



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

English Private Landlord Survey 2018

Technical report

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Introduction

1. The 2018 English Private Landlord Survey (EPLS) is a national survey of landlords and letting agents who own and/or manage privately rented properties in England. It was commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).
2. The aim of the EPLS is to inform government understanding of the characteristics and experiences of landlords and how they acquire, let, manage and maintain privately rented accommodation. Similar surveys of private landlords were carried out by the department in 2001, 2003, 2006 and 2010.
3. The EPLS is an online survey of 7,823 landlords and agents registered with one of the three government-backed Tenancy Deposit Protection (TDP) schemes. This is a new methodology compared to that used in previous private landlord surveys¹.
4. The research was conducted by NatCen Social Research in partnership with Shane Brownie of Muttonbird Research. The project was led by Shane Brownie in close collaboration with Sarah Frankenburg, Tim Buchanan and David Hussey of NatCen Social Research and colleagues at MHCLG.
5. The research benefited from the expertise of members of an informal technical advisory group². Valuable advice and support was provided from colleagues at the National Landlords Association (NLA), the Residential Landlords Association (RLA), the Association for Residential Letting Agents (ARLA) and the National Approved Lettings Scheme (NALS).
6. This report provides details of key technical features of the 2018 EPLS. Each chapter of the report covers a specific aspect of the survey and is designed to be read as a standalone document³. If you have any queries about the report or would like any further information, please contact epls@communities.gov.uk.

¹ The sample for previous government surveys of private landlords was drawn from private renters in the English House Condition Survey and English Housing Survey who provided details of their landlord or managing agent. This sample was used to conduct face-to-face and telephone surveys with around 1,000 landlords and agents.

² Experts and academics who provided comments and advice were Professor Julie Rugg (University of York), David Rhodes (University of York), Kath Scanlon (London School of Economics), Anna Clarke (University of Cambridge), Peter Kemp (University of Oxford), Liam Reynolds (Shelter).

³ See link to the EPLS main report and accompanying outputs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-private-landlord-survey-2018-main-report>

Chapter 1

Methodology and approach

- 1.1 This chapter provides some background to the TDP schemes and an overview of the methodology and approach used to undertake the pilot and main stage surveys.

Background to the TDP schemes

- 1.2 Since the 6th April 2007 in England when a deposit is provided by a tenant to a landlord for an assured shorthold tenancy, all landlords (or their agents) are legally required to register that deposit with a TDP scheme.
- 1.3 The TDP scheme administrative data used for the EPLS were downloaded in August and September 2017⁴. At this time, the TDP scheme data indicated that there were just over 3.4 million live deposits registered with a TDP scheme in England, corresponding to an estimated 1.5 million landlords. This estimate comprises approximately 360,000 landlords who registered (one or more) deposits themselves and an estimated 1.2 million landlords represented by agents who registered deposits on their behalf⁵. A randomly selected sample of these landlords and agents were invited to take part in the EPLS. Landlords and agents with larger portfolios were over-sampled to provide sufficient numbers for analysis.
- 1.4 There is no official estimate of the proportion of the private rented sector that is covered by the TDP schemes. In 2017-18, the EHS reported that 76% of households in the private rented sector paid a deposit when they moved into their current accommodation. Of these, 73% said that their deposit was protected in a government-backed TDP scheme; 7% said that it was not protected while 20% said that they did not know⁶. Therefore, the total

⁴ TDP scheme data is administrative data generated for the purpose of administering the schemes. As such the limitations and constraints of these datasets and statistics generated from them should be recognised.

⁵ Only two out of the three TDP schemes provided details of landlords represented by agents. This means that the number of landlords represented by agents was known for two TDP schemes but had to be estimated for one, therefore the total number is also an estimate. The estimation process is described in detail in Chapter 7 of this report.

⁶ English Housing Survey, Headline Report 2017-18 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2017-to-2018-headline-report>.

proportion of private rented sector households covered by a TDP scheme is estimated at between 56% and 71%⁷.

- 1.5 There are various reasons why the remainder of the sector would not be registered with a TDP scheme. For example, the landlord may not have taken a deposit, or the tenancy agreement may have been in place before the TDP schemes became mandatory in 2007. While some landlords will be operating outside of the law, it is not possible to say how many.
- 1.6 The proportion of the private rented sector that is registered with a TDP scheme has increased steadily since 2007. The proportion is expected to continue to increase as more tenancies fall within the requirement and as there is increasing awareness of the need to register⁸.
- 1.7 The three government-backed TDP schemes operating in the UK are⁹:
 - Deposit Protection Scheme
 - Tenancy Deposit Scheme
 - mydeposits
- 1.8 There are two models of tenancy deposit protection. Landlords can choose to protect deposits in either a custodial scheme (where the deposit is held by a TDP scheme), or an insurance-backed scheme (where the landlord or agent retains the deposit but pays a fee to the scheme which insures against the landlord or agent unlawfully retaining the deposit). All three schemes offer both custodial and insurance-backed protection.

The survey methodology

- 1.9 Although the EPLS explored similar issues to previous government private landlord surveys, it used a new method and approach. Whereas previous surveys used face-to-face and telephone interviews with the sample drawn from the EHS, the EPLS used an online survey with the sample drawn from landlords and agents with deposits registered with one of the three government-backed TDP schemes.

⁷ The coverage of TDP schemes across the private rented sector was calculated as the proportion of private renters who reported having a deposit registered with a TDP scheme, out of the total number of private renters (regardless of whether they had a deposit registered). It includes tenants with all types of tenancies, including assured shorthold tenancies. It is expressed as a range, with the lower bound being tenants who were certain their deposit was registered in a TDP scheme and the upper bound including those who did not know.

⁸ The [UK Tenancy Deposit Statistics](http://www.tenancydepositscheme.com/resources/files/UK%20Tenancy%20Deposit%20Statistics.pdf) (October 2016) show that the number of deposits protected in the UK by one of the three TDP schemes increased steadily year on year from March 2008 to March 2016 from 924,181 to 3,425,718 deposits, or an increase of around 270% over eight years.

⁹ See scheme websites for more information: www.depositprotection.com, www.tenancydepositscheme.com and www.mydeposits.co.uk

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- 1.10 The new approach is more cost-effective and timely than the previous method. The online approach made it possible to efficiently survey a much larger number of landlords and enables regional analysis to be conducted.
 - 1.11 As with previous private landlord surveys, respondents were a combination of landlords and letting and/or management agents. This was to ensure the findings were as representative of the total private rented sector as possible, regardless of whether deposits were registered by a landlord or an agent.

Approach to consent and making contact

- 1.12 Although the sample was determined by the researchers, to ensure anonymity for landlords and agents all invitations and reminders were sent by the TDP schemes direct to their members. Invitations were sent out via a mix of postal letters and email, with reminders sent out via email only. Those contacted were given an opportunity to opt-out of the survey.
- 1.13 The list below sets out the key stages in the approach to the main stage survey. Detail on the approach taken in the pilot is provided in Chapter 3.
 - (i) Sample drawn from combined TDP scheme registrant level dataset and split out into three files – one for each scheme;
 - (ii) Sample files sent to schemes – sampled anonymised records sent to each scheme using a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP);
 - (iii) Data match and merge – schemes matched the sampled serial numbers to the corresponding members' contact information and merged this to the email invite text. Each invitation included a unique respondent URL link to the survey website that was specific to that case number;
 - (iv) Testing – schemes sent a number of 'dummy' then live anonymised email invites to the researchers to test and verify;
 - (v) Invitations – the schemes then sent out email invitations to their members inviting them to participate in the survey and allowing them to opt-out;
 - (vi) Reminders – around a week after invitations were sent out, data was downloaded on all non-responders. Any cases who had opted out of the survey were removed from these sample files. These cases were then securely transferred to the schemes via the FTP and the process outlined above repeated (stages (iii) and (iv)) to send an email reminder only to non-responders;
 - (vii) Completion – participants undertook the survey and the survey data was saved on a secure independent server.

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- 1.14 For the letter invitation, the approach was slightly different as it required the participation of a third-party printer and distributor, independent to the researchers. As the letters included personal data (i.e. name and address information), they could not be sent to the research team to test. Instead, the schemes used their FTPs to securely transfer the letter sample files to the printers. The printer then securely sent a number of live sample letter invitations to check with the schemes. Once the tests were signed off by the schemes the printer then printed and posted the letter out to landlords in batches. Landlords and agents received the invitation letter and used a unique code to access and complete the survey on the website: www.landlordsurvey.uk.
 - 1.15 Of the sample of 116,000 landlords and agents, 53,000 landlords were invited to take part in the survey by both letter and email. The remainder were invited by email only. Landlords and agents receiving a letter were selected at random across all three schemes. An example of the invitation letter and email used is provided in Annex A.
 - 1.16 In order to test that the above processes and systems were working correctly, a soft launch was staged before the bulk of the invitations were sent. This involved a batch of 500 letters, split evenly across the schemes being posted out a week earlier than the rest of the invitations. Responses were then monitored.
 - 1.17 Because of the different IT systems and resources, the number and approach to email reminders varied across the schemes. One scheme carried out two reminders and two 'resends' of the original invitation. These went to those who did not open the initial invitation or reminder and/or engage with it. Another carried out four reminders emails and the third scheme three reminder emails. All invitation and reminder emails and letters were presented in the 'house style' of the individual schemes, though the content was very similar across all schemes.
 - 1.18 A dedicated freephone number and email address was set up to receive any comments and queries throughout the course of fieldwork. This was staffed by the NatCen Freephone team who dealt with survey access issues, queries and any respondent comments.
 - 1.19 As an incentive to take part, all landlords were offered the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw for one of 10 annual membership subscriptions to either the NLA or the RLA.
 - 1.20 The main stage survey was carried out over a seven-week period from Friday 9th March until midnight Sunday 29th April 2018.

Chapter 2

TDP scheme data

2.1 This chapter provides details on the administrative data held by the schemes, how it was obtained and descriptive statistics on the combined TDP scheme registrant and deposit datasets.

Collecting and combining TDP scheme data

2.2 The EPLS is the first time TDP scheme administrative data has been used for research purposes. While the administration of the three TDP schemes is overseen by MHCLG, the department does not have access to any of the data that landlords and agents provide to the schemes when they become members and register their deposit. This is held by the individual schemes, all of whom collect and record slightly different information about their landlords and agents in different ways.

