



Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18: Assessment of Elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard

11 April 2019
SB 13/2019

This release looks at an assessment of **some elements** of the [Welsh Housing Quality Standard \(WHQS\)](#) as measured by the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18. The WHQS is the Welsh Government's quality standard for social housing in Wales. Although the standard only applies to social housing, analysing those elements that were assessed by the Survey allows us to present a comparison across all tenures to add to our understanding of the social and private housing sectors. Vacant dwellings are not included. Additional tables relating to the WHQS elements assessed by the Survey have been added to the Results Viewer on the [Survey webpage](#).

This report uses only a subset of the elements required to fully assess the WHQS, therefore care should be taken when using the figures provided. [Official statistics on WHQS](#) for social housing are produced by the Welsh Government based on returns from social landlords. Users wanting to look at trends in meeting the quality standard for social housing over time should use the Official Statistics, those wanting to compare across tenures should use this report (noting that only a subset of elements have been measured). The two data sources are not directly comparable.

This report contains details on which elements have been assessed by the Survey and how. Most have been assessed in line with the Welsh Government's [2008 revised guidance](#) produced to assist social landlords in interpreting and achieving the WHQS. The assessment of two elements has been modified in line with the way social landlords have been advised to interpret the guidance in practice. It is clearly explained where this is the case.

About this release

This release provides an assessment of **some elements** of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), across all tenures, as measured by the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey (WHCS) 2017-18. Also included is a comparison to the [Living in Wales Property Survey 2008 report on WHQS](#).

In this release

Background	2
Assessing elements	2
Overall proxy measure of WHQS	6
Overall modified proxy measure of WHQS	7
Primary Elements	8
Secondary Elements	8
Alternative data source	9
Annex A	11
Key Quality Information	13

Background

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) is the Welsh Government's quality standard for social housing. It was first introduced in 2002 and aims to ensure that all social housing is of good quality and suitable for the needs of existing and future residents. The Welsh Government set a target for all social landlords to improve their housing stock to meet the WHQS as soon as possible, but in any event by the end of December 2020.

The WHQS is made up of 42 individual element assessments which determine whether social housing meets the overall standard. Each of these elements is categorised as either a primary or secondary element. Primary elements relate mostly to the safety of the occupants and secondary elements relate mostly to the comfort of the occupants. Full details of the standard can be found in the '[Revised guidance for social landlords on interpretation and achievement of the WHQS, 2008](#)'. To fully comply with the standard a dwelling must meet all individual elements as set out in the guidance. However, there can be situations where achieving the requirements for an individual element is not possible. Such situations may include the residents choosing not to have the work done, physical constraints which prevent work being carried out, where it is not cost effective to carry out work, or timing, where work has, with good reason, been programmed for a later date. In these instances the landlords may record one or more element as compliant subject to an acceptable fail.

Assessing elements of the WHQS in the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18

Due to the nature of some elements of the Standard and the methodology of the Survey it was only possible to assess 13 primary elements and 13 secondary elements of the standard (for more detail, please refer to [Annex A](#)). These are shown in [Table 1](#).

Acceptable fails

The Survey assessment cannot take into account tenant choice, environment restrictions (listed building status, conservation area etc.), cost prohibitions or other reasons that a social landlord may class an element as an acceptable fail in their submitted returns. Therefore the assessments presented in this report do not allow for 'Acceptable Fails'. This should be considered when looking at [Table 1](#) below.

Survey assessment differences

There are a few elements where the Survey assessment differs from the [guidance](#):

- *Element 3a - Is the heating system reasonably economical and capable of heating the dwelling to a reasonable level (Primary)?*

The [guidance](#) states this should be estimated using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings 2005 (SAP 2005) method and a minimum rating of

65 out of 100 must be achieved. However, the Survey used the most recent SAP 2012 methodology.

- *Element 3d - Is the hot water tank effectively insulated (Primary)?*

The [guidance](#) states the hot water tank must be effectively insulated with a jacket at least 75mm (3") thick, however the Survey assessed dwellings against insulation thickness of at least 80mm.

Modified assessment

The Welsh Government has been working with social landlords since the publication of the revised [guidance](#) in 2008 to establish how best to assess elements on the ground, to give a fair reflection of whether WHQS has been achieved in light of developments since the publication of the guidance. In line with what the Welsh Government know and have agreed with landlords, the method of assessing two elements has been modified to be in line with these developments:

- *Element 4b – Are there adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes (Secondary)?*

Under the modified assessment the requirement for there to be sufficient shelving in the airing cupboard has been removed.

- *Element 4d - Is there a shower as well as a bath (Primary)?*

Under the modified assessment the presence of a working shower alone is sufficient to be considered to meet the requirement of this element.

Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18 assessment of some elements of WHQS

For the majority of the 26 elements assessed in the Survey, a higher proportion of social housing¹ met the requirements for individual elements, than other tenures (owner occupied or private rented), when using the modified assessment described above. For 19 of the 26 elements, more than 90 per cent of social housing met the requirements with a further 3 elements where between 85 per cent and 90 per cent met them.

Whilst for some elements there was a high proportion meeting the requirements in all tenures, for example being structurally stable and free from disrepair, free from damp, kitchens and bathrooms in good condition; there were a large number of elements where social housing was more likely to meet the element requirements than other tenures. These included the following:

Part 2 – Safe and secure

- Element 2a - Is the staircase and balustrade safe (Primary)?
- Element 2h - Are there adequate fire alarms and equipment (Primary)?

¹ For WHCS social housing includes all housing owned by social landlords. As well social housing stock, social landlords may also own or partly own and manage other types of housing.

- Element 2j – Are mains powered smoke detectors on each floor (Primary)?
- Element 2i - Do rooms used for sleeping have escape routes not passing through another room (Secondary)?
- Element 2n - Do external doors and windows give a reasonable level of physical security (Primary)?

Part 3 - Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated

- Element 3a - Is the heating system reasonably economical and capable of heating the dwelling to a reasonable level (Primary)?
- Element 3b - Are external doors and windows adequately draught proofed (Primary)?
- Element 3d - Is the hot water tank effectively insulated (Primary)?
- Element 3e - Is there adequate mechanical extract ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom (Secondary)?

Private rented housing was least likely to meet the requirements of elements in relation to adequate space for storage or appliances or to have adequate facilities for washing, drying or airing clothes, but was more likely than owner occupied housing to have appropriate fire safety detectors and equipment.

Owner occupied housing was most likely to meet the standard for sufficient space for every day living, with only around 53 per cent to 56 per cent of private rented and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings meeting the requirements of this element compared to 68 per cent of owner occupied dwellings. The Survey uses exact floor dimensions and the household composition at the time of inspection to accurately calculate this.

There are a few elements where the proportion of dwellings estimated to have met the requirements of individual elements are substantially lower than the majority.

- *Element 2o – Is the rear garden easy to maintain, reasonably private, safe and secure for young children to play in (Primary)?*

It is likely that there are circumstances where this might be the case due to the nature of the geography or environment of some areas, for example steep gardens in the South Wales Valleys. Where this is the situation, social landlords may judge that for such dwellings this could constitute an acceptable fail. The Survey, however, was unable to take this into account.

- *Element 3a – Is the heating system reasonably economical (Primary)?*

The most recent SAP rating (SAP 2012) has been used to assess dwellings in the Survey. Whilst less than half of owner occupied and private rented dwellings are assessed as meeting the requirements for this element, a higher proportion of local authority dwellings (62 per cent) and RSL dwellings (74 per cent) did.

Table 1: Percentage of dwellings considered to have met the requirements of some elements of WHQS by tenure, Wales, 2017-18

Per cent

Element	Dwellings considered to have met the requirements of the WHQS						
	Social housing			Owner occupied	Private rented	All tenures	
	All social housing	Local authority	Registered Social Landlord				
Primary Elements							
1a	Is the dwelling structurally stable and free from disrepair?	100	99	100	98	96	98
1b	Is the dwelling free from damp?	100	100	99	99	99	99
2a	Is the staircase and balustrade safe?	98	99	98	91	92	92
2h	Are there adequate fire alarms and equipment?	98	100	98	*	93	95
2j	Are mains powered smoke detectors on each floor?	94	92	94	42	58	54
2n	Do external doors and windows give a reasonable level of physical security?	90	92	89	81	77	82
2o	Is the rear garden easy to maintain, reasonably private, safe and suitable for young children to play in?	83	81	84	79	76	79
3a	Is the heating system reasonably economical?	69	62	74	42	42	47
3b	Are external doors and windows adequately draught proofed?	92	92	92	86	84	87
3d	Is the hot water tank effectively insulated?	93	94	92	74	79	76
4a	Is the kitchen 15 years old or less, unless in good condition?	98	98	99	99	97	98
4c	Are the bathroom and WC facilities 25 years old or less, unless in good condition?	99	99	99	98	98	98
4d	Is there a shower as well as a bath?	65	61	68	81	79	78
	<i>Is there a shower present and working?</i>	95	91	97	96	94	95
Secondary Elements							
2b	Is there adequate space for kitchen appliances?	91	87	94	92	86	91
2c	Is the work surface sufficient for safe food preparation?	97	97	98	97	98	97
2d	Is the cupboard storage convenient and adequate?	93	90	95	96	88	95
2e	Is the number of convenient power sockets in the kitchen sufficient?	100	100	100	100	100	100
2f	Is the flooring in the kitchen and bathroom safe and suitable for use?	99	100	99	98	97	98
2i	Do rooms used for sleeping have escape routes not passing through another room?	92	91	92	81	72	81
3c	Is the living room separated from the main entrance door?	93	92	95	90	87	90
3e	Is there adequate mechanical extract ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom?	64	61	66	35	37	40
4b	Are there adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes?	83	82	83	77	65	77
	<i>(requirement for sufficient shelving in airing cupboard removed)</i>	85	83	86	81	68	80
7a	Is there sufficient space within the dwelling for every day living?	55	54	56	68	53	64
7b	Is internal and external general storage space adequate?	73	67	77	75	57	72
7d	Does the dwelling have the necessary physical aids to suite the requirements of the residents?	85	83	87	90	82	88
7f	Is there paved access to the drying line and any garden gate?	87	83	89	78	78	79

