



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) bulletin

Call for user views

## Summary

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) produces the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) bulletin in January each year. The statistical bulletin currently covers a number of topics collected as part of the much broader LAHS data collection. A large proportion of these data are currently used and reported in other statistical bulletins published by the department and are not included in the LAHS statistical bulletin.

The full LAHS data file is also published at the same time as the bulletin each year, and it includes all of the underlying data provided to the department. A detailed mapping of where current sections of the LAHS data collection are used and published is provided in Annex A.

The objective of this paper is to ask users what use they make of the LAHS statistical bulletin and data files and how the department can improve upon how the data are published to better meet their needs.

## How to respond

You are invited to provide feedback on what you need from the LAHS statistical bulletin and data release so that we focus our resources and outputs appropriately. A list of questions that we are especially interested in your views on are outlined in section 4.

This initial request for user views closes on 1st March 2019. Once we have had time to consider responses, the department intends to publish a final set of proposals on the MHCLG website in the summer. Users will again be invited to contribute views on these final proposals.

If you have any feedback or queries, please email [housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk](mailto:housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk)

# 1 Background

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) collects a large amount of information via the LAHS data collection from local authorities. This data collection provides detailed information on housing stock owned by the authorities, including the size and condition of stock, numbers of lettings, waiting list, condition of stock and several other areas. Further details and full copies of the data are available from the departments website <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-housing-data>

Alongside the data collected, the department produces the Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) bulletin in January each year. The statistical bulletin currently provides information and insight on some sections of the data, but other sections of the data collected are analysed and included in other statistical bulletins. A detailed mapping of where current sections of the LAHS data collection are used and published is provided in Annex A.

The Office for Statistics Regulation's published a systemic review of housing and planning statistics in November 2017. <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/public-value-of-statistics-on-housing-and-planning-in-the-uk/>

One of the key recommendations of this review was that statistical releases should be more thematic rather than collection based. The department has already made several improvements to its housing and planning related statistical publications and is now asking user views on how changes and improvements could be made to the way it publishes the LAHS data.

## 2 Initial proposal

We would like to ask users for their views on the future of the LAHS statistical bulletin and full data release.

The department is considering ceasing the publication of the LAHS statistical bulletin in future, with most of the content currently contained within it to be moved to another statistical bulletin already produced by the department. For some sections of the LAHS data, such as affordable housing and social housing sales, this has already been the case for several years.

There may be some cases where the current content in the statistical bulletin does not fit with other statistical releases and is no longer included in a statistical bulletin. However the full detailed underlying LAHS data will continue to be published so all the data collected will continue to be made available to users.

By moving the bulletin content into other statistical releases it is envisaged that this will make the department's existing statistical bulletins to be more thematic and give users analysis in better context with other figures.

The department will also be looking at making the availability of the underlying LAHS data more timely, with the possibility of publishing the individual sections of the full LAHS data alongside the statistical bulletin that they are first used in.

For example, section B of LAHS is used to provide figures, live tables and insights in the Social Housing Sales statistical bulletin published in November. Currently the full detailed underlying LAHS data used in the publication in November is made available in January as part of the LAHS statistical bulletin publication.

The department is proposing that, in future, section B of the LAHS form would be released in November alongside the Social Housing Sales statistical bulletin with no further publication in January as the data would have already been released. The approach in this example would be the same for all other sections of the LAHS form.

### 3 Timing of proposed changed

Subject to users response to this initial call for views the department is intending to publish a final set of proposals in the summer for implementation in the autumn statistical releases onwards.

This final set of proposals will include a full mapping of the data currently collected in the LAHS data collection and where they will be published and made available in future. This more detailed set of proposals will again be open for user consultation to allow user to submit their views and suggest changes to the departments approach

### 4 Suggested questions on proposed changes

We would like to know what you think of the proposed changes outlined in section 1 of this document in particular we would welcome views on the following questions in particular:

- What use to you currently make of the LAHS bulletin, and would anything be lost if the bulletin was no longer available in future (given that all underlying data will still be published)?
- Are there any other live tables or cuts of the data that you would like to see which are not currently available?
- Do you find the current publication of the full LAHS data file in one document helpful, or are there any other formats that you would prefer or be more useful?
- Would having the individual sections of LAHS published alongside the statistical release they are used in be beneficial to you?

## 5 General comments about the statistics

We would also like to hear any general comments you have regarding the Local Authority Housing Statistics. In particular:

- Is there anything we currently do which you would not want changed?
- Is there anything that the figures do not cover which you would find useful?

Please remember, you are free to provide feedback on the department's statistics at any time. This feedback can be sent to [housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk](mailto:housing.statistics@communities.gov.uk)

## 6 Confidentiality and Freedom of Information

MHCLG does not intend to publish any individual responses but we will summarise the responses at a high level when the final proposals are outlined in the summer. However, information provided in response to this request for views, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004). This means that your comments may potentially be published. We therefore ask that you do not supply any unnecessary personal information.

## Appendix A

The deadline for local authorities to submit LAHS returns is the July after the reporting year (e.g. for 2017-18 the deadline was July 2018).

The table below gives a description of what each section of the LAHS data return contains and where it is currently used and published.

<b>Section</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Current usage</b>
A	Dwelling Stock	- Dwelling Stock Estimates in England publication (spring the year after the reporting year) - LAHS publication (January) - Live table 684 Demotions (November) - Stock figure used in the production of the Social Lettings publication (November)
B	Sales and Transfers	- Social Housing Sales Publication (November)
C	Allocations	- LAHS publication (January)
D	Lettings, Nominations and Mobility Schemes	- Social Lettings publication (November) - LAHS publication (January)
E	Vacant dwellings	- Dwelling Stock Estimates in England publication (spring the year after the reporting year)
F	Condition of Stock	- Non-decency figures reported in the LAHS publication (January)
G	Evictions	- LAHS publication (January)
H	Rents and Rent Arrears	- Rent figures are reported in the LAHS publication (January)
I	Affordable Housing Supply	- Affordable Housing Supply publication (November)
J	Affordable Housing Supply (Starts)	- Affordable Housing Supply publication (November)

The full data provided for all sections are published in January after the reporting year.

The proposed change would see the underlying data published in full, alongside the statistical bulletin when it appears, making the data available in a more timely manner.

This would remove the requirement for a separate data release and potentially the need for a LAHS specific statistical bulletin.