

Living in Wales 2008 – Repair Costs

The Living in Wales survey is a household survey for Wales commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government. The survey comprised a household survey for each year from 2004 to 2008 with additional property surveys in 2004 and 2008. The Living in Wales property survey involved qualified surveyors visiting some 2,700 addresses that had participated in the Living in Wales household survey.

This report provides analysis of the 2008 Living in Wales household and property data on elements relating to the occupied first homes' repair costs. The data from 2004 has also been analysed using 2008 repair costs to take into account inflation in building costs.

Costs for the repairs have been calculated in a standard way: the surveyors provide a description of the work necessary on the homes in terms of measurements, for example a room needing 3 square metres of plastering to be renewed. Costs are then calculated using standard costs per square metre.

The aim of this method is to get a consistent basis for estimating the cost of repair that can be applied to all the dwellings covered by the survey. This method of costing repairs has been used in Welsh house condition surveys since 1993.

The information in this statistical release is used by the Welsh Assembly Government, housing professionals, local authorities and registered social landlords to monitor progress in policy areas such as the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, fuel poverty and sustainability.

Key points show:

- The average repair cost per dwelling had decreased since 2004 to £1,020 in 2008.
- The percentage of dwellings requiring no repairs increased from just 28 per cent in 2004 to 36 per cent in 2008.
- Older dwellings and converted flats had the highest average repair costs.
- The average repair cost varied by tenure. Private rented dwellings had the highest average repair cost at £1,960 per dwelling. Dwellings rented from housing associations had the lowest average repair cost at £720 per dwelling.

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Overall repair cost

In 2008, the total repair cost for occupied first homes in Wales was £1.3 billion. The overall average repair cost for each occupied first home in 2008 was £1,020. This compares to the 2004 average repair cost of £1,390 (2008 prices). The percentage of first homes requiring no repairs had increased from 28 per cent in 2004 to 36 per cent in 2008.

Chart 1: Dwellings by Repair Costs, 2008

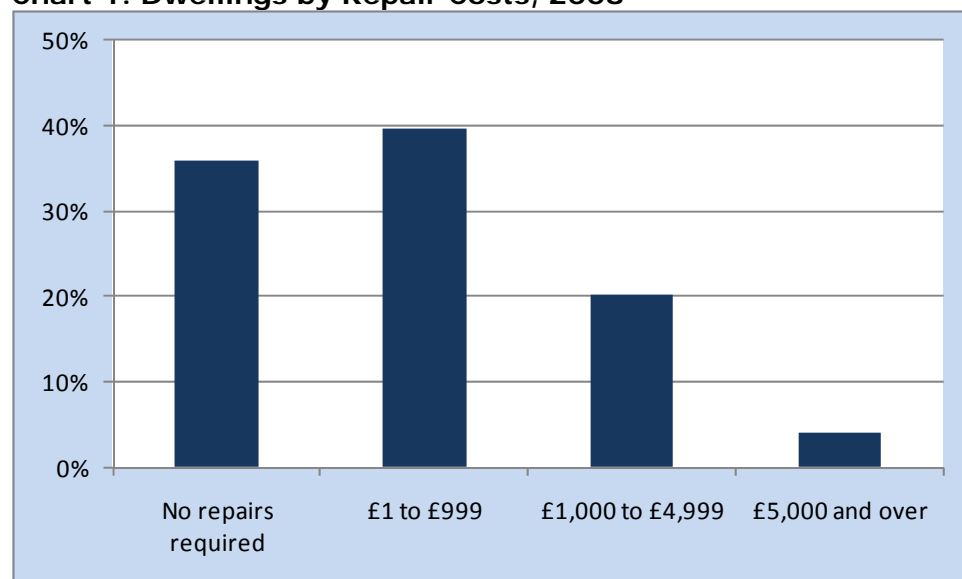


Table 1: Repair cost by dwelling type

	Per cent and average cost				Average repair costs (in £'s)
	Per cent of dwellings with:				
Dwelling type:	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	
Converted flats	19	49	23	9	1,560
Mid terrace	24	41	31	4	1,300
Purpose built flat	38	47	10	5	1,050
End terrace	31	42	24	3	980
Detached	53	29	13	5	970
Semi-detached	31	46	20	3	840
Total	36	40	20	4	1,020

Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales

Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008

Weighted total: 1,268,400

Converted flats had the greatest amount of repairs needed and the highest average repair cost of £1,560, as shown in Table 1. This has decreased from £2,770 since 2004 (at 2008 prices). The percentage of converted flats requiring repairs of £5,000 or more has decreased from 21 per cent in 2004 to 9 per cent in 2008. Purpose built flats have shown the only increase in average repair cost from £820 in 2004 (2008 prices) to £1,050 in 2008.

