, less than 6% of PRP general needs properties were let in 2012/13, whereas in areas such as West Lancashire and North East Lincolnshire around a sixth of properties were let.

Maps for supported housing and affordable rent lettings are shown in the accompanying pack of maps. Data on social stock and lettings turnover are in Accompanying Table 1c. Lettings as reported by local authority area and Local Enterprise Partnership area are in Accompanying Tables 1d and 1e.

2. Social lettings characteristics

Tenancy type and tenancy length

Most PRP general needs tenancies are let on an assured basis (89%), whereas local authorities issue secure tenancies (98%). Many general needs tenancies are first offered with a starter/introductory period; most starter tenancies will convert to assured or secure tenancies after the introductory period, subject to conditions. Most supported housing tenancies were licence agreements in PRP housing (52%), and secure tenancies in local authority housing (86%).

Table 2a: Social lettings by tenancy type, 2012/13

Main Tenancy Type	General Needs Social Rent		Supported Housing Social Rent		Affordable Rent (GN)
	PRP	LA ^{4P}	PRP	LA ^{4P}	PRP
Secure ¹	495	105,057	393	11,113	26
Assured	113,082	0	34,633	0	19,084
Assured Shorthold ²	11,262	66	14,535	61	7,468
Licence agreement	108	0	53,920	1,574	25
Other	1529	1,736	1,059	212	400
Total	126,476	106,858	104,540	12,961	27,003
% offered on starter/introductory period ³	61%	61%	16%	43%	69%

1. For PRPs, these are commonly known as "fair rent-secure tenancies"

2. Assured shorthold tenancies are applicable from 2012/13 for general needs lets. Local authorities could not provide fixed term tenancies until enactment of provisions in the Localism Act from April 2012.

3. From 2012/13 starter/introductory % is separately identified to verify if a tenancy type offered for each property is initially a starter/introductory offer.

4. Local authorities' general needs and supported housing data is weighted. Differences in totals may occur due to rounding.

Following changes brought in through the Localism Act, providers have been able to offer fixed term tenancies and from 2012/13, information on the length of fixed term tenancies has been captured in CORE. Accompanying Table 2b shows the terms of fixed term tenancies let in 2012/13. The majority (51% for social rent and 76% for affordable rent) of general needs fixed term tenancies are issued for between three and five years whilst for supported housing 93% are less than two years in length.

Average rent

The rents reported to CORE are for properties let within the financial year and therefore will differ to figures on the rents for all social stock. The average weekly social rent (net of service charges) of lettings in 2012/13 was £80. Average rents for properties let by PRPs are higher than for local authority properties and this differential tends to increase with property size: one-bedroom PRP property rent was on average 12% higher than for local authority lets, whilst rents for four-plus bedroom properties were 18% higher.

As expected, rents vary by property size and location (see also Map 2). Average rents in London are 31% higher than England at £105 and this difference is smaller for larger properties let by PRPs.

Average affordable rent is higher than social rent at £114 for England and £160 for London. The difference between social and affordable rent decreases with property size; nationally, affordable rents were 46% above social rents for one bedroom properties, decreasing to 18% for four-plus bedroom properties. As in 2011/12, affordable rents in 2012/13 in England were 68% of market rents¹. However in London, affordable rents are a lower proportion of market rents (49%).

Table 2b: Average weekly social rent¹ (£) of new general needs lettings, 2012/13

Bedrooms	England				London			
	PRP	LA ^{2P}	Total ^P	AR	PRP	LA ^{2P}	Total ^P	AR
1	£74.14	£66.46	£70.43	£108.58	£101.56	£84.18	£90.96	£147.67
2	£85.86	£74.59	£80.99	£112.78	£116.33	£97.96	£106.33	£171.04
3	£96.08	£82.79	£89.85	£116.50	£128.79	£112.42	£120.70	£168.51
4 or more	£118.06	£99.90	£111.35	£138.95	£142.35	£132.00	£138.68	£204.41
All	£84.63	£73.59	£79.58	£113.68	£115.77	£95.37	£104.52	£159.95