2.3 Over the period from the end of August to early September 2017, all three TDP schemes downloaded and provided anonymised registrant and deposit level datasets to the research team. Although the primary objective of this exercise was to derive a sample for the survey, it was also essential for weighting the survey data (see Chapter 7).

2.4 The registrant dataset included landlords and agents registered as a member of a scheme with a live tenancy in England at the time of the download. An individual registrant can be linked to a deposit via a unique identifier. Below is a list of all the variables requested from the schemes:

Registrant level dataset

- Agent / landlord / member / customer ID
- Whether landlord or agent
- Landlord / agent location by district level postcode / country
- Whether landlord / agent has contact email address
- Agent branch ID / location / postcode
- Count of tenancies – by custodial and insured

Deposit level dataset

- Tenancy / deposit ID
- Member / landlord / agent ID
- Tenancy location by district level postcode
- Tenancy location by area / country

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- Tenancy start and end date
 - Tenancy length
 - Deposit amount
 - Type of deposit (e.g. custodial or insurance)
 - Number of tenants
 - Gross rent
 - Rental period
 - Type of property
 - Number of bedrooms
 - Whether property is furnished or unfurnished

2.5 As mentioned above, there is no standardised approach across the schemes towards data collection. As such not all schemes were able to provide data across all requested variables. This resulted in some data gaps in the combined datasets. For example, not all of the TDP schemes were able to provide data on landlords represented by agents, the counts of tenancies, type of property and the number of bedrooms for a deposit.

2.6 The scheme datasets were reviewed, cleaned, de-duplicated¹⁰ and, in so far as was possible, adjusted for inconsistencies between schemes before being combined into two separate datasets at registrant and deposit level. Individual registrants can be linked to the deposit dataset via a unique identifier. Although substantial data cleaning was undertaken, given the size of the datasets (3.4 million deposits and over 390,000 registrant records) within the constraints of the survey it was not possible to undertake a thorough detailed data cleaning exercise across all individual cases¹¹.

TDP scheme data analysis

Registrant data

2.7 The registrant dataset included landlords or agents who were members of a TDP scheme with a registered live tenancy in England at the time of the data download¹².

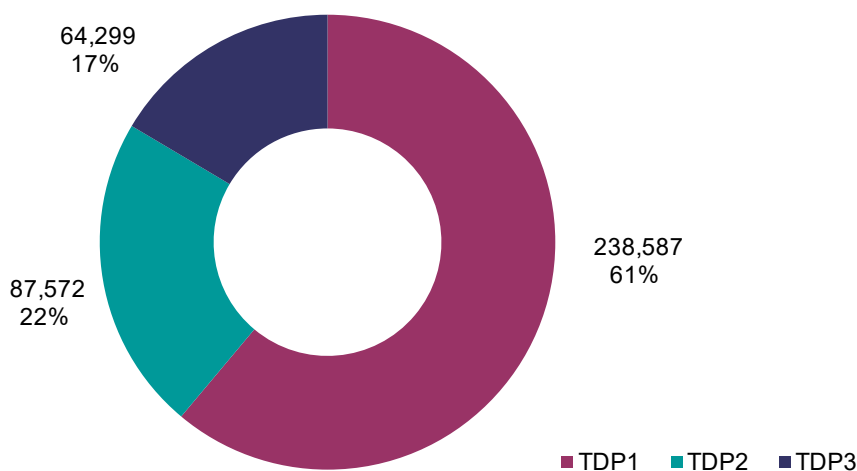
¹⁰ Duplicate records identified and removed.

¹¹ As such the TDP scheme descriptive statistics should be treated as estimates rather than definitive counts.

¹² Although data were provided for all landlords and agents who registered a deposit, one scheme was unable to provide data on the landlords who were represented by, and had their deposits registered by a letting agent. As such, it was not possible to quantify the total number of landlords who had a deposit registered (whether registered by the landlord or by an agent) across all three schemes. An estimate of the total number of landlords (1.5 million landlords) was derived by assuming the same ratio of landlords to agents that was observed in the data from the other two schemes (see Chapter 7 on weighting).

2.8 At the time of the data download there were 390,458¹³ registrants (a mix of landlords and agents) recorded as registered with a TDP scheme. Figure 2.1 below shows the distribution of registrants across the three schemes¹⁴. TDP1 has almost two thirds (61%) of all registrant landlords and agents, with TDP2 having 22% and TDP3 the remaining 17%.

Figure 2.1: Registrants by TDP scheme



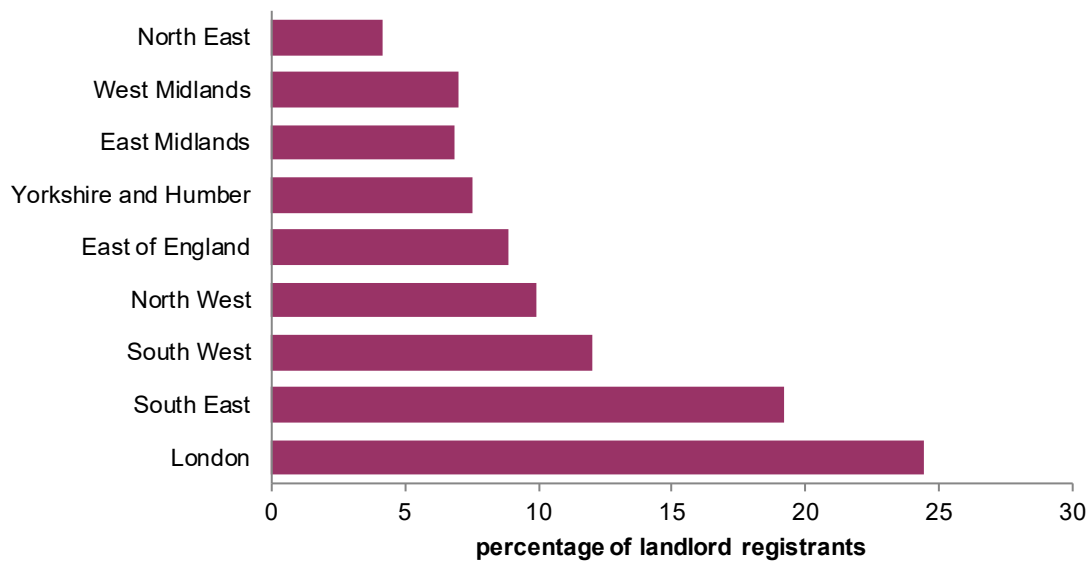
Base: all TDP scheme registrants
Source: Combined TDP scheme registrant dataset

2.9 Figure 2.2 summarises the location of landlord registrants by region, where such data was available. The largest number of landlords registering a deposit was in London (24%). This was followed by the South East (19%), the South West (12%), the North West (10%) and the East of England (9%).

¹³ As this figure was derived from administrative datasets that could not be fully verified, this should be treated as an estimate rather than a definitive count. Of the 390,458 registrants, approximately 360,000 were landlords who registered a deposit themselves with the remainder being agents registering deposits on behalf of landlords. It is estimated that there are 1.5 million landlords who have a deposit registered, with 1.2 million of these represented by agents and the remaining 360,000 registering deposits themselves.

¹⁴ For the purposes of this report, the individual TDP scheme names have been anonymised.

Figure 2.2: Landlord registrants by location



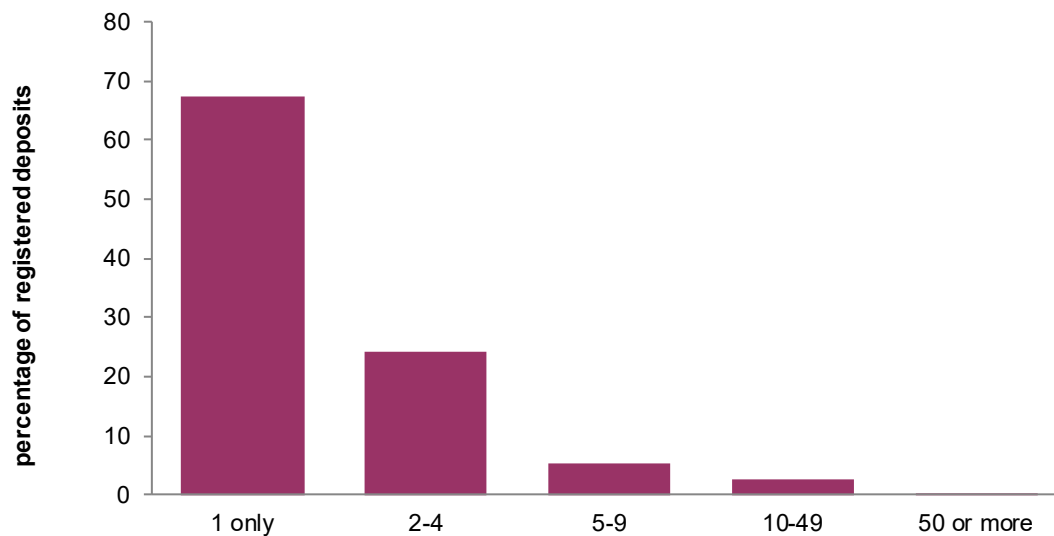
Base: all landlords (n=347,679 landlord registrants where location data was available)

Source: Combined TDP scheme registrant dataset

2.10 Over two thirds (67%) of landlords had registered just one deposit with almost a quarter (24%) registering between 2 and 4 deposits and 5% registering between 5 and 9 deposits. The remaining 3% of landlord deposits were with landlords who had registered 10 or more deposits, Figure 2.3¹⁵.

