



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

# Dwelling stock estimates: as at 31 March 2023

Estimates of the number of dwellings (including vacant) in Wales and each local authority by tenure, as at 31 March 2023.

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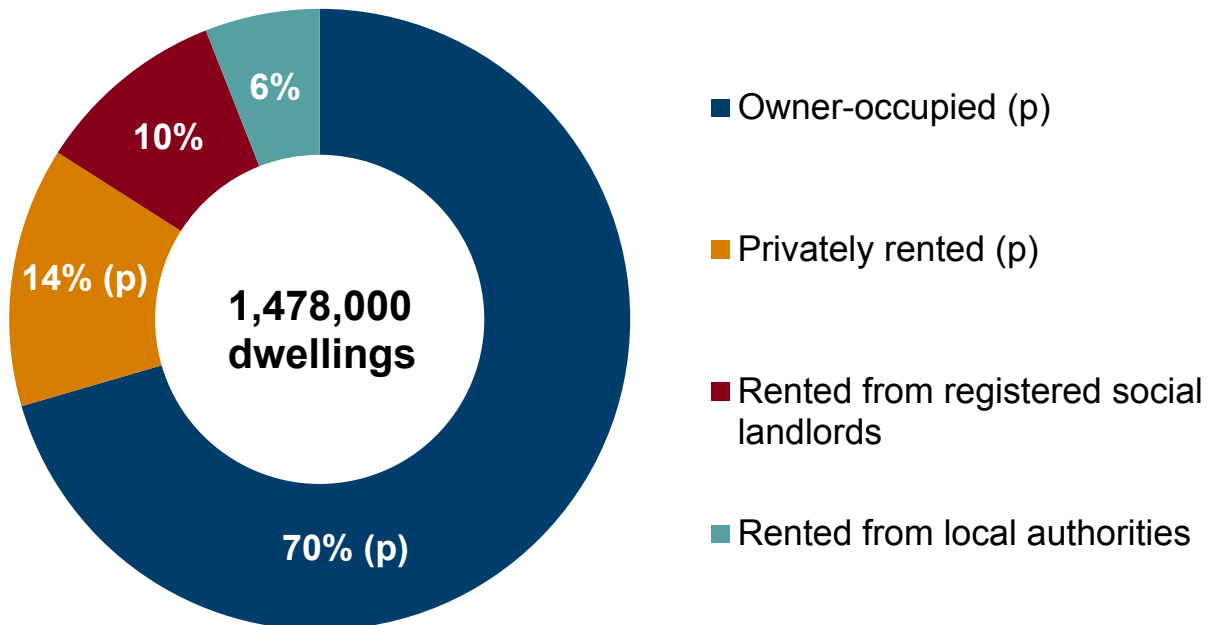
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## Main points

- There were an estimated 1,478,000 dwellings in Wales, an increase of 6% over the past decade.
- Owner-occupied stock has continued to increase in the past ten years and accounted for an estimated 70% of all dwelling stock in March 2023 (p).
- Privately rented stock has also increased in the past ten years and accounted for an estimated 14% of all dwelling stock at March 2023 (p).
- Registered social landlord stock has continued to increase over the same time period and accounted for an estimated 10% of all dwelling stock at March 2023.
- Local authority stock has remained fairly stable since 2016 and accounted for an estimated 6% of all dwelling stock at March 2023.
- The proportion of dwelling stock accounted for by each tenure has remained almost constant since 2012.

**Figure 1: Estimated dwellings by tenure, as at 31 March 2023 [Note 1]**



Description Figure 1: Doughnut chart showing the percentage split of dwellings by tenure at 31 March 2023. Over two thirds of dwellings were owner-occupied.

Source: Welsh Government

### **Dwelling stock estimates percentages by year and tenure (StatsWales)**

[Note 1] Owner-occupied includes intermediate and other tenures.

(p) of owner-occupied and privately rented stock are provisional and subject to revision following publication of the 2023 Annual Population Survey (APS) (please see the [quality report](#)).