1. Weekly rent excludes service charges

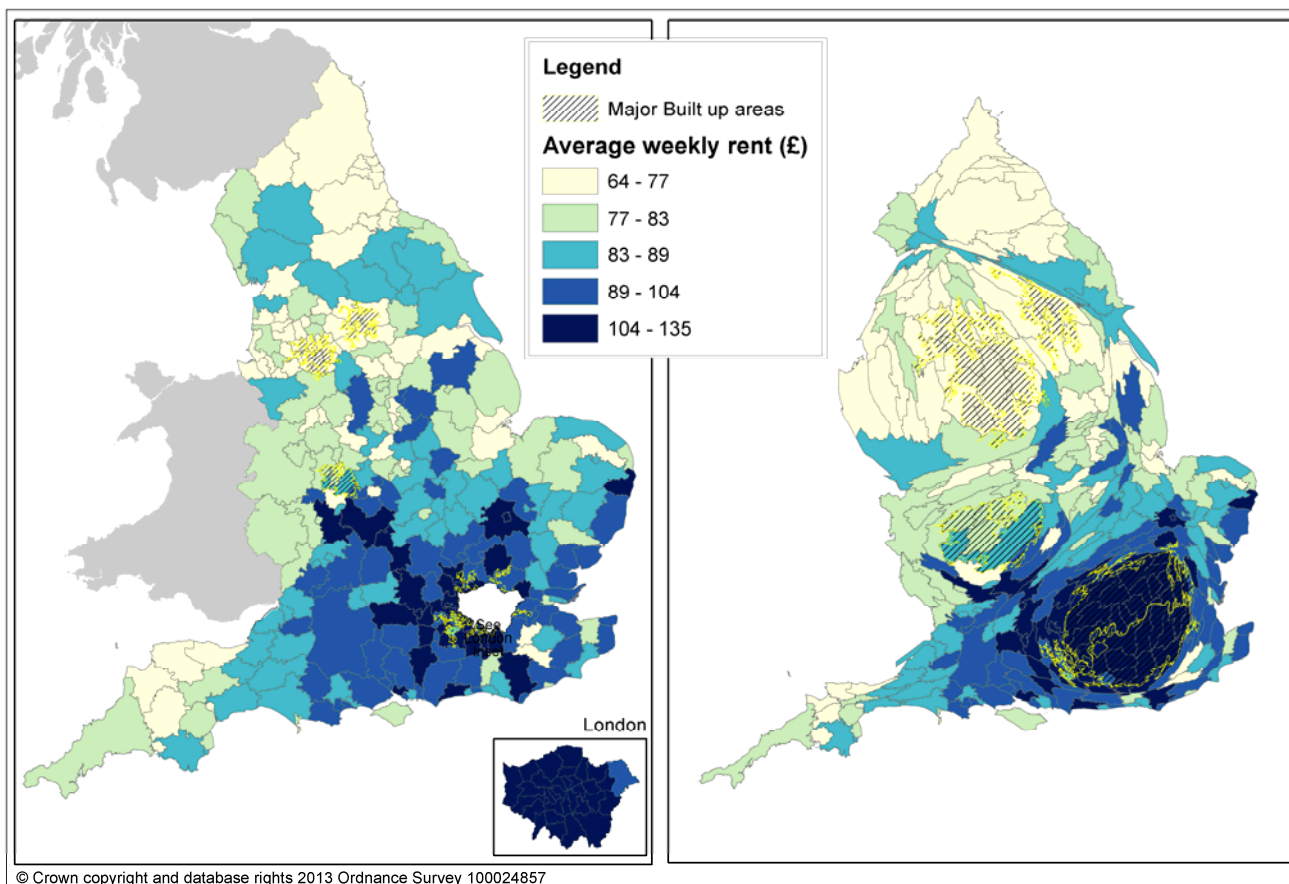
2. Local authorities general needs and supported housing data is weighted. Differences in totals may occur due to rounding.

Data on average weekly rents are in accompanying tables 2c and 2d.

Map 2 below shows the average weekly social rent of PRP general needs properties let in 2012/13. The right hand map shows a cartogram where local authority areas are represented in proportion to the number of lettings rather than their geographic size. This illustrates that whilst there are higher rents in the south of England, there tends to be more lettings made in northern areas with lower rents.

¹ Valuation Office Agency private market rents up to 31 March 2013 as at 30 May 2013.

Map 2: Average weekly social rent of PRP general needs lettings, 2012/13 (right hand map areas proportional to lettings)



Weekly rent excludes service charges. Major built up areas are those where population exceeds 1 million.

Reason for letting and re-let times

At 34%, the majority of general needs social rent lettings were due to the previous tenant moving to private sector or other accommodation. A small proportion of lettings are made due to tenants being evicted (6%, around 13,000). This pattern is the same as in 2011/12. First lets are of newly built or acquired properties and 22% of affordable rent properties were first lets, a decrease from 35% in 2011/12.