Table 2: Repair cost by date of dwelling construction

	Per cent and average cost				
	Per cent of dwellings with:				Average repair costs (in £'s)
	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	
Date of construction:					
Pre 1850	24	27	30	18	3,590
1850 - 1899	21	32	37	10	1,830
1890 - 1918	23	40	33	5	1,270
1919 - 1944	19	49	28	5	1,410
1945 - 1964	33	45	20	2	810
1965 - 1974	39	46	12	2	570
1975 - 1980	48	44	6	2	400
1981 - 1990	58	35	7	-	320
Post 1990	73	25	2	-	90
Total	36	40	20	4	1,020
Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales			Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008		
Weighted total: 1,268,400					

Table 2 gives the average repair cost by the date of the dwelling's construction. The age of the dwelling appeared to be directly linked to the average repairs required, as was the case in 2004. The oldest dwellings, those built pre-1850, had average repair costs of £3,590. This was a small increase on the 2004 figures of £3,550 (2008 prices). For the newest dwellings, those built post 1990, average repairs have decreased from £150 (2008 prices) in 2004 to £90 in 2008. The proportion of dwellings with no repairs required has risen between 2004 and 2008 in dwellings built before 1980.

Table 3: Repair cost by age of HRP

	Per cent and average cost				
	Per cent of dwellings with:				Average repair costs (in £'s)
	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	
Age of HRP:					
16 - 29	19	50	24	6	1,510
30 - 44	39	38	19	4	960
45 - 64	37	39	21	3	930
65 and over	38	39	19	5	1,050
Total	36	40	20	4	1,020
Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales			Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008		
Weighted total: 1,268,400					

The distribution of repair costs was similar for the different age bands where the household reference person was aged 30 and over. Dwellings occupied by a HRP aged under 30 were more likely to need repairs and the average repair cost for these dwellings was higher.

Table 4: Frequency and average cost by item of disrepair

Item of disrepair	Per cent and average cost	
	Per cent of dwellings requiring repair of this item	Average cost per dwelling of this item (£'s)
Internal:		
Ceilings	18	30
Internal Walls	18	60
Services	14	90
Kitchen facilities	13	40
Internal doors	9	40
Bath/ WC	9	20
Stairs	6	20
Floors	5	20
External:		
Wall finish	27	90
Other plot works	24	160
Boundary walls	22	250
Roof features	22	50
Windows	16	80
Chimneys	16	110
Roof covering	15	50
External doors	10	30
Damp proof course	4	50
Roof structure	3	10
Wall structure	2	30
Porches	2	10
Bays	2	10
Conservatories	1	40
Dormers	0	0

Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales

Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008

Weighted total: 1,268,400

Inside the dwelling, the percentage of dwellings requiring some repair to the ceilings had remained constant between 2004 and 2008 at around 20 per cent. The percentage of dwellings needing repair on other internal items had decreased during the same period. The most expensive average repair internally was to the services (i.e. heating and hot water) at £90 per dwelling. This had decreased since 2004 when it was £160 (2008 prices) per dwelling.

Of the external features the wall finish required repair in more than one quarter of dwellings costing an average of £90 per dwelling. The most expensive average repair was for boundary walls at £250 per dwelling, which had increased since 2004 when it was £220 (2008 prices) per dwelling. The percentage of dwellings requiring this repair had increased from 16 per cent in 2004 to 22 per cent in 2008.

Table 5: Repair cost by working/workless households

	Per cent and average cost				
	Per cent of dwellings with:				
	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	Average repair costs (in £'s)
Household type:					
Workless	30	42	22	6	1,320
Working	37	39	21	3	970
Non-working age	39	40	18	4	940
Total	36	40	20	4	1,020
Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales			Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008		
Weighted total: 1,256,200					

Of those households where the working status was known, non-working age households and households with working members had a higher percentage of dwellings needing no repairs. The average repair cost was highest for dwellings occupied by workless households.

Table 6: Repair cost by tenure

	Per cent and average cost				
	Per cent of dwellings with:				
	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	Average repair costs (in £'s)
Tenure:					
Private rented	22	38	30	10	1,960
Local authority	22	54	21	3	1,000
Owner-occupied	40	37	19	4	930
Housing association	38	45	15	2	720
Total	36	40	19	4	1,020
Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales			Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008		
Weighted total: 1,268,400					

The average repair cost of a dwelling varied by its tenure. Those dwellings that were privately rented had the highest average repair cost at nearly £2,000. This figure was £3,040 in 2004 (2008 prices). This average repair cost for households renting privately is nearly double that of households renting from the local authority. Nearly two-in-five owner occupied dwellings had no repair needed, the highest percentage of all tenures.

Table 7: Repair cost by area type

	Per cent and average cost				
	Per cent of dwellings with:				
	No repairs required	Repairs from £1 to £999	Repairs from £1,000 to £4,999	Repairs from £5,000 and over	Average repair costs (in £'s)
Area type:					
Urban	35	42	20	3	910
Rural	41	30	23	6	1,390
Total	36	40	20	4	1,020

Coverage: Occupied first homes in Wales

Source: Living in Wales Survey 2008

Weighted total: 1,268,400

The average dwelling repair cost varied by the type of area that it was located in. Dwellings in rural areas were more likely not to need any repairs, but the repairs that were needed had a higher average repair cost.