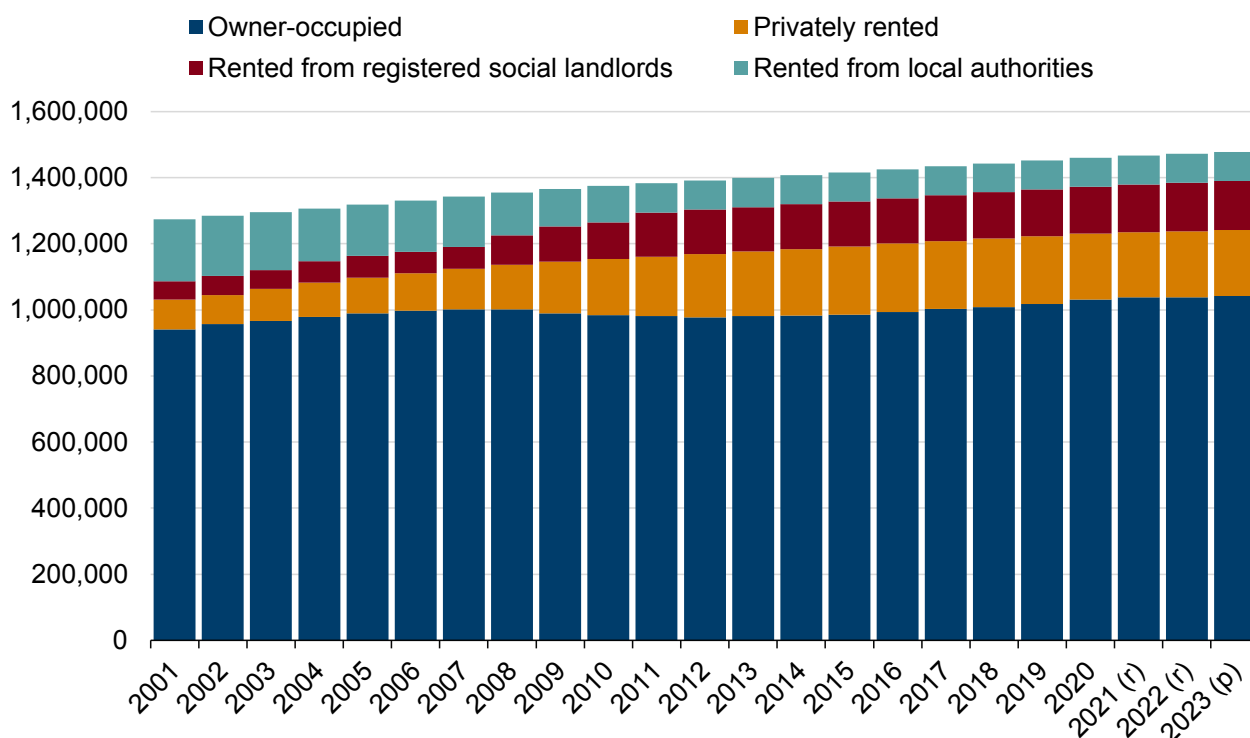
# Total dwelling stock estimates in Wales

At 31 March 2023 there were an estimated 1,478,000 residential dwellings in Wales. The number of dwellings differs from the number of households as there may be more than one household occupying a dwelling, some dwellings may be vacant, and others may be used as second residences.

The estimated dwelling stock in Wales has increased by 6% (78,500 dwellings) since 2013 and by 0.4% (5,600 dwellings) since 31 March 2022.

Between 2013 and 2023, there has been a 6% increase in both private and social sector stock.

**Figure 2: Dwelling stock estimates by tenure, as at 31 March each year [Note 1] [Note 2]**



Description of Figure 2: A line graph showing the number of dwellings for each tenure, as well as the Wales total, between 2001 and 2023. Dwellings in the private sector have increased in this period and since 2011, dwellings rented from registered social landlords have increased while those rented from local authorities have decreased.

Source: Welsh Government

### Dwelling stock estimates by year and tenure (StatsWales)

[Note 1] Owner-occupied includes intermediate and other tenures.

[Note 2] Historical comparisons should be treated with caution owing to the

methodological improvements introduced in 2019. These improvements have been applied to estimates from 2013 onwards.

(p) Estimates of owner-occupied and privately rented stock are provisional and subject to revision following publication of the 2023 Annual Population Survey (APS) (please see the [quality report](#)).

(r) Dwelling stock estimates have been revised following the publication of the 2022 APS.

