



Regulator of  
Social Housing



# Technical notes and definitions

## Private registered providers social housing stock and rents in England statistics

2019-2020

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## Introduction

These technical notes and definitions support the latest statistics release on private registered providers (PRPs) social housing stock and rents in England. The release comprises of briefing notes, additional tables, look-up tools, supplementary documents and raw data, all available through the statistical release pages.

## Data sources

PRP social housing stock and rents statistics are derived from the Statistical Data Return (SDR). This is the only survey of English PRPs that collects comprehensive data on the ownership and location of social housing stock. We collect these data to support regulation of our economic standards. Information on stock ownership, location, development and transfers is used to help ensure a risk-based and proportionate approach to regulation and to inform work on risk analysis and sector research.

We collect the SDR annually and the data are drawn from PRPs' housing management records. Further information on the collection, processing and analysis of the data can be found in the **data quality and methodology note**.

## Coverage

The statistics provide information on social housing that is owned and managed by PRPs. Data on stock size, types, location and rents is as at 31 March, and data on sales and acquisitions covers those made between 1 April and 31 March. Unless otherwise stated, all figures in this document refer to stock located in England. Not all data in the SDR is collected on a geographic basis, where it is, we present this information at a regional and local authority (LA) level in the briefing notes and/ or the additional data tables or tools. More detailed unit or sub-LA geographical data are not collected. The definitions used within the release are consistent with the way data was collected each year.

## National Statistics status

The private registered provider social housing stock and rents in England statistics are designated a national statistic. For more information see the **data quality and methodology note**.

## Publication schedule

These statistics are usually fully published in the Autumn each year, with the data pre-announced in the release calendar. However, in 2020/21, due to RSH's response to the

Coronavirus pandemic, release of these statistics was delayed until February 2021. All statistics are published on our statistics pages

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing/about/statistics>.

## Purposes and uses of the data

We use the SDR data extensively as a source of administrative data and they are required by us to deliver our operational approach to regulating the economic standards (see **data quality and methodology note** for more information).

### Why is the data published?

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) encourages public bodies to use administrative data for statistical purposes, as such, we publish these data annually. The published dataset promotes transparency and users have found the geographical breakdowns of stock types and social rents particularly valuable, as these can potentially be compared to data on other housing types published in other statistics.

### Who uses the data?

The primary users of these statistics and the underlying data are our own staff, who use the data within data-driven models (along with other regulatory data submitted by PRPs) which assess the size, complexity and relative risks posed by each PRP. Data are also used in sector-level profiling, value for money analysis and other data analyses to enable us to identify and assess major risks and issues affecting PRPs. Similarly, data are also used to inform responses to parliamentary questions or queries from government departments on the PRP sector.

Data are also used by central and local government for a variety of purposes, including policy development and the production of statistics. They are also used by non-governmental organisations (such as individual PRPs) to inform business planning and bench marking, and by journalists and academics for research and understanding of the social housing sector.

### How is the data released and what can it be used for?

The statistical release and the accompanying dataset are useful primary sources of information for users interested in the social housing sector in England. The dataset underlying this release is the most comprehensive source of information on the stock-related activities of PRPs in England, collecting stock data from approximately 95% of all PRPs each year (see individual years' publications for details of annual response rates).

We publish the raw data set along with briefing notes providing commentary and context for the data presented. Additional supplementary tables and maps are available to provide additional information at an LA and PRP level, and Excel-based look-up tools (showing data at an LA level and at a PRP level) are provided for easy access to the data.

When combined with local authority registered provider social housing in England statistics, the fullest picture of stock and rent information across the social housing provision in England is formed (see our statistical release registered provider social housing stock and rents in England at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2019-to-2020>).

## Strengths and limitations of the data from which the statistics are drawn

The SDR is designed to be a complete census of PRPs, and therefore no sampling errors should be present in the final dataset. However, there is inevitably a degree of inaccuracy, driven primarily by non-responses and reporting errors by individual PRPs (see **data quality and methodology note** for more information on how we deal with this).

### Strengths of the SDR

The SDR data collection is the single largest source of information on social housing that is owned and managed by PRPs. Comprehensive data on stock types, size, location and rents is collected annually directly from the providers of that stock. The data are subject to both automated and manual cleaning by a team of experienced analysts. The level of non-submission is minimal and we take data quality very seriously with PRPs subject to potential governance downgrades for serious data quality issues. See **data quality and methodology note** for more information.

### Limitations to note

Although we are confident in the quality of the SDR data we are aware of some limitations due to data collection methodology.

**Stock classification** - As in previous years, the likely areas for data error are the classification of stock units. These errors are most likely in the classification of stock owned by PRPs with fewer than 1,000 units as a result of different interpretations of stock classifications under various legislation. This is also complicated by the wide variety of supported housing services and accommodation types offered by PRPs.

**New build activity** – we have identified limitations in the way in which data on new build activity is captured through the SDR. This is driven by the way in which the SDR form is designed. Within year group mergers may mean that newly built units are transferred to another PRP before being reported in the SDR (resulting in them being recorded as transferred and not as new build). Furthermore, it is possible that some new stock built under section 106 affordable housing requirements may be being recorded under ‘purchased’ stock, as PRPs have purchased these units from developers once developed (rather than the developer having built them ‘for or on behalf of’ that PRP).

