**Data Quality and Meeting User Needs**

**September 2019**

**Quality of statistics forming Scottish Government Housing Statistics publications and meeting user needs.**

This document provides information on the quality of the various figures published as part of the Scottish Government Housing Statistics, often collectively referred to as “Housing Statistics for Scotland” (HSfS). It contains a summary of how these figures are collected, any data quality issues that may impact on their accuracy, the quality assurance procedures used to check them and the implications on the uses of these statistics.

This document also starts with a brief section on meeting user needs, based primarily on the outcome of the 2012 Scottish Government - Communities Analytical Services - Statistics Review.

This note complements ‘The Scottish Government Housing Statistics – Guide to Sources and Uses’ document, which contains more comprehensive information on data sources, definitions, revisions and comparisons with other data sources, available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/DataUses/UserGuide>

It also complements the ‘Explanation of Quarterly Statistics on new build and affordable housing supply’ document, available at:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/QuarterlyHSexplanation>.

**Meeting User Needs**

In 2012, Scottish Government (SG) Communities Analytical Services carried out a Statistics Review, which incorporated various elements of Housing Statistics for Scotland. As part of the external consultation, SG published the following document setting out 7 specific proposals:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/scotstat/CASstatisticsconsultation>

A summary of the external consultation responses were published within the minutes of the June 2012 Built Environment Statistical Advisory Committee (BESAC) meeting, available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/scotstat/meetings>

There was over-whelming support for **Proposal 1** to make no changes to the annual Housing Statistics for Scotland (HSfS) publication. Many comments were received about the usefulness of the HSfS statistics from a range of key users. There were no comments requesting changes to HSfS as part of this consultation, however a recent request has been received to produce Local Authority estimates of ‘Stock by Tenure’, which are only produced at the national level. SG have committed to exploring the feasibility of producing these estimates with the intention of publishing Local Authority estimates alongside the August 2014 HSfS annual publication.

Concerns were received from 4 out of 15 stakeholders regarding the use of alternative data for the production of national quarterly estimates of new house building, under **Proposal 5**. Subsequent SG analysis of data from the National House Building Council (NHBC), raised sufficient concern about the coverage of this data source to provide comprehensive and consistent estimates over time at a national and Local Authority level. Furthermore, some Local Authorities stated that they would prefer to continue providing quarterly new build data as opposed to one annual return, which could be more difficult to provide. SG has therefore concluded to continue the quarterly collection and publication of new house building at the local authority level.

The was over-whelming support (16 out of 17 responses) to reduce the frequency of data collection of Sales of Social Housing from a quarterly to annual basis, under **Proposal 6**. This change was intended to be implemented in 2014/15, however given the increased profile of the Sales data over this time period, following an announcement that Right to Buy would be ended, the data collection will continue on a quarterly basis all remaining applications in the scheme are concluded.

**Quality of Statistics**

**Complete Coverage of Local Authorities**

The majority of data collected for Housing Statistics for Scotland is sourced directly from the 32 Local Authorities in Scotland. There is no sampling of Local Authorities involved in this data collection and complete coverage of Scotland is usually achieved across most data items. In the event of non-response from a Local Authority, an estimate can be made either based on previous returns or on alternative information sources.

This means that there is no sampling error associated with data sourced from Local Authorities, although there may be a small amount of error associated with non-response and subsequent estimation.

**Local Authority Management Information Systems**

Information provided by Local Authorities for HSfS is extracted from Management Information Systems (MISs). We expect this information to be of good quality as it is used in the day to day housing management as well as for reporting purposes. We also expect the MISs to have certain levels of in built quality assurance.

**New Housing Supply - New house building**

Information is collected on private, local authority and housing association new build starts and completions. Figures for the different sectors are added together to give the total number of houses started and completed within a quarter.

More detail on new build housing statistics can be found in the ‘Explanation of Quarterly Statistics on new build and affordable housing supply’ document at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/QuarterlyHSexplanation>.

Source(s)

Information on private sector and local authority (LA) sector new build housing is collected quarterly from local authorities. The information is sourced from LA administrative systems, based on LA building inspector data.

Housing association new build figures come from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme administrative system which is used to record details of all projects which receive Scottish Government (SG) affordable housing funding.

Notes on data quality and implications on use

Information published on new build housing is considered to be of good quality as every newly built house in Scotland requires a Local Authority building inspector to provide a completion certificate, confirming that the house has met required building standards. With comprehensive coverage of all Local Authorities, this means that every newly built house in Scotland ought to be accounted for in the resulting statistics.