Source: Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18

- *Element 3e - Is there adequate mechanical extract ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom? (Secondary)?*

Whilst only 6 in 10 social housing dwellings met the requirements for this element, for private dwellings this was less than 4 in 10 dwellings. As set out in the [guidance](#), the Survey assessed this element by recording the presence of a mechanical extractor fan in the kitchen and bathroom and, if present, that they were working. A lack of mechanical ventilation was found to be more likely to cause non-compliance with this element rather than fans being present but not working. This was also more likely to be in the kitchen than bathroom. The Survey assessed cooker hoods to be adequate ventilation only if they vented to the outside of the building.

Overall proxy measure of WHQS

The previous housing conditions survey in Wales, the Living in Wales Property Survey 2008, assessed the social housing stock in Wales against elements of the WHQS; [Living in Wales 2008: Welsh Housing Quality Standard](#). In that assessment, a dwelling was considered to have met the WHQS if it passed all 13 primary elements and at least 9 (or 75%) of the 13 secondary elements, as measured by the 2008 Survey. This was a proxy measure since the Survey only assessed a subset of elements in the standard. The same methodology has been followed to calculate an overall proxy measure of WHQS using the data from the 2017-18 Survey. This allows rough comparisons between 2008 and 2017-18 to be made and any progress to be tracked.

However, when making comparisons with 2008, it must be taken into account that there has been a small change between the secondary elements used in the overall proxy measure of WHQS. This is discussed more in [Annex A](#).

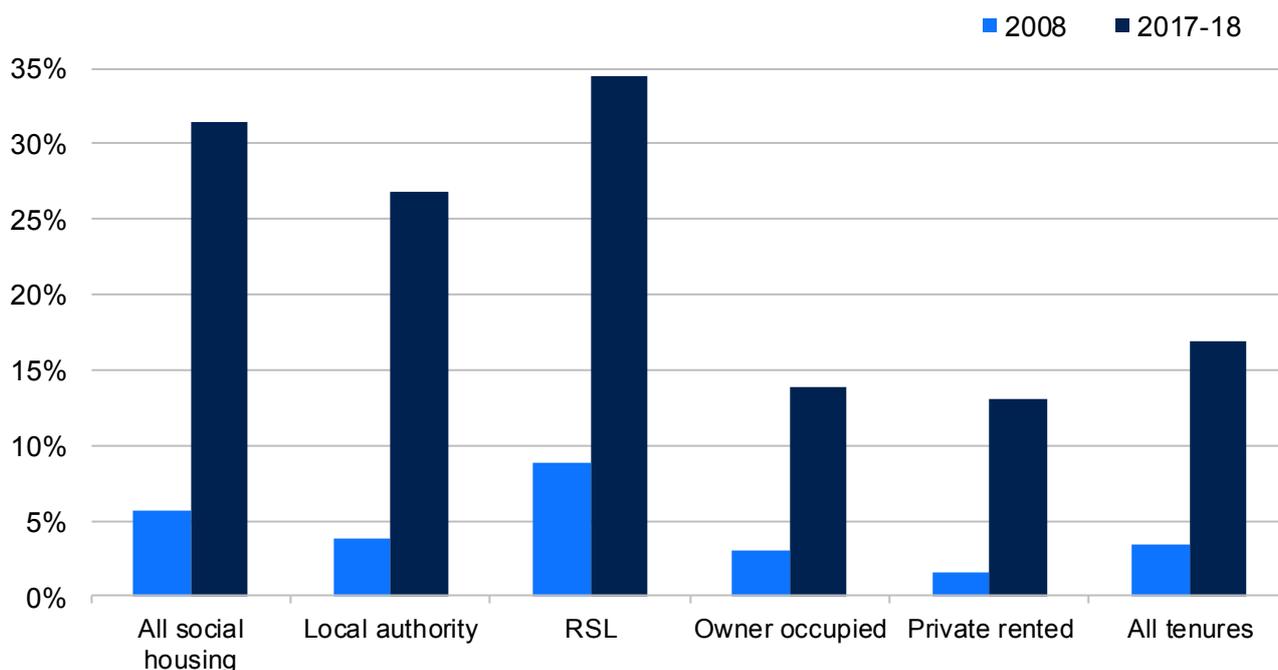
The use of this proxy measure also allows us to compare across different tenures. The proxy measure is not directly comparable with the [Official Statistics for WHQS for social housing](#) (as described below).