Table 2c: Reason for Letting, 2012/13

Reason for letting	General Needs Social Rent			GN AR
	PRP	LA ^{2P}	Total ^P	PRP
First let of a property ¹	16%	1%	9%	22%
Relet - internal transfer	15%	26%	20%	14%
Relet - previous tenant moved to other social landlord	15%	10%	13%	16%
Relet - previous tenant died	11%	17%	14%	10%
Relet - property abandoned by previous tenant	5%	4%	4%	4%
Relet - previous tenant evicted	6%	6%	6%	5%
Relet - previous tenant moved to private sector / other	33%	36%	34%	30%
Relet - tenant occupied property as temporary accommodation	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%

1. The property was newly built, converted or newly acquired.

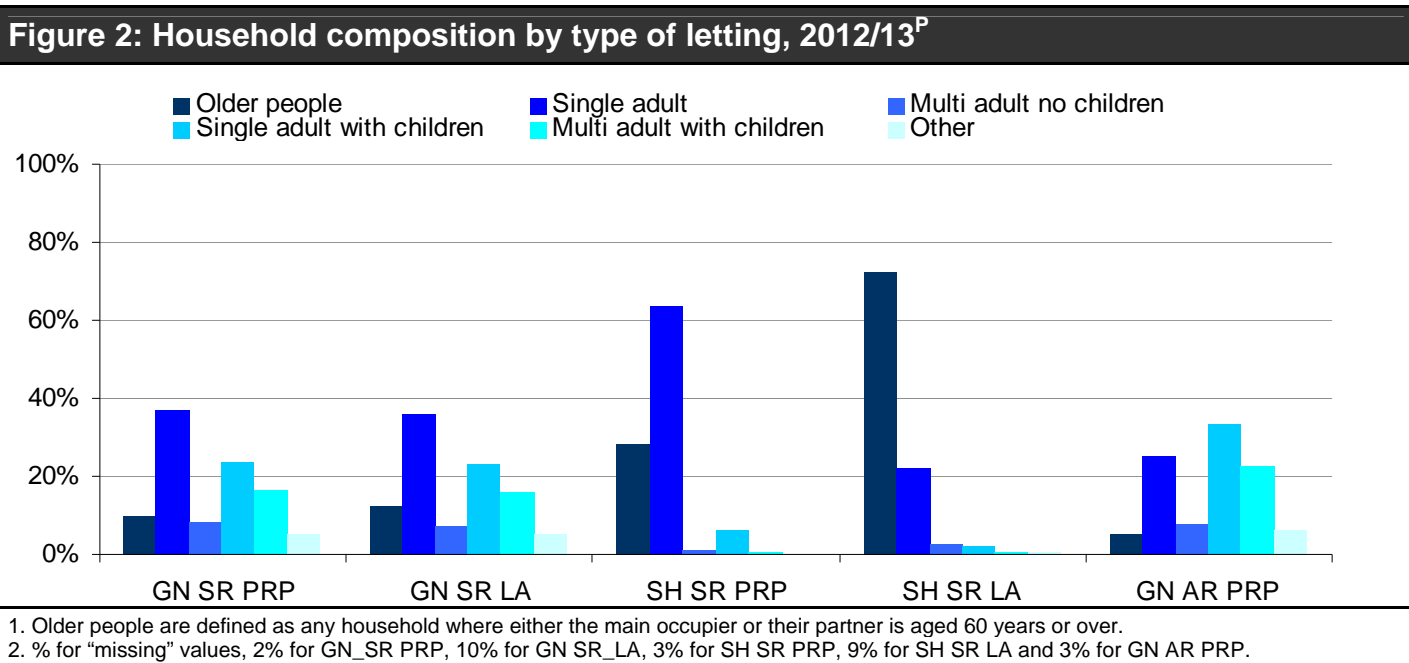
2. Local authority data is weighted. Differences in totals may occur due to rounding.

The average length of time a general needs social rent property was vacant for prior to letting was 32 days in 2012/13 (excluding those undergoing major works). On average, local authority properties tend to be vacant for longer than PRP properties, particularly in the supported housing sector. Re-let times were similar to the previous year for all types of letting. Re-let times for lettings are in accompanying table 2e.

3. Household characteristics of social lettings

Household composition

The most common type of household taking up a general needs social letting was single adults under 60 without children (see Figure 2) and the profile for PRP and local authority lettings is similar and has changed little over time. Supported housing tends to be let to single adults under 60 for PRP lettings whereas local authority lettings tend to be to people aged over 60. Households taking up affordable rent lettings were more likely to contain children - 56% of affordable rent households had children, compared to 40% for general needs lettings at social rent.