¹⁵ The proportions do not add to 100% due to rounding

Figure 2.3: Landlord registrants by number of deposits



Base: all landlords, (n=357,511 landlord registrants)

Source: combined TDP scheme registrant dataset

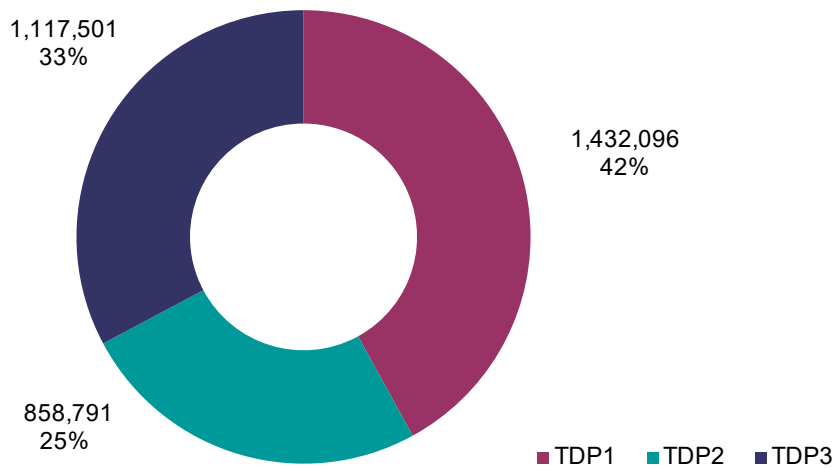
Note: some landlords will be registered with more than one scheme. Such landlords were not able to be identified and linked across TDP scheme datasets.

Deposit data

2.11 At the time of the download there were 3.4 million TDP scheme registered deposits¹⁶. The TDP scheme deposit population is fairly evenly distributed across the schemes, with 42% registered with TDP1, a quarter (25%) with TDP2 and the remaining third (33%) registered with TDP3, Figure 2.4.

¹⁶ As this figure was derived from administrative datasets that could not be fully verified, this should be treated as an estimate rather than a definitive count.

Figure 2.4: Registered deposits by TDP scheme



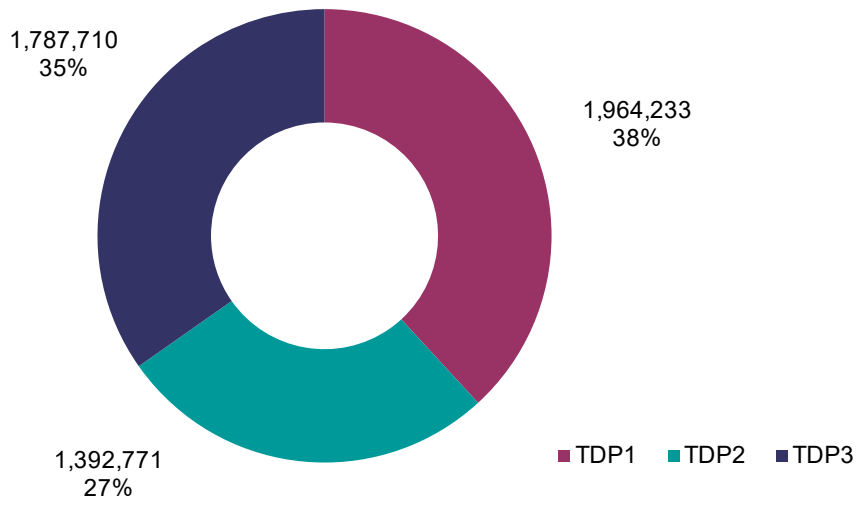
Base: all deposits, Weight: deposit weight (n=3.4 million deposits)

Source: Combined TDP scheme deposit dataset

Note: A deposit does not in all cases equate to a tenancy, household or dwelling. In some cases, a rental dwelling may have more than one registered deposit or tenancy (for example, multiple households living in the same property).

2.12 TDP schemes also provided data on the number of tenants per deposit. In total there were 5.1 million tenants recorded to all registered deposits. The number of tenants recorded was fairly evenly distributed across the schemes, with 38% of recorded tenants with deposits with TDP1, 27% with TDP2 and the remaining 35% with TDP3, Figure 2.5.

Figure 2.5: Number of recorded tenants by TDP scheme



Base: all deposits, weight: deposit weight (n=3.4 million deposits)
Source: Combined TDP scheme deposit dataset

Chapter 3

Pilot

- 3.1 This chapter provides details on the pilot, its outcomes and how these informed the approach to the main stage survey.
- 3.2 As the TDP data had not previously been used for research purposes, the EPLS was piloted before committing to and undertaking the main stage survey. The aim of the pilot was to test the feasibility of the approach, the contact method and the questionnaire, and to inform improvements.

Questionnaire

- 3.3 The pilot was an opportunity to develop and test the questionnaire in advance of the main stage survey. The questions used in the 2010 PLS were reviewed to determine if they could be used or needed to be revised for an online survey (as opposed to the previous face-to-face and telephone interview survey) and were still relevant to MHCLG policy priorities.
- 3.4 As part of the design process, colleagues from the specialist Questionnaire Design Team (QDT) at NatCen Social Research carried out cognitive testing of 19 new questions devised for the EPLS.
- 3.5 Cognitive interviews were carried out over the telephone with 10 participants from three cities (Manchester, Birmingham and London), with landlords and agents (seven landlords, three agents) with varying portfolio sizes (two with one property, five with between two and fifty properties and three with more than fifty properties). Participants were given a £40 high street voucher for their time.
- 3.6 The testing explored comprehension of key terms, the ability of the question to capture the information requested accurately and the suitability of the response options. Details of changes made to the questionnaire following the pilot are provided in Chapter 4.

Fieldwork

- 3.7 In total 3,000 landlords and agents were selected at random from the combined registrant dataset and invited to participate in the pilot survey (80% landlords and 20% agents, 1,000 per TDP scheme). As the principal aim of the pilot was to test the contact mechanism it was considered that an equal number of records per scheme was appropriate.

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- 3.8 Fieldwork for the pilot took place over a seven-week period (from 9th March to 30th April 2017). In total 2,642 email invitations were sent out to landlords and agents. Different invitations and reminder approaches were used for each TDP scheme. For TDP1 the email invitation was followed with two email reminders, for TDP2 the email invitation was followed by one email reminder and for TDP3 the email invitation was followed by a letter reminder.
- 3.9 This resulted in 116 full survey completions and 23 partial completions, a total of 139 achieved or productive responses which equated to an overall productive response rate of 5%. The proportion of productive responses¹⁷ (78% landlord, 22% agent) was very similar to the sample (80% landlord, 20% agent).
- 3.10 The pattern and timing of responses was analysed over the pilot period, including interrogating statistics on 'open' and 'click through' rates to better understand how invitees engaged with the survey¹⁸.
- 3.11 Para-data on various aspects of the survey data was analysed to explore which questions or parts of the questionnaire were problematic and could be improved or should be removed. Types of para-data explored included overall average completion times, completion times for individual questions and identification of questions where high numbers of respondents dropped out.
- 3.12 A short online questionnaire was used to gain feedback from those who did not complete the survey to probe their reasons for not participating. The main reasons given were that the questionnaire was too long, they did not have time and that they did not believe their response would make a difference.
- 3.13 Feedback on the survey process and implementation was obtained from TDP scheme colleagues helping to deliver the pilot. Feedback was also derived from a range of private landlord organisations on the engagement and response rates achieved and what improvements could be made to increase these for the main stage.

Outcome of the pilot

- 3.14 The pilot demonstrated that the overall contact method and approach was sound and deliverable, and the sequence of tasks and process functioned well.

¹⁷ A productive response was one where a respondent had completed sufficient questions in the questionnaire to enable it to be included in the survey dataset for analysis.

¹⁸ An 'open rate' is the proportion of invitees who were recorded as opening the email invite or reminder and the 'click through rate' the proportion who opened the email and then clicked through to the online questionnaire.

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- 3.15 The pilot identified low response rates as a challenge for the main stage survey and so a number of changes were suggested.
- 3.16 As a consequence of the pilot, the following changes were adopted for the main stage survey:
- use a combination of email and postal letter invitations;
 - use multiple email reminders sent only to non-responders;
 - reduce and change the questionnaire to improve comprehension and significantly reduce average completion times;
 - adopt a fieldwork period of seven weeks;
 - use an easy-to-access weblink for the survey www.landlordsurvey.uk;
 - provide greater reassurance to landlords and agents around confidentiality; and
 - undertake a range of communications (e.g. mentioning the survey in TDP scheme newsletters, websites and blogs etc.) to raise awareness and encourage landlords and agents to take part.

Chapter 4

Questionnaire

4.1 This chapter provides an overview of the questionnaire used in the main stage survey.

Questionnaire design – the main stage survey

4.2 Following feedback from the pilot, the questionnaire was revised and finalised for the main stage survey. The final questionnaire included a total of 80 questions. Because agents do not have the knowledge to be able to answer some questions that only the landlord would know (e.g. landlord finances, the landlord journey, demographic information), agents were presented with fewer questions (37) than landlords (67)¹⁹.

4.3 Survey questions asked across the different sections of the questionnaire and who they were asked of are shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Overview of questions asked in the main stage survey

| Section | Question topic | Asked of landlords? | Asked of agents? |
|--------------|---|---------------------|------------------|
| 1: About you | How they let property | Yes | No |
| | Employment status | Yes | No |
| | Number of rental properties – leaseholder or freehold | Yes | No |
| | Number of deposits registered | No | Yes |
| | How view role as a landlord | Yes | No |
| | Property related organisational membership | Yes | Yes |
| | Age / year born | Yes | No |

¹⁹ The questionnaire is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-private-landlord-survey>

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----|-----|
| | Ethnicity | Yes | No |
| 2: Your rental property and tenants | Number of rental properties | Yes | No |
| | Types of rental property owned, let or manage | Yes | Yes |
| | Types of tenants currently letting to | Yes | Yes |
| | In which region rental property is located | Yes | Yes |
| 3: Your rental practice | Sources of information for renting property | Yes | No |
| | Use of an agent | Yes | No |
| | How find tenants for lettings | Yes | No |
| | Types of tenants willing to let to, why not willing to let to | Yes | Yes |
| | Compliance with legal requirements | Yes | Yes |
| | Length of tenancy | Yes | Yes |
| | Willingness to offer longer term tenancies, why don't offer longer tenancies, what would encourage to offer longer tenancies | Yes | Yes |
| 4: Rents and deposits | Rent setting for new and existing tenants and factors influencing rents | Yes | Yes |
| | Amount of deposit | Yes | Yes |
| 5: Benefits and rent arrears | Whether tenants on benefits and how paid | Yes | Yes |
| | Whether tenancy is in arrears | Yes | No |
| | Whether most recently let property was previously vacant for more than a month | Yes | No |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|--|-----|-----|
| 6: Tenancies that ended | Why tenancies ended | Yes | Yes |
| | Why asked tenant to leave | Yes | Yes |
| | Whether deposit was returned to tenant and reasons for doing so | Yes | Yes |
| 7: The landlord journey | Number of years a landlord | Yes | No |
| | How acquired and funded first and most recent rental property | Yes | No |
| | Why became a landlord | Yes | No |
| 8: Future plans | Future plans for increasing, decreasing or keep number of properties the same over the coming two years and reasons for doing so | Yes | No |
| 9: Landlord and agent concerns | Issues that cause concern | Yes | Yes |
| | Use of government's Courts and Tribunals Service | Yes | Yes |
| 10: Finances and taxation | Approximate market value of rental property, value of any borrowing or loans for rental property | Yes | No |
| | Type of borrowing or loans for rental property | Yes | No |
| | Approximate income and rental income | Yes | No |
| | Awareness and understanding of recent and planned landlord tax, lending or fees | Yes | No |
| 11: Energy Efficiency and safety | Properties with an E, F or G EPC rating | Yes | Yes |
| | Electrical safety inspections | Yes | Yes |

