



Regulator of
Social Housing



Data quality and methodology

Registered providers
social housing stock and rents
in England statistics

2022-2023

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Introduction

This report describes the quality assurance arrangements for the registered provider (RP) social housing stock in England statistics, providing more detail on the regulatory and operational context for data collections which feed these statistics and the safeguards that aim to maximise data quality.

Background

The statistics we publish are based on data collected directly from local authority registered provider (LARPs) through the local authority data return (LADR) and from private registered providers (PRPs) through the statistical data return (SDR). We use the data collected through these returns extensively as a source of administrative data. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority (UKSA) encourages public bodies to use administrative data for statistical purposes and, as such, we publish these data.

These data were first published in this combined format in 2020, following the first collection and publication of the LADR. For more information on each of the individual collections please see our [statistics pages](#).

National Statistics status

In February 2018 the UKSA published the Code of Practice for Statistics. This sets standards for organisations producing and publishing statistics, ensuring quality, trustworthiness and value.

These statistics are drawn from our PRP and LARP social housing stock and rents in England statistics which have both been designated as National Statistics by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). As such, the RP social housing stock and rents in England are considered National Statistics. For more details see the data quality and methodology notes for the PRP and LARP publications.

User feedback

We are keen to increase the understanding of the data, including the accuracy and reliability, and the value to users. Please email feedback, including suggestions for improvements or queries as to the source data or processing to enquiries@rsh.gov.uk.

Publication schedule

We intend to publish these statistics in Autumn each year, with the data pre-announced in the release calendar.

All data, supplementary tables, data tools and additional information (including a list of individuals (if any) with 24hour pre-release access) are published on our [statistics pages](#).

These statistics are also presented in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, live tables and our PRP and LARP social housing statistics.

Quality assurance of administrative data

The data used in the production of these statistics are classed as administrative data. In 2015 the UKSA published a regulatory standard for the quality assurance of administrative data. As part of our compliance to the Code of Practice, and in the context of other statistics published by the UK Government and its agencies, we have determined that the statistics drawn from the LADR and SDR are likely to be categorised as low-quality risk – medium public interest (with a requirement for basic/enhanced assurance).

The publication of these statistics can be considered as medium public interest, as there has been mainstream media interest, but they have only moderate economic and/or political sensitivity. Concerns over data quality are considered low given the data checks by providers and our data quality checks conducted on the submitted data and analytical processes. This categorisation is the same as for the previous LAHS and current SDR data based statistical releases, both of which have similar collection and analysis methodologies and coverage.

Notwithstanding this, we aim for the highest standards of data quality possible within the constraints of available resources and the existing regulatory and operational context. Through ongoing internal analysis, we seek to understand the strengths and limitations of the data, the overall quality of the data and to identify potential means by which it may be improved.

Regulatory context

The regulatory framework for social housing in England underpins the collection of SDR and LADR data. For more information about the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and the regulatory framework please see [our website](#).

Regulatory standards

We collect SDR data in order to facilitate our operational approach to regulating the economic standards set out in the [regulatory framework for social housing in England](#) and we collect LADR data to facilitate our operational approach to regulating the [Rent Standard](#).

For more information about the individual collections please see the individual LARP and PRP social housing stock and rents statistical releases.

The regulatory framework and data quality

In [Regulating the Standards](#), we set out the operational approach to regulation and emphasise the importance of providers supplying timely and accurate data.

Governance of data and statistics at RSH

The statistician responsible for the publication of these statistics is also responsible for the SDR and LADR data collection and the cleansing of incoming data; working with RPs to directly address anomalies within the data submissions and producing the final data set on which the statistics are produced.

All incoming data are stored and analysed within password-protected government secure networks and access to the sector level analysis work undertaken on the data is restricted until after publication (RP level data is accessed by our staff as part of operational work). Further information on the data quality assurance processes we employ is provided on page 6.

Data submitted by RPs is redacted within the public release to remove all contact information submitted within the Entity Level Information sections of the returns. This contact information is not publicly available. There is no other administrative data held nor local authority specific data collected by us which can be made available for use in statistics.

LADR and SDR collection

All providers registered with us are expected to complete either the LADR or the SDR. These returns provide us with the data required for the risk-based, data-driven approach to regulation.

History

The first collection of the SDR occurred in 2012 and it has been collected annually from PRPs since. The SDR collects data on stock size, types, location and rents at 31 March each year, and data on sales and acquisitions made during the 12 months up to the 31 March each year.

The LADR was collected for the first time in 2020. This followed a pilot collection in 2019, where we worked with local authorities to encourage engagement and to identify areas where our systems and guidance could be improved. From 1 April 2020 the LADR was included on the [single data list](#) which outlines data sets local government must submit to central government.

Details of the SDR and LADR surveys' coverage and, in the case of LADR, comparison to previous data collections, can be found in the data quality and methodology notes supplementing our individual PRP and LARP social housing stock and rents in England statistics.

Systems

Both the SDR and the LADR are collected via a web-based system called [NROSH+](#). We control the requirements for data input processes, storage, verification, sign-off and extraction of submitted data and produce the statistical releases. Data are either imported or entered directly into the NROSH+ system by RPs.

In 2023 a revised NROSH+ application was launched. The principles of the site remained the same, but new features such as on-screen live validation updates and better navigation were introduced. We do not believe the new system had any impact on providers and the response rates to the survey have remained similar to previous years.

Communication with data suppliers

We work closely with RPs, through email messages and phone discussions, to ensure there is a common understanding of the data collection requirements throughout the data collection process. Guidance materials are also promoted to users and published on NROSH+.