In addition, information on housing association new build housing, sourced from the Scottish Government Affordable Housing Supply Programme, has tight financial and other controls associated with SG funding, meaning that this source of information is subject to a high level of scrutiny and can therefore be considered good quality.

However there are some issues that users should be aware of when interpreting the figures:

1. It is not always clear at the start of a development what the final tenure of the dwellings will be. Where final tenure is known at the outset, the dwellings will be included in the appropriate sector. However, where final tenure is not known, dwellings are included in the sector which is leading the development.

The implication of this issue is that the resulting total new build figures will be correct, but the split between private, local authority and housing association new build may not fully reflect the final tenure of these dwellings.

1. The precise timing of when starts and completions are recorded in the private sector and local authority sector statistics often depends on the timing of building control inspections. For example, a building control inspector may not visit a site following completion until the following quarter – the completions would subsequently be allocated to the correct quarter of completion resulting in a revision to the previously published statistics.

The implication here is that the most recently published quarterly statistics are subject to a small amount of revision to account for this factor.

1. The housing association new build statistics record approvals, starts and completions, for whole developments (or phases of larger developments). This differs from the figures collected for other sectors which relate to starts and completions of individual dwellings.

This means that the housing association new build statistics contain a greater amount of aggregation and the quarterly count of starts and completions may be subject to some inaccuracy, at least between the quarters. It suggests that some starts may be reported before building work has actually started on particular dwellings and conversely there may be a delay in the reporting of some completions until all of the dwellings in the corresponding phase or development has been fully completed. However, this issue diminishes over longer periods of reporting such as calendar or financial years.

1. For the housing association new house building, approval and completion are significant parts of the administrative process, so the data for these should be of high quality. Delays in reporting and recording site starts tend to be more significant, and as a result the data quality for new build starts is less robust. Approvals are therefore used as a proxy for starts for housing association new build.

Users of the data should be aware of the implications of using this proxy. Firstly, approvals will only represent actual starts if the corresponding building work starts in the same quarter as the approval. Inevitably, this will not always be the case.

Secondly, this proxy introduces a clear spike in the quarterly time series of starts, in Quarter 1 of the year, when a large proportion of housing association new build has traditionally been approved. This spike is not only observed for housing association starts, but it is pronounced enough to be clearly seen for total starts incorporating all tenures. It also means that the quarterly time series is subject to changes in the approval process, which has been observed in recent years and is further described in the Affordable Housing section below.

Quality Assurance

Data on private sector and local authority new house building is collected at the site level for each housing development, which is identified by its grid reference, address, postcode, reference numbers and the developer. The data includes the total number of dwellings for which the site has building warrants. Building progress for each site is then monitored on a quarterly basis, showing any new starts or completions during the quarter along with a cumulative opening and closing position. Data is collected on the site until it is fully completed.

This detailed level of data collection enables quality assurance of data for each site to be carried out, ensuring consistency between previous returns on each site and ensuring cumulative starts and completions are constrained to the total number of units for which the site has building warrants.

The detailed location information for each site also enables quality assurance against any duplicate reporting of sites and enables Local Authorities to see a full list of sites under construction.

Data on housing association new house building is provided by the SG team with responsibility for administering the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP). They in turn receive information on starts and completions from housing associations. This team is then able to cross-reference starts and completions against approvals for funding from the AHSP.

A potential improvement in the quality assurance of new build data is to ensure that there is no double counting or omission of any sites or units between the separate reporting of private sector and local authority new house building and that reported through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme for housing associations. This is something we plan to focus on more in the future.

All Local Authorities have been providing new house building data on a regular quarterly basis. The only exception has been for private sector new build by Highland Local Authority. Since 2000 quarter 1 (for completions) and 2006 quarter 2 (for starts) figures published for Highland have been estimates based on the Highland Housing Land Audit or on figures for previous years. More recently (from 2012 quarter 4) Highland have provided completions figures in the same way as other local authorities do although starts continue to be estimated.

**New Housing Supply – Refurbishment and Conversion**

Refurbishment figures include houses acquired by housing associations and refurbished for rent or low cost home ownership as well as refurbishment of private dwellings funded wholly or partly through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme.

Conversion figures are net figures based on the number of conversions from non-housing to housing and vice versa and the number of properties being sub-divided or combined together (integrated).

Refurbishments and conversions are combined with new build figures to provide an overall estimate of housing supply.