**PRP size banding** - The SDR survey captures an increased level of data from PRPs owning 1,000 or more units of social housing. This has an impact on the presented figures as for some areas (such as acquisitions (including new builds) losses, detailed rent breakdowns and some

geographical breakdowns (such as for LCHO)) where data are only available for these large PRPs and not for those owning fewer than 1,000 units.

**PRP data recording** - All data derived from the SDR are supplied to us directly by PRPs. We work with PRPs to limit errors in the supplied data but we are unable to verify all figures. Data changes year on year may be impacted by PRP recording practices or internal reviews (for example stock condition surveys).

**SDR question changes** - While the SDR collection has remained broadly constant since 2012, there have been amendments to questions to improve the quality and coverage of the data collected. When this occurs, there is a potential for a break in the continuity of the data submitted, due to PRPs reviewing their data more closely, confirming definitions or checking accuracy. The prior year comparability section (page 12) gives details of the changes in each year and their potential impact.



## Factors impacting the statistics

The figures reported in these statistics can be impacted by internal factors and external influences. These can dictate practices and patterns in social housing provision and create differences in categorisation and recording within and between years.

### Effect of government policy

Changes in government policy relating to different aspects of the social housing sector impact the statistics on the shape and nature of the sector overall. Those likely to impact the 2020 statistics are outlined below.

#### Stock classification

The introduction of the Welfare Reform and Work Act (WRWA) (2016) and associated regulations necessitated a revision to the definitions used in the SDR between 2017 and 2018 for supported housing and housing for older people. As part of this, the definition of housing for older people was focused to those units which met the definitions for supported housing and that were intended for exclusive use by older people. As such, it is likely that some of these units will have been re-categorised and recorded in other categories within the SDR. While the impact of this was most likely to have been seen in 2017, there may be some continuation of this in subsequent years.

#### Rents

The WRWA (2016) introduced rules on rent setting from 1 April 2016. The Act determined that social rents must be reduced by 1% per annum for four years for most social housing units. For new tenancies, rents were to be reset with reference to the social rent rate as defined in the Act. However, the rules introduced by the WRWA (2016) were complex. Social Housing Rents (Exceptions and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2016 provided for certain types of provider and units, such as specialised supported housing or temporary social housing, to be given an absolute exception from the social rent reduction. This is likely to have impacted on PRPs classification of stock and rent levels charged over the 2017-2019 period.

From April 2020 registered providers are required to set rents in accordance with the Government's Policy Statement on Rents for Social Housing 2018. In the year following the end of the social rent reduction period (based on WRWA (2016) rules) the maximum weekly rent for an existing tenant is set as the "2020 limit" (based on the average weekly rent for the tenant's accommodation in the fourth relevant year specified in section 23(6) of the WRWA (2016), increased by CPI + 1%). For subsequent years, the weekly rent of any existing tenant is not to be increased by more than CPI+1%, or where the existing rent exceeds the rent flexibility level, by CPI. Like WRWA (2016) the rent policy statement also includes provision for certain types of units to be excepted from the rent setting rules.

Although the 2020 SDR related to the year prior to 1 April 2020, the introduction of the rent policy statement and our Rent Standard may have caused providers to review stock categorisation and rent figures supplied in the 2020 collection.

## **Disposals**

Legislative changes that took effect on 6 April 2017, applicable to both non-profit and profit-making PRPs, have meant that they no longer need to seek consent from us before disposing of stock; rather they have to notify us of their disposals in accordance with the direction about notifications of disposals. The data presented for 2018 represented the first year since the change in legislation (covering 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018). This change may have impacted on the number of units disposed of from the sector since 2017.

## **Right to Buy (RTB), Preserved RTB (PRTB) and Right to Acquire (RTA)**

Under the prevailing policy and legislation, the ability of tenants to purchase properties under RTB or PRTB is largely dependent on them having been tenants in LA social housing which was transferred to PRP ownership. RTA sales eligibility is not dictated by transfer activity and is linked to the landlord's receipt of grant funding. The increases in tenant discounts offered to those qualifying for RTB or PRTB, along with the associated advertising and publicity, is likely to be a driver behind the level of sales under these schemes before 2017. These increases were part of the government's reinvigoration of these schemes as set out in Laying the foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011). In 2015 the Government and the National Housing Federation agreed a voluntary extension of RTB for housing association tenants as part of its commitment to getting more people into homeownership by 2020 and ran initial pilots of the scheme between 2016 and 2018. A further, larger, regional pilot (across the Midlands) commenced in 2018 and was due to end in Spring 2020 (this being the likely driver behind the increase in voluntary right to buy sales seen in the 2020 data). However, in early 2020 MHCLG announced that the Midlands pilot would continue beyond spring 2020 and would finish at a later date.

## **Movements in the lettings of stock**

Policy changes may have a potential impact on the turnover of tenants (including vacancies and evictions). For example, the introduction of the Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy (RSRS) was introduced in 2013. This coincided with an increase in vacant and available stock, potentially related to tenants moving from larger homes to smaller units or leaving the social housing sector. Further changes in welfare payments (such as the roll out of Universal Credit) may have an impact in future years.