4.4 The average (mean) response time for the mainstage survey was 19 minutes for landlords and 10 minutes for agents.

Chapter 5

Sampling

5.1 This chapter summarises the sampling approach for the survey.

Sampling

5.2 A sample of 116,000 landlords and agents was selected for the mainstage survey with the aim of achieving 10,000 responses²⁰. A census of agents was taken to maximise the number of agent responses. Separate samples of landlords were selected from each scheme in proportion to their population across the schemes. Large portfolio landlords were over-sampled to ensure they were included in the survey responses. The samples were selected after the removal of landlords and agents who had already been sampled for the pilot and those without contact details. Table 5.1 summarises the survey sample across the schemes and across landlords and agents.

Table 5.1: Survey sample by TDP scheme

| | TDP1 | | TDP2 | | TDP3 | | Total | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|--|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | | |
| Landlords | 52,499 | 60.0 | 20,360 | 23.3 | 14,622 | 16.7 | 87,481 | |
| Agents | 22,560 | 79.1 | 3,757 | 13.2 | 2,202 | 7.7 | 28,519 | |
| Total | 75,059 | 64.7 | 24,117 | 20.8 | 16,824 | 14.5 | 116,000 | |

5.3 Sampling was carried out in SPSS using systematic sampling (with a random start and fixed interval). Each landlord database was explicitly stratified by 'sizeband', a classification of the number of deposits registered. This enabled the over-sampling of landlords with larger rental portfolios. Prior to sampling, the databases were sorted within each sizeband by region, 'customer type' (for one scheme) and by the number of registered deposits. The regional classification for each landlord/agent was created using a combination of scheme data from postcode district, area and country variables, depending what data was available. Cases without a valid postcode or area were grouped with those that were located outside of England. A full breakdown of the sample by scheme, registrant type and sizeband is provided in Table 5.2.

²⁰ The sample numbers were calculated by drawing on evidence from the pilot to inform an assumption about the likely response rate (10%) and the number of responses needed to carry out analysis at a regional level.

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- 5.4 Sampling rates were set with a view to achieving 3,000 interviews with single deposit landlords; 15% of single deposit landlords were selected in all three TDP schemes. Sampling rates in other sizebands varied by TDP scheme, except for the 50+ category where all landlords were selected (see Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Survey sample by TDP scheme, type of registrant and sizeband

| TDP/Registrant type | Sizeband (no. of deposits) | Proportion of landlords/agents selected (%) | No. of landlords/agents selected | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---|-------|
| TDP 1 Landlord | 1 | 15 | 21,819 | |
| | 2-4 | 40 | 19,594 | |
| | 5-9 | 75 | 7,024 | |
| | 10-49 | 100 | 3,501 | |
| | 50+ | 100 | 141 | |
| | Missing deposit count | 25 | 420 | |
| TDP 1 Agent | 1 | 100 | 5,509 | |
| | 2-4 | 100 | 4,514 | |
| | 5-9 | 100 | 2,661 | |
| | 10-49 | 100 | 4,892 | |
| | 50-99 | 100 | 1,777 | |
| | 100-249 | 100 | 2,105 | |
| | 250-499 | 100 | 699 | |
| | 500-999 | 100 | 151 | |
| | 1000+ | 100 | 24 | |
| | Missing deposit count | 100 | 228 | |
| TDP 2 Landlord | 1 | 15 | 7,231 | |
| | 2-4 | 25 | 5,332 | |
| | 5-9 | 45 | 3,090 | |
| | 10-49 | 86 | 4,069 | |
| | 50+ | 100 | 638 | |
| | TDP 2 Agent | 1 | 100 | 237 |
| TDP 2 Agent | 2-4 | 100 | 329 | |
| | 5-9 | 100 | 350 | |
| | 10-49 | 100 | 982 | |
| | 50-99 | 100 | 609 | |
| | 100-249 | 100 | 797 | |
| | 250-499 | 100 | 317 | |
| | 500-999 | 100 | 106 | |
| | 1000+ | 100 | 30 | |
| | TDP 3 Landlord | 1 | 15 | 6,050 |
| | | 2-4 | 35 | 5,150 |
| 5-9 | | 71 | 1,958 | |
| 10-49 | | 100 | 1,368 | |
| 50+ | | 100 | 96 | |
| TDP 3 Agent | | 1 | 100 | 32 |
| TDP 3 Agent | 2-4 | 100 | 49 | |
| | 5-9 | 100 | 49 | |
| | 10-49 | 100 | 284 | |
| | 50-99 | 100 | 341 | |
| | 100-249 | 100 | 740 | |
| | 250-499 | 100 | 485 | |
| | 500-999 | 100 | 171 | |
| | 1000+ | 100 | 51 | |
| Total | | | 116,000 | |

Chapter 6

Mainstage survey response

6.1 This chapter summarises the response rates of the mainstage survey.

Response rates

6.2 Full and partial responses were included in the survey data of productive responses. A full response was where all relevant questions in the questionnaire were completed by the respondent. A partial response was where the respondent partly completed the questionnaire up to a specific question²¹ but had stopped before reaching the end. Those who completed some questions but did not reach this cut-off question were not included as productive responses.

6.3 At the beginning of the questionnaire, TDP scheme data were used to confirm whether respondents were landlords or agents. The question asked was – '*We understand you are a landlord / agent. Is this correct?*'. If their response was that the information was correct, they were able to continue with the questionnaire. If the response was that the information was incorrect, they were not able to take part in the survey and their response was treated as ineligible. If the respondent said they were both a landlord and an agent, they could continue with the questionnaire, from the perspective that matched their record in the TDP data. This approach was used to ensure the correct sample of landlords and agents completed the survey.

6.4 The survey response rates are summarised in Table 6.1. The survey achieved 7,823 total productive responses with an overall response rate of 7.2%. Of these productive responses 7,319 were full responses (94%) and 504 were partial responses (6%). There were 519 ineligible responses.

²¹ The question used for the cut-off point in the questionnaire was named 'Court' asking about the use of the government's courts and tribunal system. The question was at the end of section nine of the eleven section questionnaire and immediately before the more sensitive questions on financial information.

Table 6.1: Response statistics – summary

| | Number of cases | % of sample frame | % of issued sample | % of successful invitations |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total sample frame | 390,458 | 100.0 | | |
| Sample | 116,000 | 29.7 | | |
| Total successful invites sent | 108,820 | 27.9 | 93.8 | |
| Total engagements | 8,340 | 2.1 | 7.2 | 7.7 |
| Total responses | 7,823 | 2.0 | 6.7 | 7.2 |
| Full response | 7,319 | 1.9 | 6.3 | 6.7 |
| Partial response | 504 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| Ineligible | 519 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.5 |
| Non-responders | 100,997 | 25.9 | 87.1 | 92.8 |

Notes: 'Total engagements' are all those respondents who engaged with the survey (whether or not they fully or partially completed or were ineligible). The 'successful invitations' is the total number of valid invitations that were sent out (excluding invalid email addresses and respondents who were no longer TDP scheme members at the time of the mail out)

6.5 Table 6.2 below summarises responses by landlord and agent. Landlords had a higher response rate (7.7%) than agents (4.0%). Almost all partial responses came from landlords (99%), with the majority (87%) of ineligible responses coming from agents.

Table 6.2: Response statistics

| | Landlords | | Agents | | Total | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------|--------|------|---------|-------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Issued sample | 87,481 | 75.0 | 28,519 | 25.0 | 116,000 | 100.0 |
| Total responses / response rate | 6,694 | 7.7 | 1,127 | 4.0 | 7,823 | 6.7 |
| Full response | 6,196 | 84.7 | 1,122 | 15.3 | 7,319 | 100.0 |
| Partial response | 498 | 98.8 | 5 | 1.0 | 504 | 100.0 |
| Ineligible | 67 | 12.9 | 452 | 87.1 | 519 | 100.0 |
| Non-responders | 80,787 | 80.0 | 27,392 | 27.0 | 100,997 | 100.0 |

6.6 Table 6.3 summarises responses by the location (region) of respondent, comparing the issued sample and the achieved response. Respondents located in London were under-represented in the survey with the percentage of the responses 7.3% below the issued sample. In contrast, respondents located in the South East and South West were over-represented (with the percentage of achieved responses exceeding the percentage of the issued sample by 4.2% and 3.3% respectively). The weighting of the survey data (see Chapter 7) addressed these variations in responses by region.

Table 6.3: Response statistics by location (region) of landlord or agent

| | Issued sample | | Total responses | | Difference |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | % |
| North East | 4,345 | 3.7 | 259 | 3.3 | -0.4 |
| North West | 12,914 | 11.1 | 769 | 9.8 | -1.3 |
| Yorkshire & Humber | 9,018 | 7.8 | 624 | 8.0 | 0.2 |
| East Midlands | 7,648 | 6.6 | 571 | 7.3 | 0.7 |
| West Midlands | 8,566 | 7.4 | 584 | 7.5 | 0.1 |
| East of England | 8,350 | 7.2 | 627 | 8.0 | 0.8 |
| London | 28,092 | 24.2 | 1323 | 16.9 | -7.3 |
| South East | 20,825 | 18.0 | 1731 | 22.1 | 4.2 |
| South West | 13,163 | 11.3 | 1149 | 14.7 | 3.3 |
| Other | 3,079 | 2.7 | 186 | 2.4 | -0.3 |
| Total | 116,000 | 100.0 | 7,823 | 100.0 | 0.0 |

6.7 Table 6.4 summarises responses by size of property portfolio. Respondents owning just one rental property were under-represented in responses, with the percentage of the achieved responses 11.5% lower than issued sample. Respondents with slightly larger portfolios (two to four and five to nine properties) were over-represented with achieved responses exceeding the percentage of the issued sample by 4.5% and 4.7% respectively.