There has been an improvement in the proportion of dwellings in each tenure meeting the overall proxy measure of the WHQS between 2008 and 2017-18². RSLs had a higher percentage of dwellings meeting the overall proxy measure of WHQS (34 per cent) than local authority dwellings (27 per cent), as was the case in 2008 (9 per cent and 4 per cent respectively).

Both social landlord tenures outperformed other tenures (owner occupied and private rented). The private rented sector had the lowest percentage of dwellings achieving the overall proxy measure of WHQS (13 per cent), which was slightly lower than owner occupied dwellings (14 per cent). Overall, in 2017-18, the percentage of **all** dwellings in Wales meeting the overall proxy measure of WHQS was 17 per cent, an improvement of 14 percentage points since 2008².

² All tenures were assessed for elements of the WHQS in 2008, but only the social tenures were reported.

Chart 1: Percentage of dwellings meeting the overall proxy measure of WHQS by tenure, 2008 and 2017-18 (using conditions survey data)



Sources: Living in Wales Property Survey 2008
Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18

Overall modified proxy measure of WHQS

As discussed above and shown in [Table 1](#), in line with the way social landlords have been advised to interpret the guidance in practice, a modified assessment of elements 4b (*Is there a shower as well as a bath?*) and 4d (*Are there adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes?*) have been produced. Using the modified elements 4b and 4d, an overall modified proxy measure of WHQS has also been calculated.

Table 2: Percentage of dwellings meeting the overall proxy measure of WHQS and the overall modified proxy measure of WHQS, 2017-18

Tenure	Per cent	
	Overall Proxy Measure ⁽¹⁾	Overall Modified Proxy Measure ⁽²⁾
All social housing	31	46
Local authority	27	40
Registered social landlord	34	49
Owner occupied	14	15
Private rented	13	19
All tenures	17	21

(1) Consists of those elements assessed in the Survey as per the [2008 revised guidance](#)

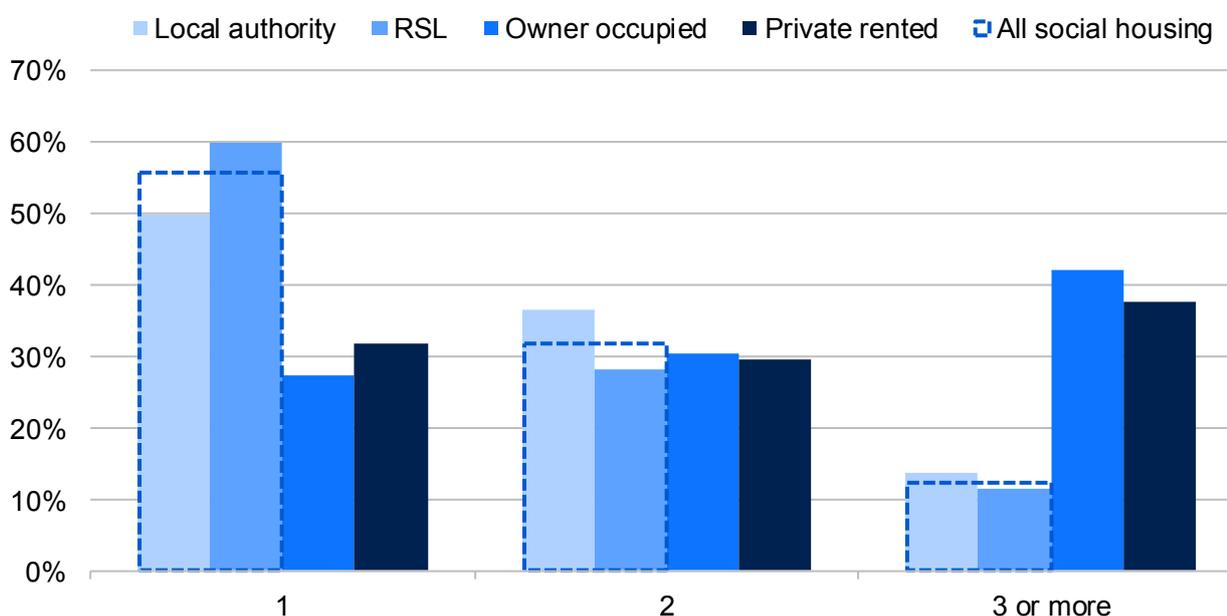
(2) Consists of those elements assessed in the Survey as per modified assessment

The percentage of dwellings that meet the overall modified proxy measure for WHQS is higher for each tenure than when using the overall proxy measure. See [Alternative data source](#) section below for comparisons.