The impact of housing support measures introduced by the Government in response to the Coronavirus pandemic will not have impacted significantly on the figures presented in the 2020 publication, due to collection of SDR data being retrospective (that is, year to 31 March 2020). However, these measures may have an impact on evictions and vacancy levels in future publications. Users should note that we advised providers that vacant units that were difficult to

let during national or local lockdowns due to restrictions on property access or tenant movements, were to be recorded as vacant and available for letting.

## **Effects of public subsidy**

The role that public subsidy plays in the changes to stock numbers should be considered, especially when looking at the gains and losses within the sector. Changes in available public subsidy also reflect underlying changes in government policy. For information on public subsidy please see information published by Homes England <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/homes-england>.

## **Affordable Rent**

Affordable Rent can only be offered by PRPs as part of a contractual agreement with the Homes and Communities Agency (known as Homes England) or Greater London Authority (GLA). Levels of growth are principally driven by the timing of the funding and delivery programme. The marginal slowdown of growth in the number of Affordable Rent units seen from 2017 is likely to be due to the transition from the 2011-2015 Affordable Homes Programme to the 2015-2018 and 2016-2021 Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme (SOAHP) which initially focused almost exclusively on shared ownership and other home ownership products.

## **Conversion to Affordable Rent**

The volume of social rental stock converted to Affordable Rent has reduced every year, since peaking at 74% in 2012/13. This change is likely to reflect the funding structure of the Affordable Homes Programme (2011-15), where conversion of existing property was intended to generate the financial capacity for investment in new development. Similarly, the reduced growth in Affordable Rent units since 2018 is linked to the emphasis placed on home ownership in the SOAHP. These additional funding streams were made available on a continuous market engagement allowing PRPs to bid on a per-scheme basis. As the delivery of stock under the SOAHP programme progresses, we expect that social rented properties will comprise a greater proportion of total supply than in the recent past, consistent with changes in the focus of the funding programme.

Further details of the number of housing units started and completed under the various funding schemes can be found on the Homes England Housing Statistics website and the GLA Housing Statistics website.

## **Home ownership**

The mix of stock to be delivered under SOAHP has evolved during the lifecycle of the programme. The initial prospectus and bidding round for the programme was focused almost exclusively on shared ownership and other home ownership products. The Autumn Statement in November 2016 increased the funding available for affordable homes delivery (and also

made grant funding available for Affordable Rent schemes). These funding programmes are the most likely drivers behind increasing levels of LCHO seen since 2017.

## Effects of PRP recording

The data from which the statistics are produced are provided by PRPs. Much of this data will be drawn directly from PRP housing management systems. While we challenge data which appear anomalous (see **data quality and methodology** note for more information), we ultimately rely on PRPs to provide an accurate reflection of their operations. Outlined below are key areas in which PRP recording may impact on the statistics.

### Stock classifications

Changes to policy (such as WRWA (2016)) may impact on PRPs' recording of stock (for example requiring the reclassification of stock based on changing requirements). We rely on PRPs to accurately categorise their stock according to prevailing policy (see also limitations of SDR data on page 5).

### Stock condition

Non-decent levels captured in the SDR are self-reported by PRPs. The accuracy of this data will be heavily influenced by the scope and frequency of stock condition surveys carried out by PRPs and may contain some extrapolation to fill gaps in data. This is likely to partially explain the different levels of decent homes standard (DHS) non-compliance reported in the SDR and other data, such as the English Housing Survey, where full stock condition surveys are conducted on a sample basis.

## Effect of PRP operation

The way in which PRPs operate varies across the sector and between years. Key areas which may impact on the statistics presented are outlined below.

### Group structures

PRPs operate on an individual basis or as part of a group structure. Group structures vary; some comprising only PRPs and others comprising PRPs and non-registered entities. PRPs may enter into group structure arrangements for a variety of reasons. In some cases, group structures may be established to undertake commercial activities within one or more subsidiaries; in others it may be to merge operations (perhaps to share strengths, or complementary specialities or to become more efficient) while maintaining individual corporate identities within a group structure. This can result in stock movements between providers within a group (showing as transfer activity) and suppress reported new build activity (where units are developed under an unregistered entity and then transferred to a PRP or where the

merger takes place within a year between two PRPs and the units are shown at the annual return as a transfer only).

### **Contractual lease arrangements**

Over recent years there has been an increase in PRPs entering into contracted lease arrangements for property. Much of this has been used to provide housing for clients with specialised support requirements and in many cases, the housing support package is delivered by a third-party specialist care provider. The recent growth in this area has often been supported by established investment funds and real estate investment trusts (REITs). This has so far been concentrated in the cohort of smaller PRPs subject to a reduced regulatory regime, although the rapid growth of a small number has seen them move into full regulatory engagement.

These organisations differ from the majority of large PRPs and report a greater proportion of their stock not being subject to requirements of the WRWA (2016). This has a bearing on their reported rent and service charge levels. The impact was particularly seen in 2018 where these PRPs first returned detailed rent information through the SDR. Please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lease-based-providers-of-specialist-supported-housing> for more information on lease-based providers.