Table 6.4: Response statistics by property portfolio size

| | Issued sample | | Total responses | | Difference |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| | No. | % | No. | % | % |
| 1 | 40,878 | 35.2 | 1,857 | 23.7 | -11.5 |
| 2-4 | 34,968 | 30.1 | 2,713 | 34.7 | 4.5 |
| 5-9 | 15,132 | 13.0 | 1,388 | 17.7 | 4.7 |
| 10-49 | 15,096 | 13.0 | 1,217 | 15.6 | 2.5 |
| 50-99 | 3,602 | 3.1 | 240 | 3.1 | 0 |
| 100-249 | 3,642 | 3.1 | 262 | 3.3 | 0.2 |
| 250-499 | 1,501 | 1.3 | 97 | 1.2 | -0.1 |
| 500-999 | 428 | 0.4 | 27 | 0.2 | 0 |
| 1,000 and over | 105 | 0.1 | 3 | 0 | -0.1 |
| Missing | 648 | 0.6 | 19 | 0.2 | -0.3 |
| Total | 116,000 | 100.0 | 7,823 | 100.0 | 0.0 |

Chapter 7

Weighting

- 7.1 The TDP scheme databases of landlords and agents that were used for sampling were also used to derive population estimates for weighting. Three different weights were produced:
- (i) Tenancy weights: these make the data representative of live deposits/tenancies that are registered with a TDP scheme;
 - (ii) Landlord weights: these make the data representative of landlords who have registered live deposits with a TDP scheme and;
 - (iii) Registrant weights: these make the data representative of registrants (i.e. landlords or agents) who have registered live deposits with a TDP scheme.

Using the appropriate weight for analysis

- 7.2 The decision about which weight to use for any given analysis depends on the survey question.
- 7.3 In the main report²²:
- The tenancy weight was used when reporting findings on the total population of tenancies with a registered deposit; for example, the proportion of tenancies controlled by landlords with different sized portfolios. This weight should not be applied to questions relating to a specific tenancy (e.g. the most recent letting) or a subset of respondents' portfolios. This is because the responses about the most recent letting or subset of the portfolio cannot reasonably be extrapolated to the total population of the respondents' tenancies.
 - The landlord weight was used for reporting findings on the registered landlord population and questions only asked of landlords; for example, when reporting the characteristics of registered landlords or landlord answers to questions on their future investment plans.
 - The registrant weight was used when exploring differences between landlords and agents and proportions of the total registrant population; for

²² See link to the EPLS main report and accompanying outputs
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-private-landlord-survey-2018-main-report>

example, when comparing compliance of landlords and agents with legal requirements or the setting of rents.

The process of creating each of the weights is described below.

Tenancy (deposit) weights

7.4 The tenancy weighting was done in four main steps:

- (iv) The six databases of registrant landlords and agents were combined to produce a dataset from which population estimates (of numbers of deposits) could be derived;
- (v) Population estimates were derived from this dataset by summing the number of deposits (for each landlord/agent) within sizeband (the classification of number of deposits used for sampling 1; 2-4; 5-9 etc) and region for each TDP/registrant type²³ combination;
- (vi) Selection weights (equal to the inverse of the probability of selection) were calculated for each TDP/registrant and applied to the responding sample. These were scaled up so that the sum of the weights matched population totals;
- (vii) Calibration weighting was used to adjust the selection weights so that the sample profile matched the population targets (from (ii)).

In more detail:

(i) Creating a population dataset

The first step was to combine the TDP scheme databases of landlords and agents (six in total, two for each TDP scheme)²⁴. A regional classification for each landlord/agent was created using a combination of postcode district, area and country variables²⁵; cases with no valid postcode or area were grouped with those that were outside of England. Putting together the six files (one for each TDP/registrant i.e. TDP1 landlords; TDP1 agents; TDP2 landlords; TDP2 agents; TDP3 landlords; TDP3 agents) produced a population dataset from which population estimates (of numbers of deposits) could be derived.

²³ 'Registrant type' refers to the landlord/agent classification. The variable name in the dataset is 'Roletyp'. TDP/registrant refers to the combination of TDP scheme and registrant. There are six combinations, two for each TDP scheme.

²⁴ The mainstage sample of landlords was selected separately for each TDP scheme. Each of the three sample frames excluded the pilot sample cases, therefore it was necessary to use the full datasets of landlords and agents (i.e. including the pilot cases), rather than the mainstage sample frames, to create the population dataset.

²⁵ This process was re-done (on each file separately) and refined/updated for weighting purposes to create a profile that was as accurate as possible.

(ii) Deriving population estimates

Next, population estimates were derived by summing the number of deposits (for each landlord/agent) within **sizeband** (the classification of number of deposits used for sampling 1; 2-4; 5-9 etc) and **region** categories within each TDP/registrant. This was straightforward for TDP2 and TDP3 because all records supplied in these datasets included a deposit count (number of deposits registered in total by the landlord/agent). For TDP1 however, some cases (1,730 landlords and 228 agents²⁶) were missing deposit counts (i.e. the scheme knew they had registered at least one deposit but were unable to tell us how many). For the purposes of creating population estimates, deposit counts were imputed for these landlords and agents equal to the means (for landlords and agents separately) in the rest of the TDP1 population. (The means were 1.9 for TDP1 landlords and 43.4 for TDP1agents). This enabled population totals to be calculated for *all* TDP1 landlords and agents.

(iii) Selection weighting

Once the population totals were derived, selection weights (equal to the inverse of the probability of selection) were calculated by TDP/registrant and applied to the responding sample. Agents were sampled with certainty, therefore they each received a weight of 1. Landlords were sampled at different rates depending on size of portfolio (see sampling chapter 5): they received weights that varied between 1 and 6.67. These weights were then scaled up so that their sum matched the total population of deposits (estimated from the combined databases). This exercise allowed us to see where extreme weights could occur, often due to small numbers in particular cells²⁷.

TDP1 cases with missing deposit counts were excluded from this exercise; instead they were given the mean weight within registrant type²⁸. A comparison of the responding sample weighted by the selection weights (excluding the TDP1 cases with missing deposit counts) with full population counts of deposits enabled calculation of the mean weights. The mean weight for TDP1 landlords was then applied to responding TDP1 cases with missing counts (ditto for agents with missing counts); thus, all TDP1 cases received a weight. Following this population targets in all TDP1 cells were re-scaled, so that the total number of deposits for TDP1 landlords/agents matched the full counts.

²⁶ Approximately 0.8% of landlords and 1.0% of agents in TDP1

²⁷ This was dealt with later by merging cells, see iv. Calibration weighting.

²⁸ It wasn't desirable for cases with missing counts to be weighted either up or down so the mean weight was used. The example in the following paragraph illustrates the reason why i.e. it would have inflated the variance of the weights un-necessarily.

For example, there were 18 responding TDP1 landlords with no corresponding deposit count. After applying the (interim) mean weight for TDP1 landlords these cases represented 1,572 deposits (compared to the population estimate of 3,259); after re-scaling they represented 1,578 (as all the TDP1 landlord weights including these were scaled up slightly to match the population). The alternative would have been for these cases to represent 3,259 deposits, in which case they would have received a weight equal to 2.07 ($3,259/1,572$) times the mean weight; this would have inflated the variance of the weights.

(iv) Calibration weighting

For the calibration weighting a key decision was to choose between weighting to totals for each sizeband and each region within TDP/registrant and weighting to totals within registrant only. As the aim of the survey was to investigate behaviours and attitudes of landlords and agents without reference to their membership of a particular TDP scheme, weighting within registrant (only) was preferred. Despite this, it was decided to weight by sizeband within TDP/registrant, mainly as this was more efficient than the alternative (in other words the variance of the weights was slightly smaller using this method). Population counts for sizeband were therefore created within each TDP/registrant. Some of the smaller cells were merged to avoid extreme weights. For example, there were only two responding landlords from TDP3 who had registered fifty or more deposits so this cell (50+) was merged with the 10-49 category.

For region, it was more efficient to weight to registrant only (rather than TDP/registrant) therefore counts of deposits were created within region for all landlords and all agents (regardless of TDP scheme). London and the South East regions were combined for reasons of efficiency (i.e. to reduce the variance of the weights).

Once the final set of targets (shown below in Table 7.1) was decided upon, calibration weighting was used to adjust the selection weights so that the (weighted) sample profile matched the population. The weighted dataset was then checked to ensure that the weighted counts (of deposits) match the population estimates. The final weight was then scaled down so that the mean weight was 1.

Table 7.1: Population estimates used in tenancy weighting (by sizeband)²⁹

| TDP/Registrant type | Sizeband (no. of deposits) | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no. of deposits) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| TDP1 Landlord | 1 | 1,272 | 151,056 |
| | 2-4 | 1,971 | 126,401 |
| | 5-9 | 912 | 59,747 |
| | 10-49 | 482 | 58,208 |
| | 50+ | 13 | 12,340 |
| | Missing deposit count | 18 | 1,578 |
| TDP1 Agent | 1 | 68 | 5,736 |
| | 2-4 | 87 | 12,803 |
| | 5-9 | 90 | 18,017 |
| | 10-49 | 219 | 118,191 |
| | 50-99 | 120 | 131,207 |
| | 100-249 | 159 | 337,630 |
| | 250+ | 69 | 382,541 |
| | Missing deposit count | 1 | 1,239 |
| TDP2 Landlord | 1 | 311 | 49,289 |
| | 2-4 | 410 | 56,655 |
| | 5-9 | 297 | 45,222 |
| | 10-49 | 415 | 91,868 |
| | 50+ | 45 | 123,610 |
| TDP2 Agent | 1-4 | 19 | 1,268 |
| | 5-9 | 16 | 2,493 |
| | 10-49 | 50 | 26,936 |
| | 50-99 | 33 | 46,271 |
| | 100+ | 59 | 415,179 |
| TDP3 Landlord | 1 | 202 | 40,838 |
| | 2-4 | 229 | 37,035 |
| | 5-9 | 71 | 17,671 |
| | 10+ | 47 | 35,466 |
| TDP3 Agent | 1-49 | 9 | 18,251 |
| | 50-99 | 27 | 46,905 |
| | 100-249 | 54 | 234,874 |
| | 250+ | 48 | 708,823 |
| Total | | 7,823 | 3,415,348 |

²⁹ The figures in the 'Population estimate' column are rounded, hence their sum does not add up to the total exactly.