Primary elements

Of those social housing dwellings **not meeting the overall proxy measure**, almost all (more than 99 per cent) did so because they failed to meet one or more primary element. This was a similar picture across all tenures.

Chart 2: Percentage of dwellings that did not meet the overall proxy measure of WHQS, by number of primary elements failed and tenure, 2017-18



Source: Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18

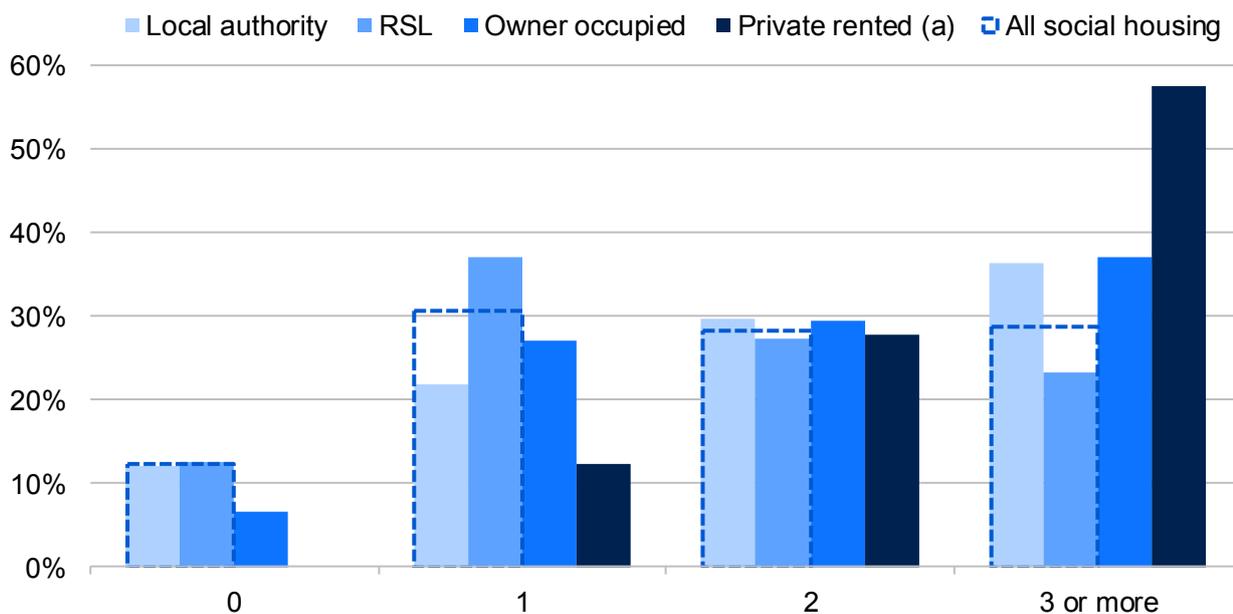
The number of primary elements failed varied by tenure. In 2017-18, of those dwellings **not meeting the overall proxy measure**, 42 per cent of owner occupied dwellings and 38 per cent of private rented dwellings failed on 3 or more primary elements. In comparison, 14 per cent of local authority dwellings and 11 per cent of RSL dwellings failed on 3 or more primary elements. [The 2008 measure of WHQS using the Living in Wales Property Survey data](#) estimated these figures at 66 per cent of local authority dwellings and 77 per cent of RSL dwellings, although it should be noted that these measures are not directly comparable (see above and [Key Quality Information](#)).

Secondary elements

Of those social housing dwellings **not meeting the overall proxy measure**, 12 per cent met all secondary elements.

Where dwellings failed to meet secondary elements, the level of non-compliance varied by tenure, with RSL dwellings failing a smaller number of secondary elements than local authority dwellings whereas private dwellings failed a larger number of secondary elements.

Chart 3: Percentage of dwellings that did not meet the overall proxy measure of WHQS, by number of secondary elements failed and tenure, 2017-18



Source: Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18

(a) Percentage of private rented dwellings meeting all secondary elements is not shown as the figure is based on too few responses.

In 2017-18, 97 per cent of social housing **not meeting the overall proxy measure** failed four or fewer secondary elements, up from 80 per cent in 2008. In comparison, 93 per cent of owner occupied dwellings and 86 per cent of private rented dwellings failed 4 or fewer secondary elements. As discussed above, dwellings must meet all primary elements of the standard and 75% (9 or more) of secondary elements to comply with the overall proxy measure.

When looking at social housing **meeting the overall proxy measure**, again the number of secondary elements failed varied by landlord type, with 38 per cent of local authority dwellings failing one or no secondary elements compared with 59 per cent of RSL dwellings.