### **Prior year comparability**

While the factors impacting on the social sector may impact on the comparability between years, we have remained relatively constant in our expectations for data submission. The key definitional and structural changes between each collection are shown below.

**2012/13 - (referenced as 2013)** - This was the first year of SDR collection. Data prior to this point was collected in the Regulatory Statistic Return (RSR). Comparing statistics derived from RSR and SDR data should be done with some caution. Please see the previous statistical publications for more information.

**2013/14 - (referenced as 2014)** - We changed the definition of group parents, with group parents owning fewer than 1,000 social housing units being reclassified as small PRPs. This saw an estimated 1,792 units of social housing being removed from the large PRP data tables and added to the small PRPs. This was equivalent to 0.07% of the social housing owned by PRPs.

**2014/15 - (referenced as 2015)** - No definitional or structural changes.

**2015/16 - (referenced as 2016)** - No definitional or structural changes.

**2016/17 - (referenced as 2017)** - The definitional changes between the 2016 and 2017 versions of the SDR were largely prompted by and related to changes introduced by the WRWA (2016). This set out statutory definitions for several stock categories reflected in the

SDR. This included supported housing, care homes and intermediate rent properties and new definitions relating to rent rules such as the social rent rate. Where relevant, we revised SDR 2017 definitions to reflect WRWA (2016) definitions. This led to some changes in stock recorded by category between 2016 and 2017. In particular, a large number of units previously recorded as housing for older people were recorded as general needs in the 2017 SDR data.

We also reordered questions within the SDR to improve the thematic grouping within the return, for example questions on LCHO and non-social stock movements were included in LCHO and non-social sections rather than in the stock movement sheet. We introduced an optional stock balance sheet to capture a more detailed understanding of stock movements.

**2017/18 - (referenced as 2018)** - We changed the methodology for collecting rent information from large PRPs in the 2018 SDR collection with rent information for temporary social housing collected separately from other rent information for the first time. We then recombined this data in the dataset to provide continuity with the pre-existing rents time series. However, the consequence of the explicit capture of temporary social housing is likely to have significantly impacted on the data obtained. Please see the 2017/18 statistical publication for more information.

We also made the completion of the stock balance sheet mandatory, with questions from the discontinued stock movement section incorporated into the stock balance sheet section.

**2018/19 - (referenced as 2019)** - We made changes to the location and wording of questions. While this did not alter our expectations on the reported figures, the increased focus on these areas of change may have resulted in some reclassification or amendments being made to the figures reported by PRPs (particularly leasehold, non-social and LCHO). We restricted Affordable Rent information to gross rent (which is inclusive of property related service charges) for the reporting of all Affordable Rents units, aligning the data capture with the expectation that rental values (including property related service charges) are up to 80% of market rent. Please see the 2018/19 statistical publication for more information.

Following the publication of the 2019 statistics, during the course of our regulatory activity, we became aware that a number of providers had inadvertently omitted service charges from their Affordable Rent gross rent figures. This omission meant that the gross rents figures reported for Affordable Rent general needs and Affordable Rent supported housing units for 2019 were artificially lower than those reported in 2018 (where service charges and net rent had been combined to create this gross rent figure). Revised figures were released in October 2020.

**2019/20 - (referenced as 2020)** The changes we made to the SDR collection between 2019 and 2020 are shown below.

- Questions relating to age and unit height became mandatory for large providers' low cost rental units and for all providers' Affordable Rent units (these data are published in the 2020 release for the first time).
- The reporting of evictions data became mandatory, with all providers required to enter data relating to evictions made in the 12 months to 31 March. Since 2012 this data has been optional, and analysis provided a weighted element to account for potential non-response.
- The basis for recording low cost rental unit rent changed. Providers were asked to record details for units (separately for general needs and supported housing) which did not have an absolute exception separately in addition to being asked to record details for all general needs or supported housing units owned. This provided us with clarity in the rent information provided for units covered by the rent standard. These data were comparable to the figures presented in previous statistics. Providers were also asked to confirm the types of units subject to exceptions. The consequence of separating units with an absolute exception and increasing the data collected regarding exception status, may have been that providers focused on the classification of units, this in turn, impacting on the data provided.
- In 2020 we provided specific guidance for the SDR to ensure standardisation in average weekly rent reporting and to ensure rent data was reported in line with our requirements in each year. The guidance drew attention to the potential for organisations to make 53 rent payment charges in a given year. For example, between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020 there were 53 Mondays and 53 Tuesdays. Depending on the day of the week rent payment charges were made, some providers could charge 53 rent payments in the year to 31 March 2020. In the guidance we were clear that the presence of uncharged weeks must be taken into the calculation. Thus, where PRPs have given tenants a (or an additional) 'rent free' week, a reduction in their average weekly rent values of 1.9% compared to a year with 52 charges (or 52 less the number of rent free weeks in that year) will be seen. This guidance and the additional cleaning effort to check incoming rent data may impact on the year-on-year changes seen in average weekly rent values. For more information see the guidance documents for the SDR collection 2020.