Table 7.2: Population estimates used in tenancy weighting (by region)

| Registrant type | Region | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no of deposits) |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Landlord | Missing/other | 176 | 19,545 |
| | North East | 244 | 34,479 |
| | North West | 621 | 83,777 |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 514 | 68,474 |
| | East Midlands | 513 | 57,713 |
| | West Midlands | 466 | 59,044 |
| | East of England | 624 | 68,877 |
| | London/South East | 2,537 | 367,312 |
| | South West | 1,000 | 147,762 |
| Agent | Missing/other | 10 | 38,348 |
| | North East | 31 | 67,288 |
| | North West | 107 | 277,841 |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 76 | 207,807 |
| | East Midlands | 103 | 201,165 |
| | West Midlands | 92 | 200,213 |
| | East of England | 135 | 260,798 |
| | London/South East | 427 | 1,008,001 |
| | South West | 147 | 246,901 |
| Total | | 7,823 | 3,415,348 |

Landlord weights

7.5 A similar process was used to produce the landlord weights. Whilst there were no missing counts to deal with, a different and more complex issue arose here: missing information on the number of landlords represented by agents from TDP1³⁰. This required us to estimate the number of TDP1 landlords ‘under’ (i.e. represented by) each of the agents. The estimation process is described in ii below.

(i) Creating a population dataset

As with the tenancy weights, the six TDP scheme databases of landlords/agents were combined making sure to remove duplicate landlords (under agents) where appropriate³¹. This time counts of landlords were

³⁰ Agents can register deposits on behalf of landlords. Where this occurred, TDP2 and TDP3 provided lists of agents and the corresponding landlords but TDP1 only supplied a list of agents, therefore we had no information on the number of landlords represented by the agents from TDP1.

³¹ Duplicate landlords were identified using the landlord identifiers in the TDP scheme databases. Whilst this process would have removed the vast majority of duplicates within scheme, this does not mean that *all* duplicate landlords were removed. It is known that some landlords register deposits with more than one TDP scheme but it wasn’t possible to identify these landlords using the scheme data. The overall landlord count(s) will be slightly inflated as a result. The same is true of agents i.e. we could not identify agents who had registered deposits with more than one TDP scheme.

included instead of counts of deposits. For landlord registrants the count of landlords was one (by definition); for agents the counts were created by summing the number of (unique) landlords under each agent (TDP2 and 3) or through estimation (as described below) where landlord data was unavailable (TDP1).

(ii) Deriving population estimates (including estimation of numbers of landlords ‘under’ the TDP1 agents)

As with the tenancy weighting, population estimates were created through summation within **sizeband** and **region** categories for each TDP/registrant. This was straightforward for TDP2 and TDP3: both supplied us with files at landlord level, detailing each landlord (with counts of deposits) and the corresponding agents (who registered the deposit on their behalf), therefore counting the number of landlords under each agent was simply a case of removing the duplicates and summing the number of records. In contrast, TDP1 supplied us only with lists of landlord and agent *registrants* i.e. the list of agents included no details on the (number of) landlords for whom they had carried out the registration. It was therefore necessary for us to *estimate* the number of landlords under each TDP1 agent to create a full set of population estimates.

The estimation was done using data from the survey questions which asked about the number of deposits registered by agents³² and the number of landlords represented by those deposits³³, taking the mean ratio of deposits to landlords within each sizeband (for TDP1 agents). We could not assume that these data were reliable without corroborating them with the data recorded on the TDP scheme databases; therefore, the relationship between the number of deposits each responding agent reported having registered and the number recorded on the corresponding scheme database was investigated. The correlation turned out to be high; this engendered confidence in our ability to use the data for estimating numbers of landlords.

The process of estimation is best described using an example. To estimate the number of landlords represented by TDP1 agents with 2-4 deposits, TDP1 agents who responded and reported that they had registered between 2-5 deposits³⁴ (5 was used instead of 4 to account for rounding by respondents³⁵) were isolated. The ratio between the number of deposits (reported) and the number of landlords (reported) was calculated for each of these agents. The

³² Variable NumDepR

³³ Variable LlordRep

³⁴ Not all of these agents had 2-5 deposits according the database. This restriction would have reduced the base for estimating the ratio. Moreover, this method was found to produce results that closely matched the number of landlords for the other two TDP schemes.

³⁵ We didn't expect respondents to know exactly how many deposits they had registered, therefore a small amount of leeway was allowed, particularly given that some respondents would be likely to have rounded up their estimate to the nearest 'round' figure (5 in this case).

mean of these ratios (2.32) was then used to estimate the total number of landlords under these agents. This was done by dividing the total number of agents with 2-4 deposits by this (mean) ratio. A similar process was used for each sizeband category; the results are in Table 7.3 below³⁶. Once this was done it was possible to create the full set of population estimates required.

Table 7.3: Ratios of deposits to landlords used in estimating numbers of landlords for TDP1

| Sizeband (no. of deposits) | Ratio |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 1.00 |
| 2-4 | 2.32 |
| 5-9 | 3.51 |
| 10-49 | 4.43 |
| 50-99 | 2.99 |
| 100-249 | 4.33 |
| 250+ | 9.61 |

(iii) Selection weighting

Next, selection weights were applied to the responding sample and scaled up to match the total population of landlords (estimated from the combined databases). Comparison of the responding sample weighted by the selection weights with the full population of deposits allowed us to see where extreme weights might occur without merging of small cells³⁷.

As with the tenancy weights, a key decision was whether to weight to totals for each sizeband (and region) within TDP/registrant or within registrant type only. This time it was decided to weight to sizeband within registrant type, mainly due to the efficiency of the resulting weights, therefore counts of deposits were created within sizeband and region for landlords and all agents (separately). London and the South East regions were again combined also for reasons of efficiency and for consistency with the tenancy weights.

(iv) Calibration weighting

Finally, calibration weighting was used to adjust the selection weights so that the sample profile matched the population targets. The weighted dataset was then checked to ensure that the weighted counts (of landlords) match the population estimates. Finally, one large outlying weight was trimmed to match the second largest weight. This was then scaled down so that the mean weight was 1.

³⁶ No estimation was required for agents with one deposit who were given a landlord count of one.

³⁷ No merging of cells was required in the end, partly due to weighting being done within registrant type rather than TDP/registrant type.

Table 7.4: Population estimates used in landlord weighting (by sizeband)

| TDP/Registrant type | Sizeband (no of deposits) | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no of landlords) |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Landlord | 1 | 1,785 | 240,764 |
| | 2-4 | 2,610 | 87,208 |
| | 5-9 | 1,280 | 19,519 |
| | 10-49 | 942 | 9,888 |
| | 50+ | 60 | 896 |
| | Missing deposit count | 18 | 966 |
| Agent | 1 | 72 | 6,073 |
| | 2-4 | 103 | 6,602 |
| | 5-9 | 108 | 7,458 |
| | 10-49 | 275 | 56,636 |
| | 50-99 | 180 | 106,873 |
| | 100-249 | 262 | 332,253 |
| | 250+ | 127 | 666,545 |
| | Missing deposit count | 1 | 1,049 |
| Total | | 7,823 | 1,542,730 |

Table 7.5: Population estimates used in landlord weighting (by region)

| Registrant type | Region | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no of landlords) |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Landlord | Missing/other | 176 | 11,562 |
| | North East | 244 | 14,561 |
| | North West | 621 | 34,375 |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 514 | 26,092 |
| | East Midlands | 513 | 23,841 |
| | West Midlands | 466 | 24,481 |
| | East of England | 624 | 30,917 |
| | London/South East | 2,537 | 151,653 |
| | South West | 1,000 | 41,759 |
| Agent | Missing/other | 10 | 24,786 |
| | North East | 31 | 26,090 |
| | North West | 107 | 108,377 |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 76 | 77,117 |
| | East Midlands | 103 | 81,683 |
| | West Midlands | 92 | 95,522 |
| | East of England | 135 | 134,521 |
| | London/South East | 427 | 524,425 |
| | South West | 147 | 110,967 |
| Total | | 7,823 | 1,542,730 |

Registrant weights

7.6 A similar process to the tenancy weighting was used to produce the registrant weights.

(i) Creating a population dataset and deriving population estimates

A combined database of registrants (landlords and agents who had registered live deposits) was created for the landlord weighting; this was used as the population dataset for the registrant weights. Population totals were created by summing the number of records (one per registrant).

(ii) Selection weighting

Next, selection weights were applied to the responding sample and scaled up to match the total population of registrants (estimated as above). Comparison of the responding sample weighted by the selection weights with the full population of registrants allowed us to see where larger weights would occur (without merging of small cells). As with the tenancy weights, some of the smaller cells were merged (within TDP/registrant type) to avoid extreme weights.

As with the other two weights, a key decision was whether to weight to totals for each sizeband (and region) *within* TDP/registrant type or within registrant type only. This time it was decided to weight to sizeband within TDP/registrant type (as per the tenancy weighting); because registrants are ‘members’ of the TDP schemes it made sense to weight to the profile of registrants *within* TDP scheme. London and the South East regions were split out rather than merged; in this case the data was able to support the split (unlike for the other two weights where the cells were merged for efficiency reasons).

(iii) Calibration weighting

The last step was to use calibration weighting to adjust the selection weights so that the sample profile matched the population. The weighted dataset was then checked to ensure that the weighted counts (of registrants) match the population estimates. The final weight was then scaled down so that the mean weight was 1.