## Private sector stock

Between 2013 and 2023, there has been an increase in owner-occupied stock annually, with the total stock increasing by 6% (60,200 dwellings) to give a total estimate of 1,041,800 in March 2023. Since March 2022, there has been an increase of 3,300 (less than 1%) in owner-occupied stock (based on provisional data).

Between 2003 and 2015, the number of privately rented stock increased annually. For the next four years, estimates of privately rented stock remained fairly stable however there has been a decrease since of 3% (5,500 dwellings) compared to 2019, to give a total of 200,100 in 2023 (based on provisional data). These estimates are calculated using the 2022 APS, which has some volatility. Also, due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, from March 2020, the mode of data collection for this survey changed, which resulted in a change in the characteristics of people who responded to the survey (please see the [quality report](#) for further details).

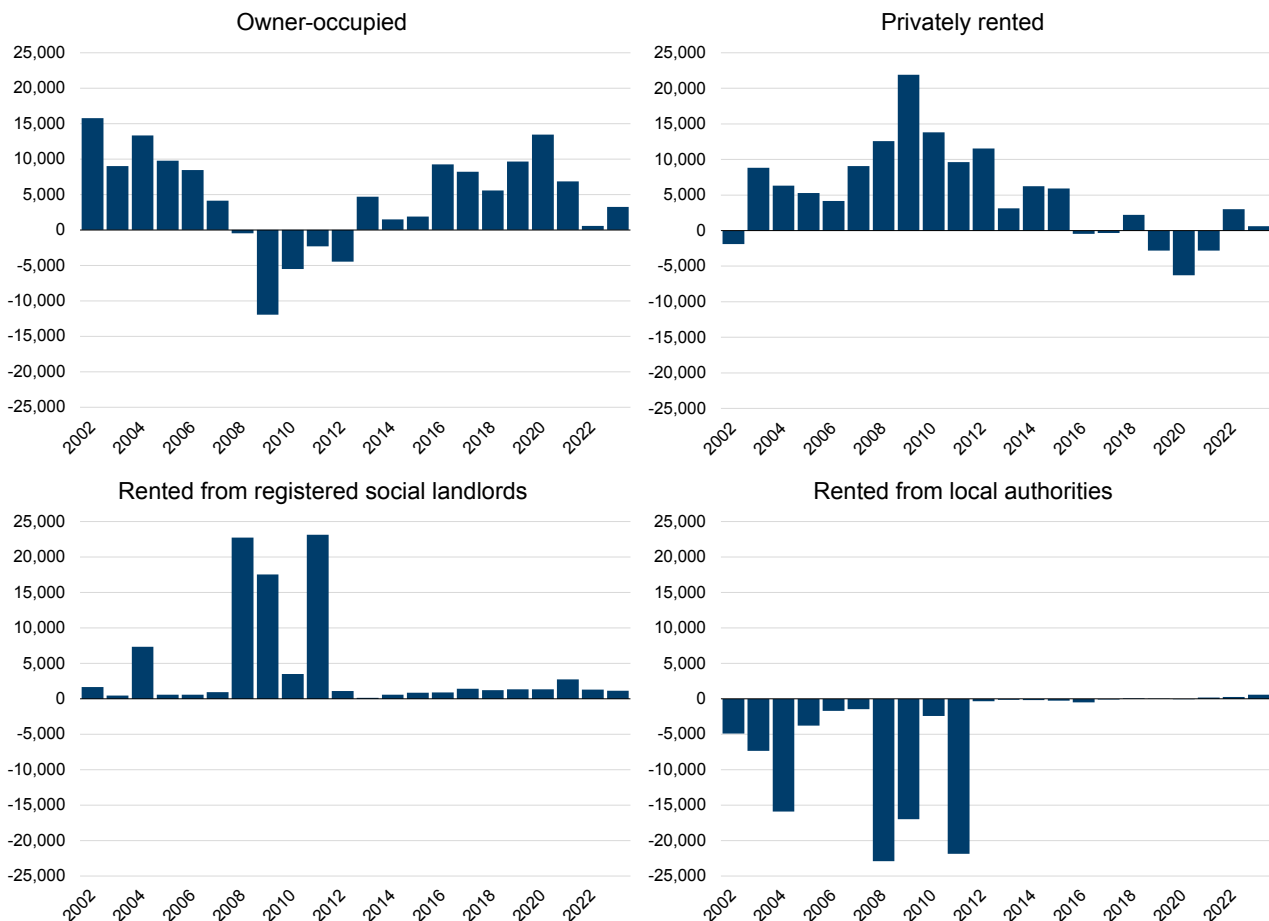
## Social sector stock

Between 2010 and 2011, there was a 21% increase in the number of dwellings rented from registered social landlords and a 20% decrease in the number of dwellings rented from local authorities. This was largely owing to the large-scale transfer of local authority stock to registered social landlords between 2008 and 2011 (please see the [quality report](#) for more details).