Source(s)

Refurbishment figures come from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme administrative system.

Conversion figures are collected annually from local authorities.

Notes on data quality

Refurbishment figures are collected from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme administrative system and so information on data quality can be found in the Affordable Housing section below.

A number of local authorities find providing information on conversions difficult. Some provide estimates based on the number of completion certificates and the description of that completion that is recorded on their system, others are able to provide information for council houses but not for other tenures (housing association or private sector) and others are unable to provide any figures. In these cases an estimate may be made based on the previous year’s figure.

Quality Assurance

For refurbishments this can be found in the Affordable Housing section below.

The conversion figures undergo quality assurance before publication. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Affordable Housing**

These statistics relate directly to any Affordable Housing units which have been supported by SG funding through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP), previously known as the Affordable Housing Investment Programme (AHIP). These statistics are used to monitor the SG target to deliver 50,000 new affordable homes over the 5 year period from 2016/17 to 2020/21.

There are a range of different types of housing that are covered by these Affordable Housing statistics. This includes Affordable Rent from:

* Local Authority
* Housing Association
* Home Owners Support Fund (rent)
* Other Forms of Affordable Rent

as well as Affordable Home Ownership from schemes such as:

* New Supply Shared Equity (NSEE) /Shared Ownership (LCHO)
* Open Market Shared Equity (OMSE)
* New Supply Shared Equity (developers)
* Home Owner Support Fund (shared equity)
* Other Affordable Home Ownership

Also, the delivery of new Affordable Homes includes the following types of homes:

* New House Building
* Off the shelf purchases
* Refurbishments

Information on the number of affordable housing approvals, starts and completions is collected and published each quarter.

More detail on affordable housing statistics can be found in the ‘Explanation of Quarterly Statistics on new build and affordable housing supply’ document at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/QuarterlyHSexplanation>

Source(s)

Figures are taken from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) administrative system which is used to administer the various Scottish Government programmes designed to deliver affordable housing.

This is the same source of data as for housing association new house building, described in the Housing Supply section.

Notes on data quality

Information published on affordable housing is considered to be of good quality as it comes from the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, which has tight financial and other controls associated with SG funding, meaning that this source of information is subject to a high level of scrutiny and can therefore be considered good quality.

However, the number of approvals, starts or completions reported each quarter can be affected by changes to the funding programme. Such changes can impact on both the timing and the level of affordable housing activity. For example, in 2011, the Innovation and Investment Fund was introduced. The cessation of the previous funding programme and the introduction of the Innovation and Investment Fund meant that there were no approvals in Q3 of 2011, and the subsequent seasonal pattern of approvals was also different from previous years. Further changes to the funding model were introduced in May 2012, with the introduction of Resource Planning aimed at enabling each council to consider on a strategic basis how this funding should best be deployed.  This new process is reflected in the low level of approvals in Q3 2012, and the seasonality of approvals and starts in future quarters has also been affected.

As mentioned earlier, approval and completion are significant parts of the AHSP administrative process, so the data for these should be of high quality. Delays in reporting and recording of site starts tend to be more significant, so should be treated with some caution.

Approval, start and completion information is collected for each type of housing described above. In the case of Off the Shelf Purchases, this is less meaningful and the start and completion date could be the same and relate to the same quarter.

Users of these Affordable Housing statistics ought to bear in mind the different types of housing which is covered, when drawing comparisons with New House Building statistics. In addition, the published AHSP figures include a sub-total showing the number of new council houses approved, started or completed as part of the AHSP during the quarter. These figures differs somewhat from the local authority sector new build figures published separately. These discrepancies are due to the different times at which progress is reported. New house building starts and completions are reported as individual dwellings are started or completed whereas AHSP approvals, starts and completions are reported once a full site (or phase of a larger site) is complete.

These statistics relate to Affordable Housing supported by SG funding, however it is unlikely that there is any significant amount of new Affordable Housing in Scotland which is not receiving any SG funding through this source.

Quality Assurance

All of the Affordable Housing statistics are provided by the SG Policy Teams responsible for managing and administering the AHSP. In addition to the publication of Affordable Housing statistics on a quarterly and annual basis within HSfS, the SG policy team also publish an AHSP annual Outturn Report, available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/investment/ahip>

This detailed reporting of the AHSP management information, which is closely scrutinised by external stakeholders, provides a good level of confidence in the underlying information and statistics used in HSfS.