Table 7.6: Population estimates used in registrant weighting (by sizeband)

| TDP/Registrant type | Sizeband (no. of deposits) | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no. of registrants) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| TDP1 Landlord | 1 | 1,272 | 151,065 |
| | 2-4 | 1,971 | 50,398 |
| | 5-9 | 912 | 9,587 |
| | 10-49 | 482 | 3,566 |
| | 50+ | 13 | 142 |
| | Missing deposit count | 18 | 831 |
| TDP1 Agent | 1 | 68 | 5,736 |
| | 2-4 | 87 | 4,650 |
| | 5-9 | 90 | 2,736 |
| | 10-49 | 219 | 5,002 |
| | 50-99 | 120 | 1,814 |
| | 100-249 | 159 | 2,142 |
| | 250+ | 69 | 890 |
| | Missing deposit count | 1 | 28 |
| TDP2 Landlord | 1 | 311 | 49,289 |
| | 2-4 | 410 | 21,819 |
| | 5-9 | 297 | 7,020 |
| | 10-49 | 415 | 4,831 |
| | 50+ | 45 | 649 |
| TDP2 Agent | 1-4 | 19 | 142 |
| | 5-9 | 16 | 460 |
| | 10-49 | 50 | 370 |
| | 50-99 | 33 | 1,030 |
| | 100+ | 59 | 1,962 |
| TDP3 Landlord | 1 | 202 | 40838 |
| | 2-4 | 229 | 14,903 |
| | 5-9 | 71 | 2,806 |
| | 10+ | 47 | 1,497 |
| TDP3 Agent | 1-49 | 9 | 896 |
| | 50-99 | 27 | 641 |
| | 100-249 | 54 | 1,409 |
| | 250+ | 48 | 1,309 |
| Total | | 7,823 | 390,458 |

Table 7.7: Population estimates used in registrant weighting (by region)

| Registrant type | Region | Unweighted frequency | Population estimate (no. of registrants) | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------|
| Landlord | Missing/other | 176 | 11,562 | |
| | North East | 244 | 14,561 | |
| | North West | 621 | 34,375 | |
| | Yorkshire & Humber | 514 | 26,092 | |
| | East Midlands | 513 | 23,841 | |
| | West Midlands | 466 | 24,481 | |
| | East of England | 624 | 30,917 | |
| | London | 1,097 | 84,957 | |
| | South East | 1,440 | 66,696 | |
| | South West | 1,000 | 41,759 | |
| | Agent | Missing/other | 10 | 667 |
| | | North East | 31 | 1,088 |
| | | North West | 107 | 3,480 |
| Yorkshire & Humber | | 76 | 2,140 | |
| East Midlands | | 103 | 2,231 | |
| West Midlands | | 92 | 2,336 | |
| East of England | | 135 | 2,789 | |
| London | | 198 | 8,125 | |
| South East | | 229 | 5,247 | |
| South West | | 147 | 3,114 | |
| Total | | 7,823 | 390,458 | |

Chapter 8

Analysis

8.1 This chapter outlines some of the survey data preparation processes. Before analysis could be carried out the data were prepared, checked and cleaned. This includes checking:

- derived variables;
- for and cleaning of implausible or invalid data and;
- all variable formats, labels and value labels

Derived variables

8.2 Prior to the survey data analysis, a series of derived variables were produced and checked. These ranged from relatively straightforward banding of raw variables such as the number of properties, to more complex computed variables such as the proportion of landlord income that comes from their rental properties. Details of all derived variables can be found in the data dictionary and survey dataset user guide³⁸.

Data cleaning

8.3 The EPLS questionnaire had several quality assurance measures in place, for example to restrict implausible value ranges such as income amounts, or to prevent respondents selecting mutually exclusive answers. However, some data cleaning was additionally required. This consisted of basic cleaning and plausibility checks on the data. As the questionnaire included a number of quality assurance measures on most questions, data cleaning was primarily focussed on continuous and free text variables where regulation of input data is more difficult (for example, the number of properties, income, loan and market value amounts and postcodes).

8.4 The process undertaken for the survey analysis dataset is outlined below. Additional processes were applied to the dataset submitted to the UK Data Archive to ensure anonymity and reduce risk of disclosure. These are detailed in the dataset user guide.

³⁸ The EPLS dataset will be made available via the UK Data Service for users who want to undertake secondary analysis. This will include a data dictionary and survey dataset user guide <http://data-archive.ac.uk/>.

8.5 Evidently spurious values were recoded as invalid. For example, where respondents had entered '99999' or '1111111' at more than one value these were recoded. Only the spurious variable was edited. For example, if an individual landlord stated they had 99999 properties, and a market value suggesting just one or two, their number of properties was set to invalid, but the market value was left unchanged.

Implausible data

8.6 Continuous variables were checked for implausible values and clear instances of these were recoded as invalid as outlined above. Histograms were used to plot the distribution (per property) of rental income, loan amount and market value, to depict the distribution and focus investigation of potential outliers and/or spurious data. These were also used to identify reasonable outlier cut off points for analysis. Identifying the interquartile range to identify statistical outliers on financial variables was not appropriate as the distribution was not normal; these variables have a long 'tail' at the upper end.

8.7 In many cases we could not conclude that very high values were in fact erroneous and therefore these have been left in the data. This is especially the case for larger portfolio landlords. It is recommended that readers take this into account when considering mean values; a small number of very high value cases raise the mean. It is for this reason we recommend using the median value. The median is therefore used in the main report.

8.8 More information about cleaning of individual variables can be found in the data dictionary and user guide³⁹.

Significance testing

8.9 All reported comparisons were tested at the 5% significance level, taking into account the effect of the weights. Confidence intervals around survey estimates were also produced. Although an estimate produced from a sample survey will rarely be identical to the population value, confidence intervals indicate the likely range within which the population value will fall and provide an indication of the precision of the survey results.

³⁹ The EPLS survey dataset will be made available via the UK Data Service for users who want to undertake secondary analysis. This will include a data dictionary and survey dataset user guide <http://data-archive.ac.uk/>.

Chapter 9

Interpreting the results

- 9.1 Detailed findings from the EPLS are provided in the main survey report⁴⁰. To help interpret these and their implications, this chapter examines the extent to which private renters with a registered TDP scheme deposit differ from private renters generally⁴¹.
- 9.2 This analysis is based on English Housing Survey (EHS) data collected in 2014-15⁴². By comparing the profile of tenants reporting their deposit was registered with a TDP scheme and all private renters, we can consider the extent to which the TDP scheme population is likely to be representative of the wider private rented sector.

TDP scheme coverage

- 9.3 As mentioned in Chapter 1, there is no official estimate of the proportion of the private rented sector that is covered by the TDP schemes. From the EHS in 2017-18, 76% of households in the private rented sector paid a deposit when they moved into their current accommodation. Of these, 73% said that their deposit was protected in a government-backed TDP scheme; 7% said that it was not protected while 20% said that they did not know⁴³. Therefore, the total proportion of private rented sector households covered by a TDP scheme is estimated at between 56% and 71%.
- 9.4 The proportion of the private rented sector that is registered with a TDP scheme has increased steadily since 2007. The proportion is expected to continue to increase as more tenancies fall within the requirement and as there is increasing awareness of the need to register⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ See link to the EPLS main report and accompanying outputs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-private-landlord-survey-2018-main-report>

⁴¹ TDP scheme households were compared to all private renters, rather than non-TDP scheme households, as the analysis was testing the extent to which the TDP scheme population is representative of all landlords / properties and tenants in the private rented sector (including TDP landlords / tenants).

⁴² At the time of analysis, this was the latest data available.

⁴³ English Housing Survey, Headline Report 2017-18

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2017-to-2018-headline-report>

⁴⁴ The [UK Tenancy Deposit Statistics](#) (October 2016) show that the number of deposits protected in England and Wales by one of the three TDP schemes increased steadily year on year from March 2008 to March 2016 from 924,181 to 3,425,718 deposits, or an increase of around 270% over eight years.

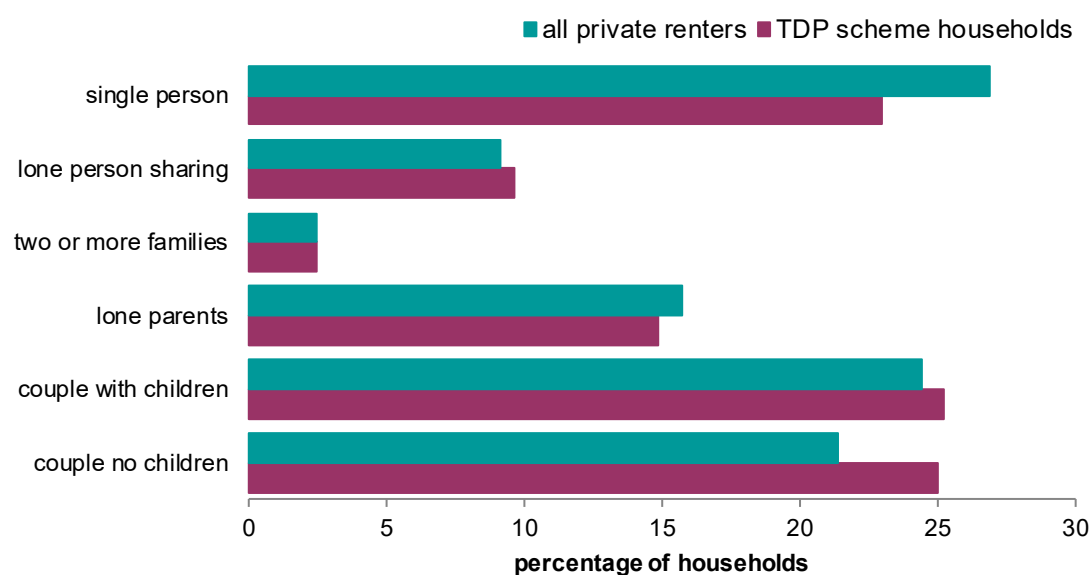
Household characteristics

9.5 The EHS was analysed to compare the following characteristics between households stating they provided a deposit which they believe was registered in a TDP scheme and all private rented sector households⁴⁵:

- Household type
- Economic activity of household reference person
- Income distribution
- Length of residence

9.6 In terms of the types of households, the TDP scheme household population were more likely to be couples without children (25% compared to 21% of all private renters), and less likely to be single person households (23% compared to 27% of all private renters). Other apparent differences between the two groups were not statistically significant, Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Comparison of TDP scheme and all private renter households, by household type, 2014-15



Base: all private renters

Source: English Housing Survey 2014-15, full household sample

9.7 More notable differences were observed in relation to economic activity and income. Household Reference Persons (HRPs)⁴⁶ in households with a TDP scheme registered deposit were more likely to be employed and particularly