Alternative data source: Social Housing statistical returns on WHQS

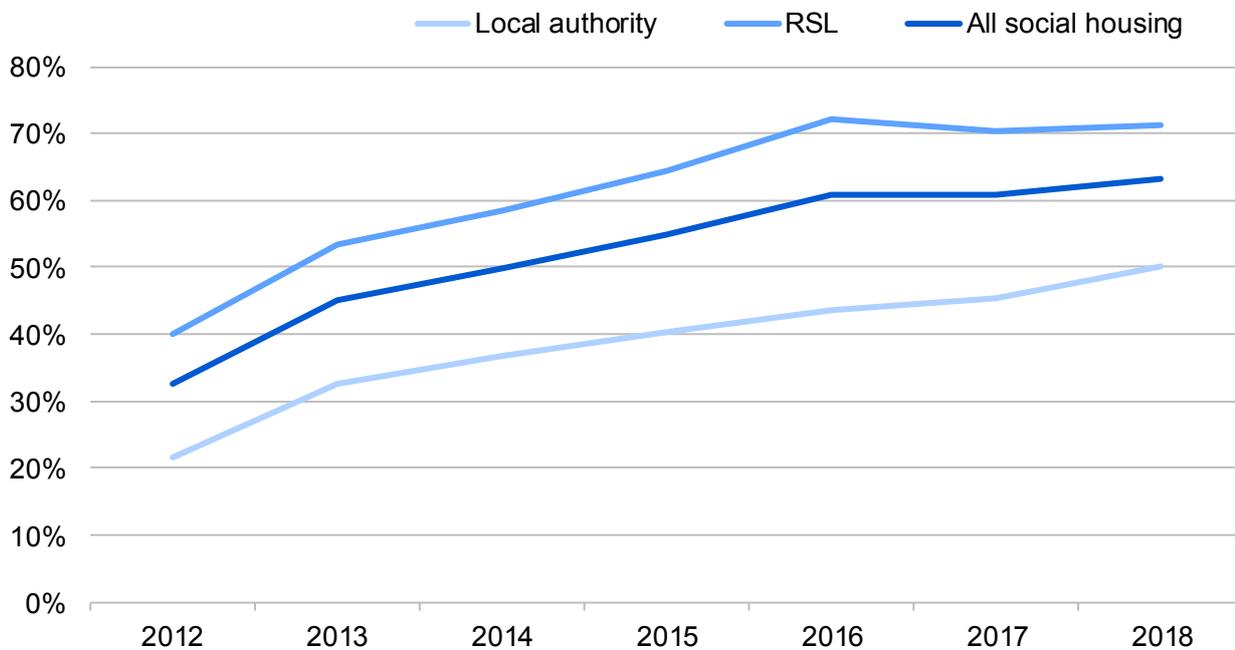
There is a difference between the percentage of social housing meeting the overall modified proxy measure for WHQS (46 per cent) and the WHQS compliance rate provided to Welsh Government by RSLs and local authorities for the [Official Statistics on WHQS](#). These returns report that 63 per cent of social housing fully meet WHQS (excluding acceptable fails) as at 31 March 2018.

It is acknowledged that there are different ways of measuring the improvement in housing quality related to the WHQS. The difference between the two sets of reported compliance rates can be attributed to the following factors: the different methodologies used by the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey and social landlords when collecting information; the timing of these assessments; the purpose of the two data collections; the fact that landlords will be applying their

wider knowledge of their stock in the returns; and the provision for stock to have acceptable fails in the landlord returns and not in the Survey assessments.

What is clear though, is that - whichever measure is used - there has been significant improvement in the quality of Wales' social housing stock in the last 10 years.

Chart 4: Percentage of social housing dwellings fully compliant with WHQS (Official Statistics)(a)



Source: Annual WHQS Returns, as at 31 March

(a) Excluding acceptable fails.

Annex A - Assessment of elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard in the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18: Further details

The purpose of this annex is to provide further details on the assessment of elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard as assessed by the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18, as discussed briefly in the section above titled [Assessing elements of the WHQS in the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18](#).

Due to the nature of some elements of the WHQS and the methodology of the 2017-18 Survey, it was only possible to assess 13 primary elements and 13 secondary elements of the standard, these are shown in [Table 1](#). This is in line with the methodology used in the [Living in Wales Property Survey 2008: WHQS report](#). The 13 primary elements measured in 2008 and 2017-18 are the same, and 12 of the 13 secondary elements, are the same. The only difference being that element 7e (*Does the garden have a directly accessible, reasonably sized level area?*) has been removed, due to an oversight when designing the Survey form, and element 7a (*Is there sufficient space within the dwelling for everyday living?*) has been included, as it is now possible to model this. Both elements are from the same section of the [guidance](#) regarding specific requirements of the household, but element 7a measures living space whereas element 7e measures the garden area. There are many more requirements that need to be satisfied to pass element 7a. Therefore, households may be more likely to fail on element 7a than element 7e. In turn this may mean the 2017-18 overall proxy measure may be lower than it would be if able to directly compare between the two survey years.