Age

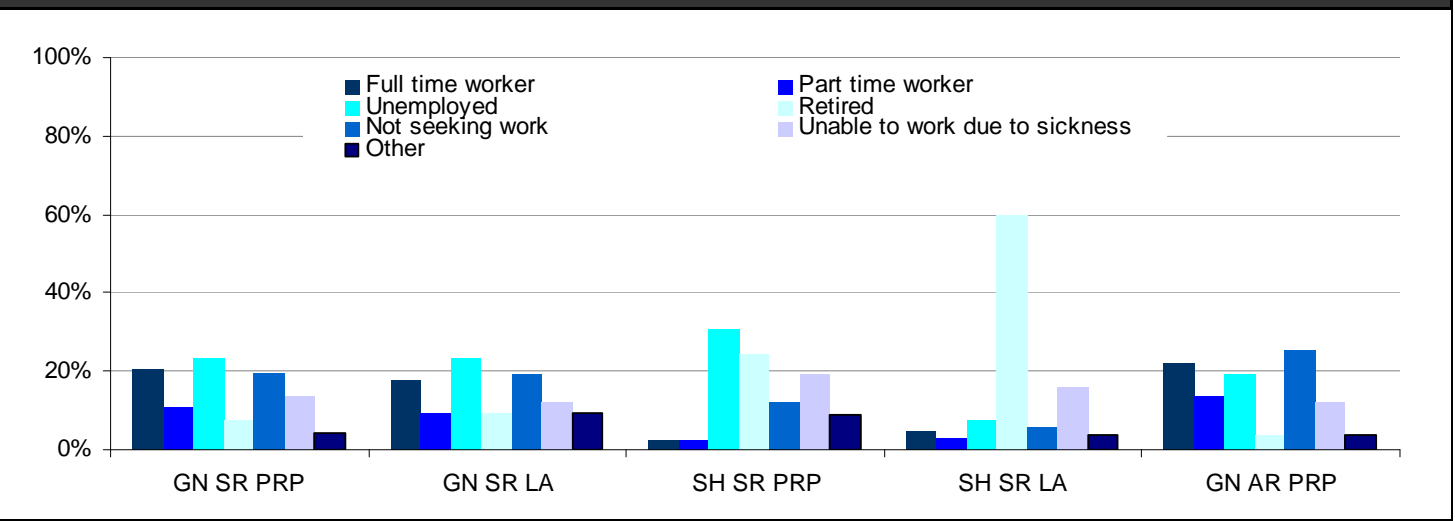
General needs lettings tend to be made to younger tenants (head of household only); 22% were to tenants aged 18-24. This is particularly the case for female tenants; 45% were under 30 compared to 29% for male tenants. Within the supported housing sector, more lettings are made to older tenants, particularly for local authority lettings where 73% were to those aged 60 or over.

Economic status

In 2012/13, 31% of PRP general needs lettings were to tenants (head of household only) in employment, compared with 27% of local authority lets. Around a further 23% of general needs

tenants were unemployed and another 19% not seeking work. Most supported housing lets were to retired and unemployed tenants.

Figure 3: Economic status of tenant by type of letting, 2012/13^P



1. Part Time defined as working less than 30 hours per week.
2. Other includes: Government training/New deal, full time student, child under 16 and other adult.
3. Local Authorities general needs and supported housing data is weighted. Differences in totals may occur due to rounding.
4. Imputed data has been applied for missing values from 2011/12.
5. The named tenant where the letting is made on a single tenancy basis. In the case of joint tenancies, the economically active or working person or if both tenants are working, or both are not working, the oldest person.

Nationality & Ethnicity

The large majority of lettings were made to UK nationals. In 2012/13, 91% of general needs social lettings and 94% of supported housing lettings were to UK national tenants (head of household only). Similarly, 93% of general needs PRP affordable rent lettings were to UK national tenants. Tenants moving within the social sector are slightly more likely to be UK nationals (94%) than tenants new to social housing (90%).

In 2012/13, 82% of general needs lettings and 86% of supported housing lettings were to white tenants (head of household only). For general needs PRP affordable rent lettings, 84% were to white tenants.

Other key household characteristics

Table 3 presents a range of other key characteristics of the households taking up social tenancies in 2012/13. In general, the patterns observed are similar to those in 2011/12.

Table 3: Other household characteristics of social lettings, 2012/13 (% of lettings)⁸

<i>Household characteristic</i>	General Needs			Supported Housing			AR (GN)
	PRP	LA ^{7P}	Total ^P	PRP	LA ^{7P}	Total ^P	PRP
Statutorily homeless ¹	13 ^R	17	15	22	11	21	18
New to social housing ²	61	62	61	68	52	66	66
Eligible for housing benefit	79	81	79	91	85	91	81
Household's previous property overcrowded ³	18	14	16	2	1	2	23
Household's previous property underoccupied ⁴	4	3	4	1	4	1	3
Served in British regular armed forces ⁵	2	2	2	4	7	4	2
New to local authority ⁶	11	6 ^R	9	23	11	22	11

1. Those found 'statutorily homeless' by a housing authority and either owed a main homelessness duty or not

2. Tenants whose tenure immediately before this letting was not social housing (including social housing other than general needs and supported housing).

3. Defined as the tenants' last settled home being unsuitable because of overcrowding, in their view.

4. Defined as the tenants' last settled home being unsuitable because of under-occupation, in their view.

5. Where anyone in the household has served in the regular armed forces. Collected from 2012/13.

6. Where the household lived in a different local authority immediately before the letting (including in temporary accommodation).

7. Local authorities general needs and supported housing data is weighted. Differences in totals may occur due to rounding.