## Revisions policy

We have adopted the revisions policy developed by MHCLG

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>.

This policy covers two types of revisions.

**Scheduled revisions** – where the receipt of subsequent information is expected.

These statistics are based on data collected in the SDR. This survey has no scheduled revisions period. We expect PRPs to submit complete, accurate data in a single survey round. As such, there are no scheduled revisions planned for this release. However, the data collected through SDR is used to inform engagement on registered providers' compliance with the rent standard. As part of their response to any issues raised by us, providers subject their data to increased validation and may identify errors in the data submitted. We are committed to ensuring the quality of the LADR data and will gather corrected data from LARPs as part of this work. We will, therefore, republish these statistics in the April of the year following the initial publication, if the aggregate changes made by providers require a major revision.

**Non-scheduled revisions** – where subsequent information is received unexpectedly, for example to rectify a data error or where methodological issues are identified.

If a substantial error occurs as a result of the production process or due to errors in submitted figures reported by PRPs after the survey has closed, the statistical release and accompanying tables will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical. Revisions will normally only be made to the previous year's data and not earlier years. Revised data are denoted 'R' in tables and each document (including the raw data release) contains a revisions history.

We consider data quality and transparency in publication of data a priority. As such, where errors are identified through regulatory engagement, we will ensure published data are revised. The **data quality and methodology note** provides information about our approach to data quality and publication of revisions when they are required.

**Note:** As in 2019, prior year adjustments reported by PRPs in their 2020 stock balance sheet, were not used to update previously published data. A net change across all stock types resulted in just 1,792 units added to PRP owned stock. This change was not deemed significant across the sector.



## Related statistics

Social housing statistics in the UK are available for England and the devolved administrations. While the statistics derived from SDR data are the most comprehensive for PRP stock in England, those listed below provide additional information on development activity or provide information on social housing owned outside the PRP sector (including that owned by LAs in England).

### **Local authority registered provider social housing stock and rents**

Published by us, these national statistics provide information on housing stock and average rents for stock owned by local authority registered providers in England.

They are compatible with the data within this statistical release.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2019-to-2020>

### **Registered provider social housing stock and rents**

A briefing note and tables, drawing together the PRP and LARP statistics we publish is also available.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/registered-provider-social-housing-stock-and-rents-in-england-2019-to-2020>

### **MHCLG Housing statistics**

MHCLG produce a range of statistics from data collected from providers of social housing. Summary information about their collections, including frequency and topic area is provided at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-mhclg-housing-statistics>

Of most relevance to this publication are the local authority housing statistics (LAHS).

### **Local authority housing statistics (LAHS)**

These statistics are published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) annually. They provide information on housing stock, lettings, average rents, waiting lists, decent homes delivery and evictions by LA landlords in England.

The LAHS statistics are broadly compatible with the statistics drawn from the SDR, although there are some definitional differences, particularly in the way in which bedspaces and LCHO units are treated.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/local-authority-housing-data>

## **CORE**

MHCLG collects data through CORE (the continuous recording of lettings and sales in social housing in England). This system records information on all new social housing lettings and sales (for both PRP and LA properties), along with the characteristics of new social housing tenants and the homes they rent and buy. All providers delivering Affordable Rent units are obliged to update CORE.

Information on lettings from CORE is available in the MHCLG release on Social Housing Lettings:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

Information on sales from CORE is available in the MHCLG release on Social Housing Sales:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/social-housing-sales-including-right-to-buy-and-transfers>

While the SDR covers both new and existing tenancies, CORE statistics relate only to new tenancies.

## **Housing Statistics**

The Housing Statistics Release (produced each year in June and November) by Homes England details the supply of new stock, through housing starts on site and completions made for each programme managed by Homes England, by LA and tenure.

The Housing Statistics Release relates only to new stock, while the SDR covers both existing and new stock.

London is excluded from the Affordable Housing Starts and Completions in the Housing Statistics release. When reviewing new build data against figures contained in these statistics, reference to the limitations in new build recording should be made (see page 5).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-statistics>

## **Affordable Housing Statistics (England)**

The Greater London Authority (GLA) publishes data relating to other London housing delivery, with monthly and annual Affordable Housing Statistics. When reviewing new build data against figures contained in these statistics, reference to the limitations in new build recording should be made (see page 5).

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/affordable-housing-statistics>

## **Affordable Housing Starts and Completions (England)**

MHCLG combines data from Homes England and GLA to publish live tables on Affordable Housing supply, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

## **English Housing Survey (England)**

This survey is comprised of two parts. The first covers household profiles (including tenure trends, demographic and economic characteristics, rents and housing benefit). The second covers housing stock (age, size and type, energy efficiency, decent homes and homes affected by damp).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/english-housing-survey>

The data cover all dwellings in England, so include stock from both the private (free market) and social housing sectors, though stock figures covering the social sector do separate LA and PRP dwellings. Stock condition data within the English Housing Survey is collected through sample surveys and not through PRP recorded data (as in the SDR). Please see information provided on page 6 for more details.