Between 2013 and 2023, registered social landlord stock has increased by 10% to 147,800 dwellings. Estimates of local authority stock decreased by 1,400 (2%) between 2011 and 2016. Between 2016 and 2023, local authority stock has remained fairly constant at between 87,000 and 88,000 dwellings. In 2023, the estimated number of dwellings rented from local authorities was 88,300.



**Figure 3: Annual change in total dwelling stock by tenure, as at 31 March 2002 to 31 March 2023 [Note 1] [Note 2]**



Description of Figure 3: Bar graphs showing that owner-occupied and privately rented dwellings have fluctuated between 2002 and 2023, where registered social landlord dwellings have increased each year and local authority dwellings have mainly decreased year-on-year.

Source: Welsh Government

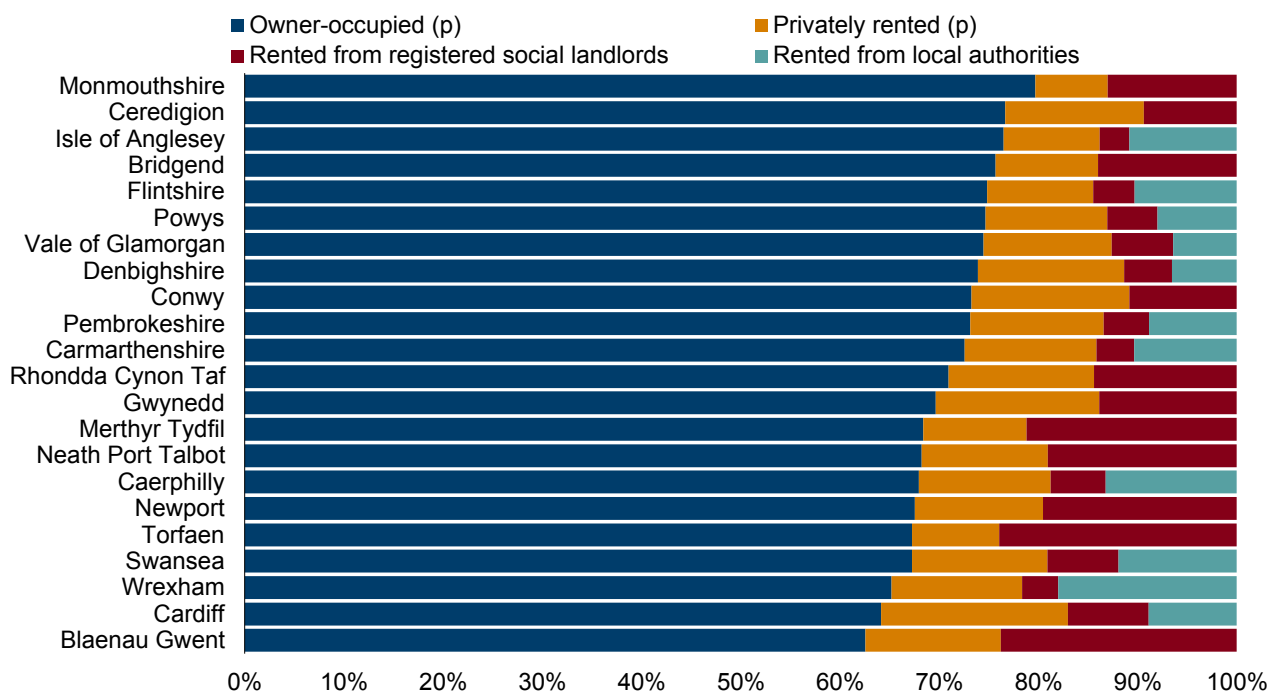
[Note 1] Owner-occupied includes intermediate and other tenures.