**Local Authority Housing Stock**

Information on local authority housing stock is collected annually from local authorities. This includes the number of dwellings owned by local authorities split by type and age.

Within HSfS, statistics on Local Authority housing stock are presented alongside Housing Association stock, which are collected and published by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Source(s)

Annual collection from Local Authorities.

Notes on data quality

Information on the overall numbers of houses owned by Local Authorities is considered to be of good quality, as this information is crucial to the management of housing stock by Local Authorities.

In addition, the Scottish Housing Regulator uses HSfS statistics in their engagement with Local Authority landlords, which adds a further level of scrutiny to these statistics.

The classification of the housing stock into house type and age is believed to be generally good quality although there is some evidence that the way in which certain houses are classified from one year to the next can change.

Quality Assurance

SG carries out quality assurance of data provided from each Local Authority prior to publication. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Stock by Tenure**

Estimates of total housing stock in Scotland split by tenure are published in the HSfS annual report. The tenure is broken down by the following categories:

* Owner occupation
* Vacant private and second homes
* Private rent or living rent free
* Housing Association rent
* Local Authority rent

Source(s)

Estimates of stock by tenure are produced by combining information from several different data sources.

National Records for Scotland (NRS) dwelling estimates are used to provide the overall number of dwellings in Scotland. These are derived from council tax records maintained by local authorities. These records are used by local authorities to administer council tax and so are considered to be of good quality. This information is also used to distinguish between vacant private or second homes and occupied dwellings.

Estimates of local authority housing stock are derived from HSfS as described above and estimates of housing association housing stock are derived from data collected by the Scottish Housing Regulator. Both of these estimates are considered to be of good quality.

Estimates of local authority and housing association stock are subtracted from the overall NRS dwelling total. This produces a combined total for owner occupation and private rent or living rent free stock. In order to estimate these categories separately, the corresponding proportion of these categories from the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) are applied. The SHS has a large sample size and the annual estimates used in the tenure calculation are considered to be reliable at the national level.

Notes on data quality

The approach described above to derive the stock by tenure estimates, utilise complete stock data sources where available, which eliminates any sampling error and provides high confidence in the results. Where sample survey data is used, the SHS has a sufficiently large annual sample (ie 10,644 in 2012) to produce a reliable split between owner occupied stock and private rent or living rent free stock.

Users should note that the estimates for local authority and housing association stock include any stock that are vacant on the corresponding survey date, whereas private vacant and second homes are excluded from the owner-occupied total.

The reference periods for the different data sources are also different. The local authority and housing association stock figures relate to 31st March each year, the SHS proportions are based on the annual calendar year survey and the NRS overall dwelling counts are taken as averages from September of consecutive years, to provide a March estimate.

In meeting the request to produce reliable stock by tenure estimates at local authority level (as described earlier under meeting user needs), consideration will have to be given as to whether the SHS annual survey sample sizes are sufficiently high at this level of geography or whether there will be a need to use SHS data combined for 2 or more years.

Quality Assurance

Quality assurance of these estimates, includes comparing them with the full tenure results from the SHS and with figures derived from the Population Census. All three sources are largely consistent with each other.

**Sales of social sector housing**

Information on sales of social sector housing is collected quarterly from local authorities. The ‘Sales 1’ form collects a summary of applications to buy, action taken on applications, and completed sales during the quarter. The ‘Sales 3’ form meanwhile records details of all individual sales of dwellings to sitting tenants by local authorities, including market value, selling price, type of dwelling and year of construction.

Source(s)

The information is provided by Local Authorities and sourced from administrative systems.

Notes on data quality

In general this information is believed to be of good quality.

Quality Assurance

The two forms (sales 1 and sales 3) are compared to ensure that consistent information has been provided in both.

**Local authority vacant stock**

Source(s)

Information on local authority housing stock is collected annually from local authorities. This includes the number of dwellings vacant on 31st March and the corresponding length of the vacancies.

Notes on data quality

The data is considered to be of good quality however Edinburgh Local Authority was unable to provide complete data on the length of vacancies for 2012/13. This is footnoted in the web tables showing 2012/13 results by Local Authority.

Quality Assurance

The figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Housing for Older People and Disabled People**

Information on supported housing is collected annually from local authorities by SG.

This includes a count of the number of dwellings at the 31st March available for:

* Housing for Older People (4 categories)
* Housing for People with Physical Disabilities (3 categories)

Source(s)

Local Authority administrative systems.