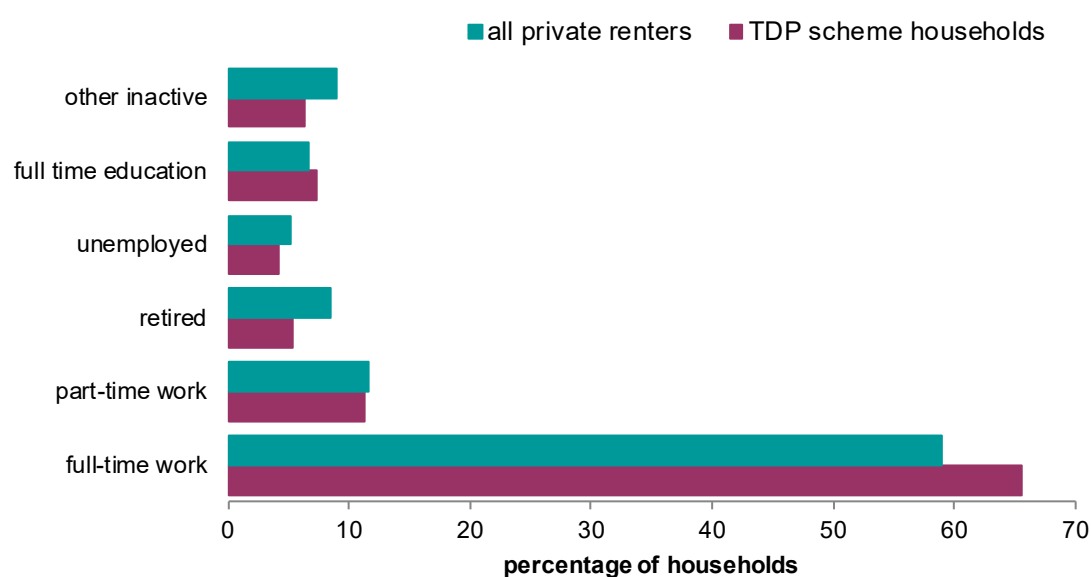
⁴⁵ More characteristics were explored, however only those that were found to be statistically significant (with a 95% confidence interval) are reported here. Other characteristics analysed were age of property, age of household reference person, property type and region of household.

⁴⁶ In the private rented sector, the HRP is the person in whose name the accommodation is rented. In joint tenancies, the person with the highest income is the HRP,

employed full-time (66% in full-time employment compared with 59% of all private renters).

9.8 HRP in households with a TDP scheme registered deposit were less likely to be retired than all private renters (5% compared to 9%) and be classed as 'other inactive'⁴⁷ (6% compared with 9%), Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: Comparison of TDP scheme and all private renter households, by economic activity, 2014-15



Base: all private renters

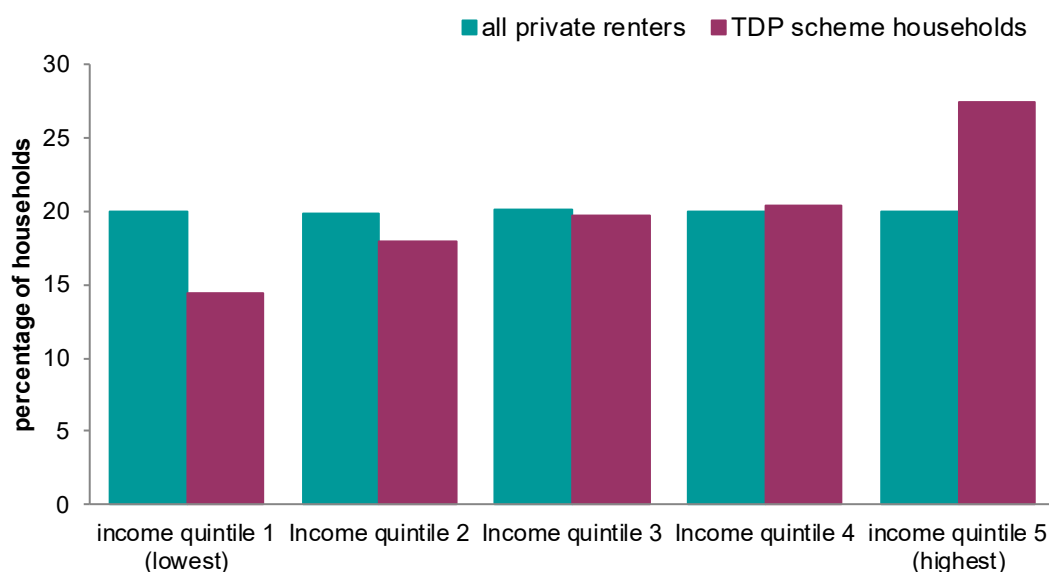
Note: This is the economic activity of the Household Reference Person (HRP)

Source: English Housing Survey 2014-15, full household sample

9.9 The income profile of TDP scheme households is skewed towards higher income households (and in particular the highest income households) compared to the income profile of all private renters which is evenly spread, Figure 9.3. The average (median) incomes for all adults in TDP scheme households were 13% higher (£29,900) than for all private renters (£26,390).

⁴⁷ Other inactive includes people who were permanently sick or disabled, those looking after the family or home and any other activity.

Figure 9.3: Comparison of TDP scheme and all private renter households, by income distribution, 2014-15



Base: all private renters

Note: This is the income of the Household Reference Person (HRP) and partner

Source: English Housing Survey 2014-15

9.10 TDP scheme households also have been living in their properties for shorter periods than all private renters, with over half (53%) of TDP households living in their current home for one year or less compared to 45% of all private renters. TDP scheme households are also less likely to be long term tenants with 2% of TDP households residing in their current home for 10 or more years compared to 10% for all private renters.

Implications for EPLS findings

9.11 Although across most of the household characteristics the profiles of households with a TDP scheme registered deposit and all private renters were very similar, the findings above have shown some clear differences. In particular, TDP scheme households were more likely to be employed (and employed full-time in particular) and more likely to be on higher incomes. Further, the EHS 2017-18 data indicates that the TDP schemes cover an estimated 56% to 71% of households in the private rented sector⁴⁸. These differences need to be recognised when interpreting the survey findings.

⁴⁸ English Housing Survey, Headline Report 2017-18

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2017-to-2018-headline-report>.

ANNEX A: Examples of email and letter invitations

Invitation to take part in the English Private Landlord Survey

Your unique reference number is: P12356-00/00200000/P

To take part now, please click [HERE](#).

On behalf of the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#), we would like to invite you to take part in the English Private Landlord Survey. You have been chosen at random from all landlords registered with the XXX Scheme.

Your views are important and will help inform Government policy to improve the private rented sector for landlords, agents and tenants.

The survey is being managed by [NatCen Social Research](#). All information provided will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. No one will be able to identify you, your property or tenants from the survey data or findings. Your details will not be passed on to MHCLG or any other organisation.

Take part now

To take part, please click [HERE](#). The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. You can pause the survey at any time by clicking “stop” and come back into it later by re-clicking the link above.

You have until midnight Sunday 22nd April to take part.

Your unique six-digit code for the survey is: xxxxxx

Any questions?

You can find out more about the survey by clicking [HERE](#). If you have any further questions, please contact the research team at landlordsurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call the Freephone number (0800) 168 1356.

Many thanks for taking the time to take part. The research findings plan to be published in Autumn 2018 by MHCLG.

Kind regards,

LAND PROPERTY
LORD WAY
COUNTY LAND
LL1 0RD



Your reference number: PA12345 / 12345

Invitation to take part in the English Private Landlord Survey

Dear Landlord,

On behalf of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), we would like to invite you to take part in the English Private Landlord Survey. You have been selected at random from all landlords and letting agents registered with mydeposits. Your views are important and will help inform Government policy to improve the private rented sector for landlords, agents and tenants.

The survey is being managed by NatCen Social Research. All information provided will be treated in strictest confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. No one will be able to identify you, your property or tenants from the survey data or findings. Your details will not be passed on to MHCLG or any other organisation.

Take part now

To take part, please type the following into your internet browser: **www.landlordsurvey.uk**

When asked to enter your access code, please enter **ABC123** then click "start".

The survey should take around 10 minutes to complete. You can pause at any time by clicking "stop" and come back later by re-typing the link above.

Any questions?

You can find out more about the survey by going to:

www.natcen.ac.uk/taking-part/private-landlord-survey. If you have any further questions please contact the research team by emailing landlordsurvey@natcen.ac.uk or by calling the freephone (0808) 168 1356. We expect the research findings to be published in the autumn by the MHCLG.

Many thanks for taking the time to take part.

Kind regards,

Signature
CEO Company

NatCen
Social Research

Scheme authorised by:



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Registered office: Lumiere House, Suite 1-3, 1st Floor, Elstree Way, Borehamwood WD6 1JH. Registered in England 05861648.
VAT No.: 893 9729 49. mydeposits is a trading name of Tenancy Deposit Solutions Limited.

Reminder to take part in the English Private Landlord Survey

Your unique reference number is: XXXX

To take part now, please click [HERE](#).

You recently received an email and / or letter from us inviting you to take part in the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#) English Private Landlord Survey. Our records show we have not yet received your response.

Your views are important and will help inform Government policy to improve the private rented sector for landlords, agents and tenants.

The survey is being managed by [NatCen Social Research](#). All information provided will be treated in the strictest of confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. No one will be able to identify you, your property or tenants from the survey data or findings. Your details will not be passed on to MHCLG or any other organisation.

Take part now

To take part, please click [HERE](#). The survey should take around 15 minutes to complete. You can pause the survey at any time by clicking “stop” and come back into it later by re-clicking the link above.

You have until midnight Sunday 22nd April to take part.

Your unique six-digit code for the survey is: XXXX

All those taking part will have the chance to go into a prize draw for one of ten annual memberships to either the [National Landlord Association](#) (NLA) or the [Residential Landlords Association](#) (RLA) valued at up to £100.

Any questions?

You can find out more about the survey by clicking [HERE](#). If you have any further questions, please contact the research team at landlordsurvey@natcen.ac.uk or call the Freephone number 0800 168 1356.

Many thanks for taking the time to take part. The research findings plan to be published in Autumn 2018 by MHCLG. If you have already completed the survey, please disregard this email and thank you for participating.

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