[Note 2] Historical comparisons should be treated with caution owing to the methodological improvements introduced in 2019. These improvements have been applied to estimates from 2013 onwards.

## Dwelling stock estimates by local authority

Estimated dwelling stock in Wales increased by 5,600 (0.4%) between March 2022 and March 2023. Annual increases ranged from under 100 in Gwynedd (less than 0.1%) and Merthyr Tydfil (0.2%) to 900 in Cardiff (0.6%).

**Figure 4: Dwelling stock estimates, percentages by tenure and local authority, as at 31 March 2023 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 4: A stacked bar chart showing the tenure percentage breakdown for each local authority in Wales. The chart highlights that a large

majority of dwellings in each local authority are owner-occupied.

Source: Welsh Government

## Dwelling stock estimates percentages by year and tenure (StatsWales)

[Note 1] Owner-occupied includes intermediate and other tenures.

(p) Estimates of owner-occupied and privately rented stock are provisional and subject to revision following publication of 2023 Annual Population Survey (APS) (please see the [quality report](#)).

At 31 March 2023, the local authority with the highest proportion of private sector stock (owner occupied and privately rented) was Ceredigion at 91%. Monmouthshire had the highest proportion of owner-occupied stock at 80%, whilst Cardiff had the highest proportion of privately rented stock at 19%.

Contrastingly, the local authorities with the highest proportion of social sector stock were Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent at 24%. All of the social sector stock in Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent was accounted for by registered social landlords. The highest proportion of local authority stock could be found in Wrexham at 18%.

## Vacant dwellings

There were an estimated 1.48 million dwellings in Wales at 31 March 2023, however, not all of these were occupied. The dwelling stock estimates shown in this release include vacant as well as occupied dwellings.

At the Census 2021, there were a total of 120,450 [unoccupied dwellings in Wales \(ONS\)](#) (6.1% of total dwellings). The tenure breakdown provided by the Census should not be compared to the dwelling stock estimates, as Census

tenure estimates do not include vacant dwellings, whereas social sector dwelling stock estimates include vacant dwellings.

Further information on Census data can be found in the [quality and methodology section](#) below.

## **Future plans: using administrative data to produce dwelling stock estimates**

We are currently exploring how we may be able to utilise administrative data to produce a new methodology for calculating dwelling stock estimates.

We will initially look to produce these estimates using AddressBase Premium (a product which combines data from local authorities, Royal Mail and the Valuation Office Agency to produce a record of every addressable location in Great Britain), potentially in addition to local authority council tax data.

There are a number of advantages to utilising administrative data (for example, using AddressBase Premium, we would have information on whether the dwelling was in use or unoccupied/vacant/derelict), however, there are also disadvantages.

In the coming months we will publish further information on this exploratory work, outlining the advantages and disadvantages of our proposed new approach and how the estimates compare to current dwelling stock estimates.

We welcome any feedback on our plans to evaluate how we could use administrative data to produce dwelling stock estimates to enhance our understanding of Welsh housing stock.

# Glossary

## Dwelling

For the 2021 Census, a dwelling is a unit of accommodation that may be empty or being lived in, for example houses or flats. They are usually made up of one household, but those with more than one household are shared and called a “shared dwelling”.

If a dwelling has no usual residents living in them, for example they are empty after being sold, these are called “unoccupied dwellings” but may be used by short-term residents or visitors on Census Day, 21 March 2021, for example holiday homes.

## Household

A household is defined as one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address who share cooking facilities and share a living room or sitting room or dining area. A household must contain at least one person whose place of usual residence is at the address. A group of short-term residents living together is not classified as a household, and neither is a group of people at an address where only visitors are staying.

## Intermediate and other tenures

This includes properties developed for sale (including shared ownership and flexible tenure) where ownership of the freehold (or head-leasehold) remains with the landlord; and wardens’ and caretakers’ accommodation and all dwellings owned by the landlord but managed by another landlord.

This excludes fully stair-cased shared ownership dwellings and properties where the social landlord has sold the leasehold through right to buy but retains the freehold.

## **Non-self-contained dwelling**

A non-self-contained dwelling is accommodation occupied by a household, which lacks exclusive use of bath/shower or WC or some cooking facilities. These usually take the form of:

- bedsit
- shared housing
- hostel or hostel-type accommodation in which each bedspace is normally considered a non- self-contained dwelling

## **Bedsits**

Bedsits are a combination bedroom and sitting room.