Quality Information about the Living in Wales survey

Methodology

- The 2008 Living in Wales Property Survey continues a series of Welsh House Condition Surveys, last conducted in 1998 and 2004. The survey provides information to the Welsh Assembly Government for the development and monitoring of housing policies directed at the repair, improvement and energy efficiency of the housing stock.
- The survey was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government, managed by the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales and conducted by Ipsos MORI.
- The sample for the Property Survey is taken from the 2008 Living in Wales Household Survey. The Household Survey was used to assess the condition of the dwelling and determine its inclusion in the Property Survey sample. The householder must also give consent. The final sample was 2,741 dwellings stratified by condition, age of the dwelling and tenure. The sample only contains occupied first homes. Further details of the survey are available in the technical report <http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/living-wales/technicalreports/?lang=en>.
- The data from the 2008 Household Survey was linked to the data from the 2008 property survey to provide information on the dwelling and its occupants.

Comparability

- There are no known reasons why the 2004 and 2008 Living in Wales Surveys should not be comparable. The surveys were designed to ensure comparability where possible. If this is not the case it is noted in the text of the report.
- The Living in Wales Survey methodology differs from other house condition survey methodologies in the UK and care should be taken when making comparisons with other UK countries.
- The methodology for creating the repair cost estimates is the same as that for Living in Wales 2004. The 2004 report has been revised and republished at the same time as this report.

Accuracy

- The overall response rate for the Property Survey was 71.6 per cent. Response rates varied by local authority from 60 per cent to 80 per cent. The figures are designed to be reported at a Wales level.
- The Living in Wales Survey is a sample survey and is subject to sampling variability.
- Figures reported in this publication but have been rounded to the nearest 1,000 grossed responses and percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.
- Repair cost estimates have been rounded to the nearest £10.
- Where comparisons have been made with 2004 data the figures may have different accuracy associated with them due to sampling.

Timeliness

- The 2008 Living in Wales Household Survey was conducted between January and August 2008. The 2008 Living in Wales Property Survey was conducted between September and December 2008.
- The Living in Wales Survey was conducted in 2004 and similar methodology was used in previous House Condition Surveys in 1998 and 1986.
- The Living in Wales Survey has now been replaced by the National Survey for Wales for the household element. No further house condition surveys are planned.
- The Living in Wales Property Survey data is collected via paper forms and scanned to form an electronic database. The processes for checking the data are more complicated than for the Household Survey which is collected electronically. The Property Survey data is used in various post-survey modelling processes to obtain energy efficiency ratings and repair costs. These processes all contribute to a longer analysis period and therefore a delay in publication compared to the Household Survey results.

Revisions

- In the process of compiling this release, errors were identified in the 2004 Living in Wales release titled "Unfitness and Repairs". A revised version of this release has been published today (17 December 2010) and is available from:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/housing2010>

Terms and definitions

Household – is defined as one person living alone, or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping – that is, sharing either a living room or sitting room or at least one meal a day.

HRP – Household Reference Person is defined as the person in whose name the home is owned or rented. If it is jointly owned or rented the HRP is the person who earns the most. If there are equal incomes the HRP is the eldest.

Urban/Rural – As defined by ONS morphology. <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/geography/products/area-classifications/rural-urban-definition-and-la-classification/rural-urban-definition/index.html>. Urban combines the urban and town categories and rural combines the villages and isolated dwellings and hamlets.

Repair Cost – Costs for the repairs to individual dwellings have been calculated in a standard way. Surveyors provide a description of the work necessary in terms of measurements, for example a room needing 3m² of plastering to be renewed. Costs are then calculated using a standard costs per square metre. This method of costing has been used in Welsh house condition surveys since 1993.

Fitness Standard – The Fitness Standard was introduced in the Housing Act 1985. Unfitness is a technical and legal term that related to the physical fabric of dwellings and their condition. Each dwelling is judged on 11 items separately and should the dwelling not meet the required standard for any one of the items, it will be classified as unfit for human habitation. That does not mean that it is condemned and should be demolished, just that some problems exist that need to be dealt with.

Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) – The Housing Health and Safety Rating System replaced the fitness standard in law in 2006. The principle behind HHSRS is that a dwelling should provide a safe and healthy living environment for both the occupants and any visitors. A range of potential hazards are assessed and the system uses a formula to generate a numerical score which allows comparison of the full range of hazards.

Further information

- Living in Wales Household Survey 2008 results
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/livinginwales08/?lang=en>
- Living in Wales Household Survey 2008 technical report
<http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/living-wales/technicalreports/?lang=en>
- Living in Wales Property Survey 2008 technical report
<http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/living-wales/technicalreports/?lang=en>

Further information on previous Living in Wales surveys is available from the Living in Wales web pages: <http://www.wales.gov.uk/livinginwalesurvey>

If you require any further information about using the data collected by the Living in Wales survey, then please contact the Welsh Assembly Government. The contact point for requests for statistics on the Living in Wales survey is:

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