It is worth noting that currently social landlords are not required to measure sections 5 or 6 of the WHQS ('Well managed' and 'Located in attractive and safe environments') which makes the total number of elements included in the social landlord statistical returns on WHQS (used for the [Official Statistics](#)) 33, only 9 less than assessed in the Survey.

To calculate the pass rates for individual elements ([Table 1](#)), missing values where requirements of elements were not applicable were excluded. However, it was not possible to exclude any elements when aggregating. Therefore for the calculation of the overall proxy measure and the overall modified proxy measure, elements were taken as a pass where the data was missing due to requirements not being applicable to certain dwellings. For example, element 2o (*Is the rear garden easy to maintain, reasonably private, safe and suitable for young children to play in?*) may not be applicable to flats. This only affected 5 of the 26 elements measured (2h, 2o, 3d, 7d, 7f).

Modified assessment

The Welsh Government has been working with social landlords since the publication of the revised [guidance](#) in 2008, to establish how best to assess elements on the ground to give a fair reflection of whether WHQS has been achieved and in light of developments since the publication of the guidance. In line with what the Welsh Government know and have agreed with landlords, the method of assessing two elements has changed in practice:

- Element 4d - Is there a shower as well as a bath?

There needs to be both a shower and a bath present in a dwelling to meet the requirements of element 4d as per the guidance. However, many landlords consider a working shower alone to be enough to satisfy achievement of this element. Additionally, tenants can also have a preference for a shower alone, reflecting adaptations to suit the needs of tenants. In these cases, element 4d is considered to have been achieved by some landlords whereas the Survey would not pass a dwelling unless a bath and a shower are present (this can be a shower over a bath). Therefore a modified assessment, where the presence of a working shower alone was sufficient to meet the requirement of the element, is also provided.

- *Element 4b – Are there adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes?*

The [guidance](#) states that, 'there should be adequate facilities for washing, drying and airing clothes, which include: space, power and plumbing for a washing machine; provision for an external drying line; and an airing cupboard. Additionally, in dwellings where a hot water tank is present, there should be a heated airing cupboard with at least 1m² of internal slatted shelving provided'. A modified assessment, where the requirement for sufficient shelving in the airing cupboard has been removed is also provided.

There are a few elements where the Survey assessment differs from the [guidance](#):

- Element 3a - Is the heating system reasonably economical and capable of heating the dwelling to a reasonable level (Primary)?

The [guidance](#) states this should be estimated using the Government's Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings 2005 (SAP 2005) method and a minimum rating of 65 out of 100 must be achieved. However, the Survey used the most recent SAP 2012 methodology. The SAP methodology has been through two major updates since the 2005 version used for the Living in Wales 2008 modelling, first to SAP 2009 and then SAP 2012. In addition, the Reduced data SAP (RdSAP) methodology for SAP 2012 was updated in November 2017. This doesn't change the SAP calculation but changes the way that inferences are made for elements of the SAP calculation that are not directly measured in a non-intrusive survey. This series of updates, along with continual improvements to the models used to calculate SAP, have introduced numerous changes to the way SAP is calculated.

- *Element 3d - Is the hot water tank effectively insulated (Primary)?*

The [guidance](#) states the hot water tank must be effectively insulated with a jacket at least 75mm (3") thick, however the Survey assessed dwellings against insulation thickness of at least 80mm. This was an oversight when designing the Survey form and is a change from the [2008 Living In Wales assessment of WHQS](#).

Key Quality Information

This section provides a summary of 'Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18: Assessment of Elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard' quality information. Please note that a detailed Quality Report on the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey (WHCS) statistics has been published on the [WHCS website](#), which measures quality against five dimensions: Relevance, Accuracy and Reliability, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability and Coherence.

Background to the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18 (WHCS)

There was a critical gap in the Welsh Government's knowledge about housing conditions in Wales. The last comprehensive collection of data on housing conditions in Wales prior to the WHCS 2017-18 was the Living in Wales Property Survey in 2008. In June 2016 permission and funding was given for the [Housing Conditions Evidence Programme \(HCEP\)](#). The Programme is managed by Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) within the Welsh Government and encompasses two work streams:

- The [Welsh Housing Conditions Survey \(WHCS\) 2017-18](#); and
- The [Housing Stock Analytical Resource Wales](#) (HSAR): Essentially a repository capturing a range of data on the characteristics, fabric, condition and energy efficiency of the housing stock in Wales. Where possible at individual property level.

The WHCS was carried out by the [Building Research Establishment](#) (BRE) on behalf of the Welsh Government. Fieldwork ran from August 2017 to April 2018. Property inspections were carried out by qualified surveyors, who performed a visual assessment of the interior and exterior of the property. The inspections lasted around 40-50 minutes, with around 20 minutes spent inside on a room by room inspection. The surveyor also inspected the plot of the property and made an assessment of the local neighbourhood. For full details of the topics included in the Survey see the Survey Form, available on the [WHCS website](#).