## **Private Rental Market Statistics (England)**

The Valuation Office Agency releases statistics on the average rents paid for private properties in England (private rental market) twice yearly (May and November).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/private-rental-market-statistics>

While average rents are provided by unit sizes comparable to the SDR and by LA location, all figures are on a monthly, rather than a weekly basis as in the SDR and other releases mentioned in this section. The underlying data set is not drawn from a statistical sample, so the statistics should be treated as indicative only.

## **Related statistics - devolved administrations**

Information on social housing in the rest of the UK is available from the respective devolved administrations. It should be noted that, due to differences in the collection period, methodology and terminology, direct comparisons should be made with care. Details of the data collected and methodologies used can be obtained from the sources below.

### **Northern Ireland**

Northern Ireland Housing Statistics are produced annually by the Department for Communities. These statistics contain information on supply, energy, social renting demand, private renting demand, owner occupier demand and household characteristics.

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/housing>

While the report covers all homes in Northern Ireland, the social renting demand section focuses more on applications/ allocations/ homelessness, though it does also provide comparable overall average weekly rents for housing associations.

## **Scotland**

The Scottish Government produce a range of statistics in the annual Housing Statistics for Scotland. These include information on new housing supply, public sector stock and house sales, LA housing management, supported housing, houses in multiple occupation and right to buy entitlement.

<https://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS>

The social housing tables contain a selection of statistics that offer some coherence with the SDR, such as stock counts, average weekly rents, sales and vacancies. Most of these measures are available by individual LA location, with some available by landlord type (registered social provider versus LAs).

## **Wales**

The Welsh Government produces the Social Housing Stock and Rents Statistical Release on an annual basis, running across the financial year. The report includes information on the number of dwellings, bedsits and bedspaces owned or partly owned by LAs and registered social landlords, along with breakdowns of location of stock at LA level.

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Social-Housing-Stock-and-Rents>

This release provides unit counts and average weekly rents, split by provision type and by LA location for registered social landlords' stock, which are comparable with the equivalent SDR statistics.

## Definition of terms

The definitions presented below are provided for clarity of terms and categories within this release. They are consistent with the manner in which data was collected in the 2020 SDR collection (based on a view 'as at' or 'in the year to' 31 March 2020). See the 2019-20 SDR guidance published as part of this release for more information.

### Affordable Rent

Affordable Rent homes are those made available to households eligible for low cost rental housing at a rent level of no more than 80% (inclusive of service charges) of local market rents. Affordable Rent homes can be either newly built, acquired from other PRPs or converted from existing low cost rented homes, but only where they form part of an agreement with Homes England or the Greater London Authority. They can be either general needs or supported housing. See also **London Affordable Rent**.

### Decent homes standard

The guidance on the decent homes standard is set out in A Decent Home: Definition and Guidance for Implementation, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in June 2006, and any guidance issued by the department or its successors, in relation to that document <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>.

### Evictions

A tenancy brought to an end by the execution of a warrant of possession by court bailiffs. Eviction does not include abandonment, even where a property is abandoned in the period between a warrant of possession and the execution of that warrant. All evictions effected during the year are included, regardless of the year in which the possession order or warrant of possession itself was obtained, the type of tenancy to which it relates, or whether the original possession order was an outright, postponed or suspended possession order. Evictions from immediate licenses are also included.

Evictions that have not been effected during the year, regardless of the date of the possession order or warrant of possession, are excluded.

### Exceptions/ excepted units (rents)

Units with an absolute exception from the statutory rent setting requirements set out in the Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) and regulations made under it.

## **For-profit providers**

A PRP whose objects may not contain a reference to the provision of social housing; or whose constitution allows it to trade for a profit (this might be expressed as an ability to distribute dividends to shareholders, or pay out its surpluses to other organisations etc.); or whose objects allow it to carry out activities that are not linked to housing provision (or any combination of these). There are no standard regulatory requirements in relation to the constitutions of for-profit providers – although specific requirements may be necessary as assessed at the point of registration.

## **General needs housing**

General needs housing covers the bulk of housing stock for rent. It includes both self-contained units and non-self-contained hostel/ shared housing units and bedspaces. General needs housing is stock that is not designated for specific client groups.

## **Gross rent**

The total charged to tenants inclusive of all rent and property related service charges.

## **Group parent**

An entity defined as the parent body of another organisation where it: (a) owns more than half the nominal value of the share capital in that other organisation; or (b) has the power to appoint or remove all or some of the board members of the governing body of that other organisation.

## **Group structure**

For the purpose of the SDR and this release, PRPs are defined as being members of a group structure if they are subsidiaries and associates of one another within the meaning of those terms as set out in Section 271 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

## **Housing for older people**

Properties made available exclusively to older people and that fully meet the definition of supported housing specified in the Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) and regulations made under it.

## **Intermediate rent**

Units that fully meet the definition of intermediate rent accommodation specified in the Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) and regulations made under it.

## **Large PRPs**

For the purposes of the SDR release this includes all PRPs that own 1,000 or more units of social housing and complete the 'long SDR form'.

## **Leasehold (social and non-social)**

Leasehold units are those that are occupied by a resident holding a leasehold interest in the property. In the SDR, PRPs report all leasehold units they own excluding any low cost home ownership units that are not fully stair-cased (which are reported under the LCHO part).