8. Percentages exclude missing data. Missing represents cases where this question was not answered.

R. Revised 23rd October 2013.

Around 15% of general needs lettings were made to those who were statutorily homeless; this proportion is higher for supported housing at around a fifth (21%). The majority of households were eligible for housing benefit (although there is high level of missing data for this question).

Most households were new to social housing, based on their tenure immediately before this letting and referral route. Tenants are asked the main reason they left their last settled home, in their view. Overcrowding was given as the main reason in 16% of general needs tenancies but rarely for supported housing. A very small proportion of households gave under occupation (3.7% of general needs) as the reason for move, although this has increased from 2.0% in 2011/12.

Whilst the majority of lettings were made within the same local authority area, 9% of general needs lettings were made to tenants coming from a different local authority. This was higher at 22% for supported housing tenants, suggesting it is likely that tenants need to move further to find appropriate supported housing.

4. Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables and maps are available to download alongside this release. These can be accessed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

Social housing providers supplying lettings and sales data can access their annual strategic summary reports and annual data submission reports at: <https://core.communities.gov.uk/AnalyseCOREdataMain.aspx>

Additionally, data can be analysed using the online reporting tools at

<https://core.communities.gov.uk/> , and licensed users can download the datasets for 2012/13.

5. Definitions

Some of the key terms referred to in this statistical release are defined below. A full set of definitions can be found in the CORE guidance manual for 2012/13:

<https://core.communities.gov.uk/LearnAboutCore/LACGuidesAndManuals.aspx>

Private registered providers (PRPs) - PRPs refer in this document to Private Registered Providers of social housing in England that are registered with the social housing regulator (from 1st April 2012 this is the Homes and Communities Agency's Regulation Committee). These were previously term Registered Social Landlords or housing associations. This term excludes local authority registered providers.

General needs housing - General needs housing covers the bulk of housing stock for rent and includes both self-contained and shared housing. It is stock that is not designated for specific client groups requiring support, or stock that does not have the special design features that are specific to housing for older people or supported housing. Where additional support is offered to all residents as a matter of course, this stock is not general needs (see definition of supported housing).

Supported housing - Housing is categorised as supported housing within CORE on the basis of either special design facilities or features, or by designation for a particular client group. The definitions are based on Circular 03/04 published by the Housing Corporation (subsequently Homes and Communities Agency, HCA) in April 2004. If housing is targeted at a specific client group but does not have a designated support purpose or the required special design features, then it should be classed as general needs housing.

Housing for older people - Properties intended for older people (regardless of the actual characteristics of each tenant) and which incorporate the range of basic facilities and special design features set out below, or are specially designated housing for older people. The distinctive design features should be over and above lifetime homes adaptations to general needs properties. The age of tenants actually resident is not a defining feature.

Affordable rent – Affordable rent is the principal element of the new supply offer through the new Affordable Homes Programme, 2011-2015, funded by the HCA. Affordable rented housing is housing let by registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is not subject to the national rent regime but is subject to other rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80 per cent of the local market rent. For more detailed information, follow the link below:

<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/affordable-homes>

As of 1 April 2012, local authorities are able to offer affordable rent on flexible tenancy terms.

Social rent - Social rented housing is housing owned and managed by local authorities and other registered providers, for which target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency as a condition of grant. Although 'affordable rent' will be the main new supply offer, in some circumstances there will be still be limited offer of 'social rent' housing.

European Economic Area (EEA) countries - Includes Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania, Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal,

Spain, Sweden, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

6. Technical notes

Symbols

R=Revised data. Local authority estimates for 2007/8 to 2011/12 have been revised as data have been weighted to take into account different response rates over time

P=Provisional data. Estimates for 2012/13 are based on provisional weights and may be subject to small revision in the next publication

..=not available/applicable

Data collection

All data are submitted through the on-line Continuous Recording system (CORE) by private registered providers and local authorities. Information for 2012/13 in this release reflects data given by providers for the year ending 31 March 2013. CORE is a requirement on the single data list for local authorities and is a regulatory requirement of the HCA for PRPs. Certain types of lettings are excluded from CORE. This includes mutual exchanges, conversions of starter or introductory tenancies to assured or secure tenancies, successions by assignment, and temporary general needs housing. A full list of exclusions can be found in the CORE guidance manual at:

<https://core.communities.gov.uk/LearnAboutCore/LACGuidesAndManuals.aspx>

Data are also collected through CORE for sales of self-contained dwellings and re-sales of any part-owned dwellings (shared ownership) from private registered providers. The 2012/13 sales data from CORE is reported through the Department's Social Housing Sales statistical release, due to be published on 10th October 2013.

Data quality

Completeness

Local authorities were invited to participate voluntarily in CORE in 2004/5. In the first year, 24% of stock-holding local authorities participated, and the number of authorities participating has steadily increased since then with all authorities bar one submitting some data for 2012/13.