## **Self-contained dwelling**

A self-contained dwelling is accommodation occupied by a household with exclusive use of bath/shower, inside WC and some cooking facilities.

## **Tenure**

The main tenure categories used in this release are:

- owner-occupied. This includes a dwelling that is owned outright or bought

- with a mortgage; or is part-rent and part-mortgage
- rented privately. This includes those renting or living rent free where their landlord is a private rented landlord/employer/relative
- rented from registered social landlords
- rented from local authorities

## Quality and methodology information

Detailed information on data quality and methodology can be found in the [quality report](#).

## Registered social landlord stock (2019-20)

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, registered social landlord data for 2019-20 has been estimated. Registered social landlord stock data is relatively stable from year to year. Therefore, an average two-year annual increase (2016-17 to 2018-19) was calculated for registered social landlord stock. This average increase was then applied at a local authority and Wales level to 2018-19 data to estimate 2019-20.

## Census data

The source of the baseline dwelling counts for these estimates are the 2001 Census, the 2011 Census and the 2021 Census. In [Dwelling stock estimates: as at 31 March 2022](#) (published September 2023), we revised figures for 2012 to 2020 to calibrate to the Census 2021 dwelling count.

As outlined in that release, the ONS advised that in Census 2021 improvements to the address frame were made, and that using 2021 dwelling stock counts

from census is preferred, rather than rolling forward since 2011 counts.

Following ONS' publication - [Number of vacant and second homes, England and Wales \(ONS\)](#) (published October 2023) we have worked with analysts from ONS and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to understand more about vacant dwellings within Census 2021.

The article [Comparing empty home statistics in England and Wales \(ONS\)](#), published 9 August 2024 (corrected 10 September 2024) considered the comparability of empty home statistics in England and Wales.

Note: On 7 October 2024, we removed some paragraphs from this section. The original text suggested that over-coverage of the Census address frame (including counting dwellings under construction) had led to an overcount in unoccupied dwellings. ONS has issued a correction to an [ONS explainer on empty homes](#) that originally stated this, and confirmed that this is unlikely to have a meaningful effect.

## Official statistics status

All official statistics should show the standards of the [Code of Practice for Statistics \(Office for Statistics Regulation \(OSR\)\)](#).

These are accredited official statistics. They were independently reviewed by the OSR in July 2012. They comply with the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of accreditation. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with OSR promptly. Accreditation can be cancelled or suspended at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when



standards are restored.

Accredited official statistics are called National Statistics in the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007.

## Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in the Welsh Government's [Statement of Compliance](#).

These [accredited official statistics \(OSR\)](#) demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value in the following ways.

### Trustworthiness

Data on new house building, demolitions and social housing stock are collected directly from local authorities and registered social landlords through their unique systems. Figures are checked and queried where necessary by Welsh Government statisticians.

### Quality

The published figures provided are compiled by professional analysts using the latest available data and applying methods using their professional judgement

and analytical skillset. Statistics published by Welsh Government adhere to the Statistical Quality Management Strategy which supplements the Quality pillar of the **Code of Practice for Statistics (OSR)** and the European Statistical System principles of quality for statistical outputs.

Data for the Welsh Government dwelling stock estimate publication is collected by Welsh Government directly from local authorities and registered social landlords, as well as extracted from the Annual Population Survey (APS). Both local authorities and registered social landlords' complete data collection forms based on data stored on their respective IT systems and return the completed forms to Welsh Government via its secure web data transfer system.

Validation checks are performed by Welsh Government statisticians and queries referred to local authorities and registered social landlords where necessary. The statistical release is then drafted, signed off by senior statisticians and published in line with the statement on confidentiality and data access which is informed by the trustworthiness pillar contained in the **Code of Practice for Statistics (OSR)**.

## Value

The dwelling stock estimates are used as evidence in policy making by both central and local government. The information provides an estimate of the number of residential dwellings by each tenure type and by local authority, at the end of March each year. The data are used by the Welsh Government, local authorities and other housing organisations to help monitor trends in the overall level of Welsh housing stock, as well as any changes in its tenure distribution over time.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing [regulation@statistics.gov.uk](mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk) or via the OSR website.

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

# Contact details

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