Leasehold units owned by PRPs typically include Right to Buy or fully staircased shared ownership units where the PRP has sold a leasehold interest to a residential occupier but retains an interest (freehold or leasehold) of its own. This often applies to blocks of flats and other forms of construction where there are common areas and facilities. This includes scenarios where the PRP retains the responsibility for maintaining common areas and services, the financial costs of which can be transferred in line with the terms of a lease.

Leasehold units are either social leasehold or non-social leasehold based on the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 definition of social housing.

The definition of a leasehold property is determined by whether a leasehold interest is owned by a residential occupier (not whether the landlord owns a leasehold interest). Commercial non-residential leasehold properties, or properties where it has granted a lease other than to a residential occupier (e.g. where a PRP lets a property to another social housing provider) are not included.

## **London Affordable Rent**

London Affordable Rent (LAR), was introduced in 2016 by the Mayor of London. LAR units are Affordable Rent units in London let at or below the weekly rent benchmarks set by the GLA. They are included in Affordable Rent figures in the SDR collection. For more information see <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/homes-londoners-affordable-homes-programmes/homes-londoners-affordable-homes-programme-2016-2023>.

## **Low cost home ownership (LCHO)**

LCHO accommodation is defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 as being that occupied or made available for occupation in accordance with shared ownership arrangements, shared equity arrangements, or shared ownership trusts; and it is made available to people whose needs are not adequately served by the commercial housing market.

LCHO figures do not include 'fully staircased' properties, that is properties once occupied under relevant arrangements but where the occupier has for example acquired a 100% share of a shared ownership property or repaid an equity loan on a shared equity property in full. Fully staircased properties where the landlord has retained a freehold interest are included under 'leasehold' properties.

The conditions under which LCHO properties are regarded as sold to occupiers (e.g. through being fully staircased) are more formally set out in Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

## **Low cost rental**

The term low cost rental is used in these statistics to denote any stock which meets the definition of low cost rental accommodation in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. It must be available for rent, with a rent below market value, and in accordance with the rules designed to ensure that it is made available to people whose needs are not adequately served by the commercial housing market.

## **Managed stock**

Refers to stock managed by PRPs, whether the stock is owned by themselves, another PRP or an LA.

## **Net rent**

The rent charged to tenants excluding all service charges.

## **Non-profit provider**

A PRP that is either charitable or exclusively established for housing purposes and which does not trade for a profit (full regulatory expectations on constitutional arrangements apply).

## **Non-self-contained unit (bedspace)**

A non-self-contained unit will consist of an area in a hostel/ dormitory or other similar entity or a room or rooms (within a block of flats, sheltered scheme, house in multiple occupation or similar entity) which is/ are private to the tenant but which require sharing of some or all living, cooking, bathroom or toilet amenities. When counting non-self-contained units, PRPs record the number of areas for which an individual tenancy can be issued, not the number of occupants. All non-self-contained units are recorded in the SDR as bedspaces.

## **Non-social leasehold (see leasehold definition above)**

## **Non-social stock**

Stock to which the definition of social housing does not apply.

## **Owned stock**

A PRP owns property when it: (a) holds the freehold title or a leasehold interest (of any length) in that property; and (b) is the body with a direct legal relationship with the occupants of the property (this body is often described as the landlord). No non-residential properties should be reported in the SDR.

In earlier data collections (RSR), a minimum period of lease (21 years) was stated. Stock held on shorter leases will have been counted as stock managed but not owned in these earlier collections.



## **Private registered providers (PRPs)**

PRPs are providers of social housing in England that are registered with us and are not local authorities. This is the definition of PRPs in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

## **Right to Buy (RtB)**

The statutory rights of secure tenants to purchase the property they occupy from their landlord (public sector). The main legal provisions are contained in Part 5 of the Housing Act 1985, as amended. Where an LA transfers stock to a PRP, tenants who were eligible to purchase their home under the RtB scheme continue to retain this right, subject to certain conditions (Preserved RtB).

## **Right to Acquire**

This refers to the statutory rights of certain secure/ assured tenants to purchase the property they occupy from a PRP. The legal provisions are contained in Sections 16 and 17 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Right to Acquire Regulations 1997.

## **Self-contained unit**

A self-contained unit is one in which all the rooms (including kitchen, bathroom and toilet) in a household's accommodation are behind a door, which only that household can use and therefore allows that household exclusive use of them. Some self-contained units, especially flats, may have some common services such as a central boiler for heating and/ or hot water. Households which share a common entrance hall, but otherwise have all their accommodation behind their own front door are self-contained. Bedsits are considered self-contained units.

## **Service charges**

Service charges are payable by some tenants in addition to rent. Service charges usually reflect additional services which may not be provided to every tenant, or which may be connected with communal facilities rather than being particular to the occupation of a dwelling. Service charges are subject to separate legal requirements and are limited to covering the cost of providing the services.

## **Small PRPs**

These are PRPs that own fewer than 1,000 social housing units/ bedspaces and that complete the 'short SDR form'.