Quality assurance processes

We do not have oversight of the systems and data quality assurance processes employed by the local authorities before submitting data to the SDR or LADR. However, we do provide clear guidance and documentation on NROSH+ and subject incoming returns to a series of checks to identify potential quality issues before each data return is signed off.

The final data files that support the statistical releases are only created once all outstanding queries which could materially impact the quality of the published data are resolved. Any returns not meeting our quality standards are excluded from the final datasets.

A list of RPs who have not submitted data or whose data did not meet our quality standards will be published alongside the underlying data for the years this is required (please see the individual LARP and PRP social housing stock and rents in England statistical release pages).

Submission checks

SDR and LADR data submitted to us is subject to both automated validation checks and manual inspection.

Automated validations are programmed into the NROSH+ system and check the data at the point of submission for correct formatting, consistency and logical possibility (within expected limits). For example, ensuring numbers of units are consistent across different parts of the return. Automated validations are either 'hard' or 'soft'.

Hard validations – RPs cannot submit without the issue being resolved (for example, when data on stock numbers is missing but a rental value is given).

Soft validations – RPs can submit but are required to check their information, and if correct to submit a supporting document (for example, when a value appears to be outside of a normally expected range, such as higher than expected rents).

Manual inspections are systematically undertaken on all data submitted. Returns are checked for basic consistency and likely errors, for example where proportions of stock are recorded as particular excepted categories are outside the expected range or where rents are particularly high or low. This includes comparison to previously submitted data, with unexpected movements in stock levels or changes outside those anticipated in reported rent values being queried with RPs.

Where we identify a potential anomaly with the submitted data, a query is raised with the submitting RP. This overall checking process is fully documented in the data quality and methodology notes for the individual LARP and PRP social housing stock and rents in England statistical releases.

Submission checks and sign-off

It should be noted that the process of signing off data is distinct from our ongoing regulatory work. The sign-off of data confirms that we have investigated areas of potential data error, as highlighted in the validation and checking work, and accepted that the provider has submitted data they believe to be accurate. However, during the course of our regulatory activity, the data will be reviewed alongside other evidence, and we may subsequently challenge classification of stock, rent setting or any other aspect covered by the data with providers. As such, the sign-off and publishing of these data does not constitute our agreement that the provider has appropriately classified units or complied with our standards.

Post publication checks

SDR and LADR data (excluding contact details), are published at a disaggregated level as part of the statistical release. Releasing data into the public domain serves as an additional route through which erroneous data may be identified by the RPs or third parties.

Misreporting

There are no numerical measures of misreporting of data by RPs. However, one source of possible quality weakness is inconsistent interpretation of guidance with providers not applying this consistently across the sector. This issue is most likely to arise where there are technical or legal definitions that are complex or, to some degree, ambiguous. Please see **technical notes and definitions** for more information on other factors which impact on the data collected.

Corrections

Where errors in the submitted data are discovered within a survey year, either through regulatory activity or through provider contact, we allow providers to resubmit data through the NROSH+ portal. Returns can be amended until mid-March the year following their launch.

LADR corrections

In 2023 there were no corrections made to previously published LADR data.

SDR corrections

In 2023 there were no corrections made to previously published SDR data.

Statistical release methodology

The data presented in the registered provider social housing stock statistics are drawn from the LADR and SDR data.

Accounting for missing data

All questions in the LADR and SDR are mandatory, and all RPs are expected to submit the appropriate return. The data quality and methodology notes accompanying the individual LARP and PRP social housing stock and rents in England statistics provide more detail on accounting for missing data.

LADR 2023 responses

In 2023 the overall response rate was 100% as in the previous years of LADR collection. Due to the 100% response rate and all data queries being resolved in 2023 we have not needed to impute any figures to account for missing or suspected inaccurate data.

SDR 2023 responses

All PRPs are required to complete the SDR. However, due to non-submission or exclusion due to unresolved errors there is a small level of known SDR non-response. In 2023 the overall non-response rate was 3.5%. This is similar to that seen in previous years. Using other administrative data held by us, we have identified that all the PRPs excluded from the SDR data are those which own fewer than 1,000 social housing units/bedspaces. The response rate for these 'small' providers in 2023 was 96% (with the response rate for providers owning 1,000 or more units being 100%).

Data is weighted to account for this small proportion of census respondents for which data is not available. Please see the PRP social housing stock and rents in England data quality and methodology note for more information.

Quality assurance of the published statistics

The data, briefing note, look up tools and tables are quality assured by analysts within our statistics production team. This process ensures the figures are consistent across the release, and match the raw data submitted through the SDR and LADR, each check being signed off and recorded by the responsible statistician when it has been completed.

Revisions

Under the revisions policy (see **technical notes and definitions**), errors identified in the underlying SDR and LADR will be investigated, and revised data gathered. Some corrections may be only minor changes to the data, with little or no impact on the published statistics. These changes will be published at the next scheduled release with no specific announcement.

However, if we become aware of substantial errors in the submitted data, statistical process or other methodology and where a major revision to the published data is required a non-scheduled revision of the statistical release will be published. This will include full details of the revisions, clearly marked data amendments and summary tables showing the overall impact of the changes.

We seek to ensure transparency in processes to maximise user confidence in the quality of our statistical releases.

For more information on our data quality assurance processes in the individual surveys please see the individual LARP and PRP social housing stock and rents in England statistical release documentation.

Why not have your say on our statistics in 2023/24?

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 or click below to quickly rate how this document meets your needs.



All needs met



**Some needs
met**



No needs met



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The Regulator of Social Housing regulates registered providers of social housing to promote a viable, efficient and well-governed social housing sector able to deliver and maintain homes of appropriate quality that meet a range of needs.