While CORE captures all private registered providers lettings in England, it is estimated that around 85%² of local authority lettings were submitted in 2012/13. One stock owning local authority did not provide any data, and others did not provide data for all their lettings. Table 4a gives more detail on the submission levels of stock holding local authorities.

² Provisional estimates based on responses to the Local Authority Housing Statistics 2012/13 as of 5th September 2013.

Table 4a: Number of participating LAs and estimated CORE submission levels

LA lettings submission levels ^{1P}	2012/13		2011/12		2010/11	
	LAs	Reported Lettings ²	LAs	Reported Lettings ²	LAs	Reported Lettings ²
Greater than 90%	96	64,112	104	65,596	71	47,292
75%-90%	35	23,286	39	28,166	51	32,221
50-75%	20	10,234	14	4,434	26	13,022
25-50%	3	1,071	5	1,455	6	2,041
Less than 25%	2	22	2	180	4	268
Non participating LAs	1	-	6	-	12	-
No LAHS data ¹	11	5,991	1	181	4	1,187
Total	168	104,716	171	100,012	174	96,031

1. Based on a comparison of CORE lettings to the Department's Local Authority Housing Statistics total lettings figures, excluding mutual exchanges. Estimates for 2012/13 are based on provisional LAHS returns as at 5th September.

2. The total does not match total LA submissions due to CORE submissions by non stockholding LAs who do have some properties for emergencies. These figures are unweighted lettings as reported by LAs to CORE and therefore will not match weighted estimates in other tables.

For the first time, this release presents statistical estimates which take into account non-response through weighting and imputing missing data. Weighting is applied to adjust for record level non-response by local authorities. Imputation is applied to estimate for item non-response by both types of social landlord.

The ONS Methodology Advisory Service were commissioned through the UK Statistics Authority Quality Improvement Fund to carry out a project for DCLG in summer 2013 to advise on methods that could be used to improve the quality of the social lettings data. In particular, the aims of the ONS project were:

1. To produce options and a recommendation to address item level non-response of key data on tenant characteristic, and deliver a working system;
2. To review the current methodology for weighting social lettings data and make recommendations for improvements;
3. To identify and make recommendations around ways to improve the presentation and coherence of social lettings statistics for users.

Further information on the weighting and imputation methods are available in the project report produced by the ONS for DCLG on 'Improving Outputs on Social Housing Lettings' which has been published alongside this statistical release.

Local authority weighting:

Weighted estimates have been calculated for 2007/8 to 2012/13 – prior to 2007/8 local authority participation was too low to provide reliable estimates.

Local authority weights have been calculated by reference to the total number of lettings reported to the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) return, or its predecessor the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA). For 2007/8 to 2011/12, complete LAHS/HSSA data is available. For 2012/13, weights have been estimated from the provisional data returns made by local authorities as at 5th September. At this point, 93% of local authorities had provided data.

Weights are calculated for groups of similar local authorities, where these groups are defined by the [ONS area classification](#). This National Statistics area classification is based on detailed variables in the 2001 Census, many of which are directly relevant to the factors of interest for

social housing. The ratio of the number of lettings in each geographical cluster reported to LAHS relative to those reported to CORE provides the weight for each group which is then applied to responding local authorities in CORE at record level.

Tables which showed weighted local authority lettings by key demographic characteristics were published in December 2012. The weighting methodology used in this release builds on and improves that weighting method and the estimates reported here replace Live Tables 750 to 754. The revisions arising from changing the weighting methodology are small – the new weighting method has increased the number of lettings by around 1% and shifts in the percentage distribution by household characteristics are generally less than +/-1% (see accompanying report).

Item Imputation:

Some of the questions on the CORE questionnaire are not compulsory. In particular, data on household characteristics (age, sex, economic status, ethnicity and nationality) may not be available to the housing officer or may be refused by the tenant. Imputation has only been carried out for 2011/12 onwards and for general needs and supported housing at social rents. Records provided by both local authorities and PRPs have been imputed, although non-response rates tend to be higher for local authorities.

Table 4b shows the percentage of records where missing data have been imputed for each demographic variable by type of provider.

Table 4b: Percentage of lettings with imputed variables¹, 2011/12 and 2012/13

	2011/12				2012/13			
	General Needs		Supported Housing		General Needs		Supported Housing	
	PRP	LA ^P	PRP	LA ^P	PRP	LA ^P	PRP	LA ^P
Age	2%	11%	3%	10%	2%	9%	3%	8%
Sex	2%	8%	2%	9%	2%	9%	3%	8%
Economic Status	2%	15%	4%	13%	2%	22%	4%	12%
Ethnicity	4%	13%	4%	11%	3%	19%	4%	10%
Nationality	4%	19%	5%	16%	4%	12%	6%	13%

1. Imputed data has being applied for missing values from 2011/12. Percentages for local authorities are based on weighted data.