Response rates

A sample of addresses was drawn from eligible households taking part in the [National Survey for Wales](#) 2017-18. A total of 2,549 full WHCS surveys were achieved across the 22 local authorities of Wales which enables national level estimates. A consent rate of 58% was achieved by the National Survey for Wales interviewers, and of those, a conversion rate of 78% was achieved by the BRE surveyors. The overall response rate was 45%.

95% confidence intervals have been calculated for key WHCS variables and are included in the Results Viewer, available on the [WHCS website](#).

How is the WHCS used?

Key information gathered in the WHCS allows properties to be assessed for energy efficiency, cost of repair, the [Welsh Housing Quality Standard \(WHQS\)](#), [fuel poverty](#) and the [Housing Health and Safety Rating System \(HHSRS\)](#). It will also help improve the Housing domain in the [Welsh Index](#)

[of Multiple Deprivation](#) 2019 update and underpin two of the [Well-being of Future Generations National Indicators](#) for Wales, specifically homes free from hazards and homes with adequate energy efficiency measures. The WHCS 2017-18 is closely linked to the Welsh Government's [Decarbonisation Programme](#) and is recognised as one of the crucial data sources, especially for the domestic buildings working group. The Survey will also be used to provide data for many other housing, environmental and social policy needs e.g. the impact of poor housing on health, education and economic activity.

Who are the users of the WHCS?

The Survey is used for policy making purposes by the Welsh Government mainly for housing and environmental areas, but also social policy needs. There are a wide range of other users of the Survey including: Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies; local authorities across Wales; Public Health Wales; Third Sector Organisations; other UK government departments and local government organisations; other public sector organisations; academics; private companies; the media; and members of the public.

Strengths and limitations

Detailed information on the strengths and limitations of the WHCS is provided in Section 3.1 (Relevance) of the Quality Report, available on the [WHCS website](#).

Technical Report

Detailed information on the methodology used in the WHCS can be found in the Survey technical report, available on the [WHCS website](#).

Glossary

A detailed Glossary is available on the [WHCS website](#) which provides definitions for the key terms found in this report.

Interpreting the results

Some questions on the physical inspection form were not answered by the surveyor where the question was not applicable.

Where a relationship has been discussed between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to identify whether one factor causes change in another, or if other factors are actually more important.

The results are weighted by households and calibrated to Wales levels. Weighting for non-consent is also applied.

Vacant dwellings are not included in the assessment of elements of the standard. Where this report refers to the percentages of dwellings, the figures are based on occupied dwellings, and do not include vacant dwellings.

Statistical significance

A selection of key measures in the Results Viewer include approximate 95% confidence intervals. Confidence intervals were calculated using the statistical package Stata. These provide an indication of the precision of the estimates. A confidence interval can be calculated around a survey estimate and gives a range within which the true value is likely to fall. There is a 95% chance that the 95% confidence intervals include the true value. In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. As a rough guide to interpretation, when comparing two variables, if the confidence intervals around the estimates overlap, it can be assumed that the estimates are not statistically significantly different – this approach is not as rigorous as doing a formal statistical test, but is straightforward, widely used and reasonably robust. Unless stated otherwise, differences in this report are significant.

Coherence

The Welsh Government publishes [annual statistical reports](#) on the [Welsh Housing Quality Standard](#). Data in these reports are not comparable to the ‘Welsh Housing Conditions Survey 2017-18: Assessment of elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard’ due to differences in the way the data are collected and measured (see [page 9](#)).

All countries of the UK report on a measure to assess the quality of their housing stock. The latest results can be found in the links below.

In England, the Decent Homes Standard is reported on page 13 of the [English Housing Conditions Survey](#).

For 2013-14 onwards, the [Scottish Housing Quality Standard is reported here](#). Prior to this, the SHQS was recorded on the [Scottish Housing Regulator website](#).

[Northern Ireland Decent Homes Standard](#).

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). The [assessment report](#) and [designation letter](#) can be viewed on the Office for Statistical Regulation webpages.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority’s regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government’s responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the

appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being 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 Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016 and this release includes two of the national indicators, namely Indicator 31 (percentage of dwellings which are free from hazards) and Indicator 33 (percentage of dwellings with adequate energy performance).

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

As a national indicator under the Act they must be referred to in the analyses of local well-being produced by public services boards when they are analysing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in their areas.

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 well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

This document is available on the WHCS website: <http://www.gov.wales/whcs>

The WHCS Quality Report, Technical Report and Glossary can be found on the [WHCS website](#).

There is also an easy-to-use Results Viewer which presents results on a range of topics.

Next update

Detailed topic specific analysis (at the national level) will be published throughout 2019. You can find out more about the planned publications on the [WHCS website](#). Detailed fuel poverty analysis will be published in Summer 2019.

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to stats.housingconditions@gov.wales.

Open Government Licence

All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated.