## **Social housing**

Social housing is defined in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 sections 68-77. The term covers low cost rental, low cost home ownership and accommodation owned by PRPs as previously defined in the Housing Act 1996.

**Social leasehold** (see leasehold definition above).

### **Social rent**

In these statistics social rent refers to all low cost rental units that are general needs or supported housing (excluding Affordable Rent and intermediate rent units). This includes units with absolute exceptions from standard rent rules.

### **Social stock**

Social stock is used in these statistics to denote the total number of low cost rental and low cost home ownership units. Social stock figures do not include social leasehold units or any other stock type. Total social stock figures represent the number of self-contained units plus bedspaces.

### **Supported housing**

Units can only be counted as supported housing if they meet the definition of supported housing specified in the Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) and regulations made under it. The fact that a tenant receives support services in their home does not make it supported housing.

### **Temporary social housing**

Units are recorded as temporary social housing if they meet the definition of temporary social housing specified in the Welfare Reform and Work Act (2016) and regulations made under it.

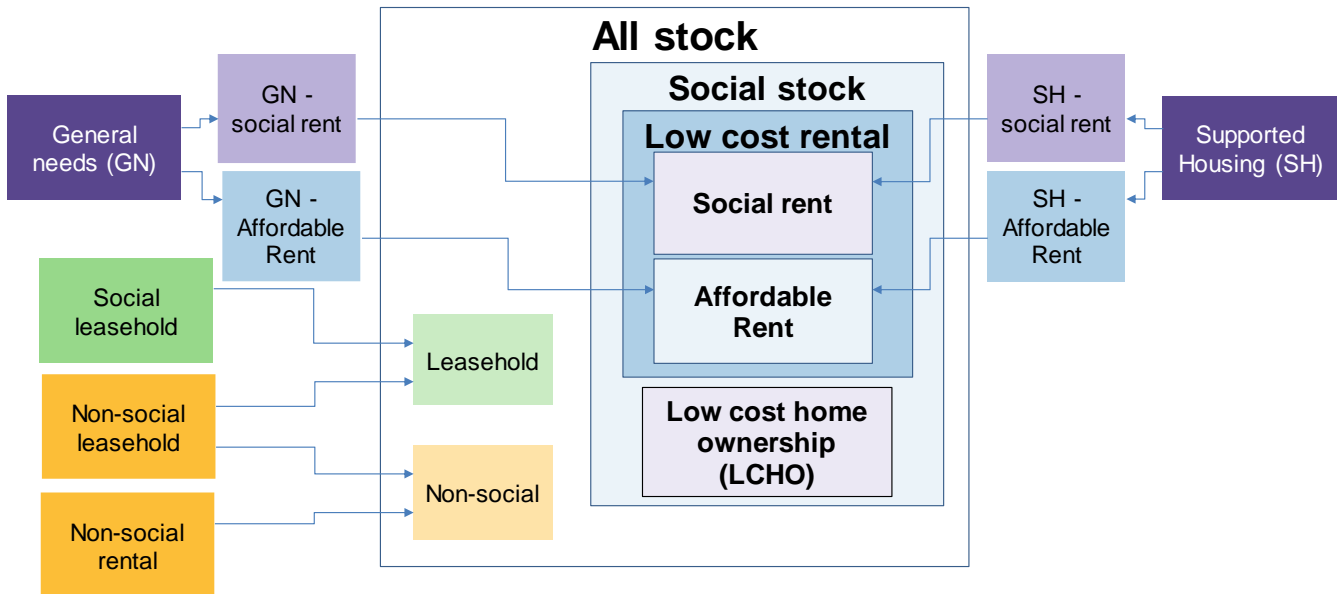
### **Transfers**

PRPs are directed to include all properties that another organisation (including PRPs or LAs) have transferred to them for social rent, where the ownership has been transferred from one organisation to another by lease or transfer of the freehold. This includes properties transferred within a group structure.

The SDR records the number of times a unit has been transferred and not the number of unique units/ bedspaces transferred as the same unit may be transferred more than once within a given period.

## Categorisation of units

The graphic below shows the types of unit included in each category used in the SDR. Social rent and Affordable Rent are both included in low cost rental figures. In the SDR social rent is used for all low cost rental units which are not defined as Affordable Rent, in 2020 this includes units with an absolute exception from the WRWA (2016).



Intermediate rent units are included in some general needs data (see individual fields in the release). They are excluded from all rent data.

Headline figures for owned and/ or managed care homes are captured in the SDR but no further information relating to these units is captured, and they are excluded from all stock figures.

## Why not have your say on our statistics in 2021/22?

We want to hear your views on how the format and range of documents in this statistical release meet your needs. Please email feedback, including suggestions for improvements to [enquiries@rsh.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@rsh.gov.uk) or click below to quickly rate how this document meets your needs.



**All needs met**



**Some needs  
met**



**No needs met**

### 2020 User feedback

During 2020 we received feedback from users on the 2019 statistical release, which had been revised following a consultation exercise. The feedback was positive with users reporting that the developed products fully met their needs. We encourage users to provide feedback on our statistical releases.



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**RSH regulates private registered providers of social housing to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver homes that meet a range of needs.**