Imputation is carried out using a donor methodology. This has been implemented using the Canadian Census Editing and Imputation System, CANCEIS. This software is used by ONS for imputation of the 2011 Census. This imputation methodology identifies records with missing data and finds similar records in the dataset; a similar record is selected to ‘donate’ its value for the missing data to the target record. Household characteristics for general needs tenants are imputed by matching records with similar profiles defined by geographical area, previous tenancy, number of bedrooms and type of provider. For supported housing the client group is also taken into account but information on number of bedrooms is not available.

Overall, the percentage distribution of lettings by household characteristics is changed little by imputation, with typical changes being less than +/- 0.5%. Further details are available in the accompanying report on “Improving Outputs on Social Housing Lettings”.

Accuracy

Data undergo a series of validation checks, including range checks on individual data items, cross-

validation of data items for consistency and logic, and checks for missing data. Queries that can not be resolved are sent to individual providers for resolution, which usually involves checking against their manual or electronic records. We are confident that most data received is accurate; the data items where we have less certainty are those where the tenant has provided the information, particularly for sensitive areas like income. Responses to questions asked directly of tenants are subject to the usual range of bias that is seen in other face-to-face questionnaires.

Changes to data collection for 2012/13

There were some changes to the questions asked of providers for 2012/13, which are important to know when comparing any data with data from previous years:

- a) Tenancy details: The format of the tenancy question has been revised; starter / introductory tenancy periods are now identified separately to the main tenancy. Flexible and Assured Shorthold tenancies can now be captured for general needs lettings.
- b) Armed Forces: A new question was added asking whether anyone in the household has ever served in the British regular armed forces (Yes/No response).
- c) An option was added to Q9 to permit 'Don't know' for the reason the tenant left their last settled home.
- d) Reasonable Preference Groups: Two new questions were added asking (i) whether the household are in a Reasonable Preference Group and (ii) if yes, which one they are in. Options include homelessness, medical/welfare, hardship and insanitary/unsatisfactory conditions, and more than one group can be indicated.

Copies of the CORE "logs", which detail the questions asked on lettings and sales, can be found at: <https://core.communities.gov.uk/LearnAboutCore/LACLogs.aspx>

Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Department's Revisions Policy (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>). There are two types of revisions that the policy covers:

Non-Scheduled Revisions

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release, live tables and other accompanying releases will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical.

Scheduled Revisions

Providers cannot retrospectively submit or revise data after the closedown deadline date for the reporting year. Local authority estimates for 2012/13 are based on provisional weights derived from provisional population data. These estimates will be updated in the next annual publication in autumn 2014. Where figures for previous years are shown, but have been revised following the original release, this is clearly noted.

This release incorporates a one-off revision to local authority estimates from 2007/8 to 2011/12 to reflect the new weighting and imputation methodology (see data completeness).

Uses of the data

Policy makers and practitioners regard the system as an essential tool for monitoring housing costs, assessing affordability and developing policy. CORE provides an important source of information about new lettings and sales including, for example, household characteristics, economic status, ethnicity, primary reason for housing, source of referral and previous tenure. For example, information on lettings has been used extensively to develop DCLG's understanding of how social housing allocations are being made, and information on tenants has been used in analysis leading up to welfare reform. The range of information collected is also used to answer Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests.

The Homes and Communities Agency, which incorporates the Social Housing Regulator, use the information to obtain a better understanding of the socio-economic and demographic make up of affordable housing customers by tenure. The income and housing costs data allows them to consider affordability levels by tenure. Migration between tenures and areas can also indicate where there is differing demand for housing. This analysis contributes to understanding local housing markets and affordable housing products.

Individual providers of social housing use analysis of their own data to better understand allocations of housing and to inform their housing management strategies. Local authorities are able to interrogate new lettings data across their areas, comparing statistics between councils. In addition, they are able to monitor the performance of PRPs in their areas individually and in aggregate, to see whether they are providing effective services for households on their waiting lists. PRPs have been utilising this data for 20 years to improve their management services for residents. Given their complex stockholdings across geographical boundaries, larger providers are able to collate data by operational area and so interrogate performance according to their particular requirements.

Researchers including public and private sector organisations, charities and trade bodies in the social housing sector also make use of the data.

User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

The Department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>

Requirements for the type and format of data collected on social housing lettings and sales are reviewed on an annual basis in the autumn. Proposals for additional questions, amendments to questions and question deletions are sought both from within and outside Government, including inviting social housing providers to suggest changes. We are keen to ensure that any information needs that can be met through data collected in CORE are only implemented where the methodology of data collection is robust and the practicalities of collecting the data for social housing providers have been appraised. Key stakeholders who provide and use the data are identified across different organisations and consulted in more detail on specific proposals before final decisions are made. Changes for the following financial year are usually agreed around 3 months before the start of the financial year to allow sufficient time for providers of housing

management software to implement any updates, and for social housing providers to put the necessary training and procedures in place to be ready to provide the data.

Annual data is published via a statistical release and associated publications for individual providers of social housing. In-year reports are also made available to social housing providers for the purpose of management information.

The latest news on CORE, including sharing examples of the use of CORE data, updates on changes to CORE, and news on events such as practical workshops can be found in a CORE newsletter, which is published three times a year via the CORE website.

Should you have any suggestions or questions on the data collected, please contact the CORE helpdesk in the first instance by telephone on 0800 046 8888, or via email to: core@team.research-int.com

Notes

The project to collect detailed social housing lettings and sales data is commonly known by the name "CORE", which stands for the Continuous Recording of lettings and sales. It is a national information source funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government that records information on the characteristics of Registered Provider social housing tenants and the homes they rent and buy. Management of data collection, validation and reporting is provided by external contractors TNS.

CORE was set up in 1989 to record information on Private Registered Provider (PRP) lettings and sales in England. PRPs have been required to supply data for many years as a regulatory requirement of the Social Housing Regulator. Since its inception, the system has undergone many refinements and has been considerably enlarged. One of the key changes was the extension to the Local Authority sector in 2004. On 1 April 2010, CORE became a regulatory requirement for local authorities, and a requirement of the DCLG via their "single data list", which lists all data requirements of local government; see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/making-local-councils-more-transparent-and-accountable-to-local-people/supporting-pages/single-data-list>

Lettings and sales data are reported by all registered providers, and voluntarily by those who are not registered with the Homes and Communities Agency. Information is only collected on new lettings or sales, in general needs or supported housing, by financial year. CORE does not currently collect information on sales from local authorities.

Further information about what is collected and support on analysing and interpreting the data can be obtained via the CORE helpdesk by telephone on 0800 046 8888, or via email to: core@team.research-int.com

Confidentiality

CORE records information anonymously and absolute confidentiality on residents' circumstances is maintained. Access to the full datasets is granted via a licence agreement, and datasets have been edited to remove or curtail some data items. A protocol on how to use CORE data is issued to users receiving CORE datasets; this advises on its use in geographical information systems and sharing with other organisations. The protocol can be downloaded from the CORE website: <https://core.communities.gov.uk/Default.aspx>

Related statistics

Related DCLG statistical releases are:

Local authority housing data

Local authorities report on a range of housing-related data to DCLG, through the annual Local Authority Housing Statistics return. Prior to 2011/12, much of this information was collected through the Department's Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA). More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/local-authority-housing-data>

More information on local authorities' activities under homelessness legislation can be found through the quarterly Statutory Homelessness statistical release here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/homelessness-statistics>

Information on local authority sales of social housing can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/social-housing-sales-including-right-to-buy-and-transfers>

This release includes information on sales by Private Registered Providers reported to CORE.

Housing stock in England

The Department publishes annual live tables on housing stock and vacants by tenure, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants#live-tables>

In addition, the English Housing Survey (EHS) provides information on the quality and quantity of both social and non-social stock in England based upon a sample of households. Survey reports can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/english-housing-survey>

Private registered provider social housing

The Regulator for Social Housing in England is a statutory regulatory committee sitting within the Homes and Communities Agency. Regulatory data are collected annually from private registered providers, including the total number of social and affordable lettings per year and some information on sales.

2012/13 data was published on 20 August 2013 and can be found here:

<http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk/ourwork/publications>

Devolved administrations

Social housing lettings and sales statistics for the devolved administrations of the UK are published separately by them. These data are not published alongside the England statistics in this release, because there are not directly comparable figures across the country due to differences in data collection methodologies and policies. Scotland runs a similar system to CORE, but this covers private registered provider lettings only.

Wales

- Social housing stock and rent statistics:
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/housing2013/social-housing-stock-and-rents-31-march-2013/?jsessionid=9F56461BA178FA98598D48E0B3D56129?lang=en>
- Social housing lettings statistics:
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/housing2013/social-housing-vacancies-lettings-arrears-2011-12/?jsessionid=9F56461BA178FA98598D48E0B3D56129?lang=en>

Scotland

- Local authority social lettings:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/StockManagement>
- Social sector summary tables:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/socialhousing>
- Private registered provider social lettings:
<http://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/publications/performance-tables-%E2%80%93-lettings-and-void-loss>

Northern Ireland

- Social housing statistics including data on tenancies, household, allocations and sales can be found at: http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/housing_publications.htm

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Information on Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/browse-by-theme/index.html

Information about statistics at DCLG is available via the Department's website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics

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This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/dclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, email contactus@communities.gov.uk or write to us at:

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