Notes on data quality

There may be some inconsistency in the way that supported housing is categorised by different local authorities. Some local authorities are unable to classify their properties into the categories asked for and so estimate these figures. There may also be some confusion around the counting of accommodation with community alarm systems as many of these also fall into other categories.

Quality Assurance

The figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Scheme of Assistance**

The Scheme of Assistance replaced the previous system of private sector home improvement grants. The scheme also aims to encourage home owners to take more responsibility for the condition of their homes, to ensure that private housing in Scotland is kept in a decent state of repair.

Information on the number of cases and amount spent are published for disabled adaptations, assistance for other householders and assistance for work under a work or other statutory notice.

Source(s)

Information on the scheme of assistance is collected annually from local authorities. The information is sourced from LA administrative systems

Notes on data quality

The following note on the quality of these statistics was included in the HSfS publication and on the home webpage of the Scheme of Assistance statistics:

“2012-13 is the third year the Scottish Government collected statistics from councils on this scheme. The data collected in the first year (2010-11) differs from that collected in subsequent years, and so is not directly comparable. As this was the third year these statistics were collected, and due to the fact that some councils were unable to record all of the information asked for, these statistics are provisional official statistics. We expect the quality of the data to improve over time as councils become familiar with monitoring the scheme - as such there may be revisions to the published data in the future.”

This is a relatively new data collection and local authorities have encountered a number of difficulties when attempting to provide the requested information. There is some evidence that local authorities are not answering all of the questions on a consistent basis and may not always be able to provide the information exactly as it is being requested. As a result of these concerns over the data quality these statistics have been published as ‘provisional’ official statistics.

Quality Assurance

These figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority. Any necessary changes are then made to ensure consistency over time.

**Local Authority lettings**

Information is collected annually on, amongst other things, the number of vacancies arising during the year, the number of lettings made to LA stock by source of tenant, tenancy changes and types of tenancy agreements.

Source(s)

Local Authority administrative systems.

Notes on data quality

A number of local authorities have difficulties in accurately providing information on tenancy changes and on nominations invited from other landlords.

Quality Assurance

These figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Local Authority evictions**

Information is collected on the different phases of the eviction system covering:

* Notice of proceedings issued
* Court action initiated
* Eviction order
* Dwellings abandoned following decree
* Evictions carried out
* New post decree tenancy granted at same dwelling (technical eviction)

This information is also collected by the main reason of the eviction case, categorised by ‘Rent Arrears’, ‘Anti-Social Behaviour’ and ‘Other’.

Source(s)

Information on the evictions is collected annually from local authorities. The information is sourced from LA administrative systems

Notes on data quality

Data on evictions is believed to be of good quality as it can have serious consequences for individual tenants and includes information from the courts.

The consequence of an eviction order usually results in the re-possession of the local authority dwelling. This can either be achieved through tenants abandoning their dwellings or by staying until the eviction is carried out. As this achieves the same final outcome, users are advised to consider results for both abandonments and evictions simultaneously.

Quality Assurance

The figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority and, if necessary, changes are made either to the latest year’s data or to that for earlier years in order to ensure consistency.

**Housing Lists**

Information is collected annually from Local Authorities on flow of applicants on and off housing lists, including the number of applicants on the register on 31st March each year. This information is requested separately for those on the waiting list and current local authority tenants on the transfer list. Questions are also asked about housing list arrangements, including the operation of Common Housing Registers, where Local Authorities and Housing Associations have joint registers.

Source(s)

Information on housing lists is collected annually from local authorities. The information is sourced from LA administrative systems

Notes on data quality

The housing lists statistics published in HSfS represent households who are on Local Authority Only housing lists or on combined Local Authority & Housing Association lists operated through a Common Housing Register.

These statistics do not cover the 6 Local Authorities in Scotland which have transferred all of their stock to Housing Associations.

There are data quality issues regarding the housing lists statistics collected by SG for HSfS:

* Individual applicants can apply to be on several different local authority housing lists as well as several different housing association lists. We therefore believe that HSfS figures are double-counting to some extent the number of unique applicants on the housing lists covered by HSfS.

As we collect aggregate data on housing lists, we are not able to quantify and correct for this double-counting using the data collected for HSfS.

* There is a possibility that some applicants on housing lists are no longer actively looking for social housing. This can occur if applicants do not inform local authorities of this change or if housing lists are not reviewed frequently.
* HSfS statistics on housing lists are available on the website from 2001. In 2001, 2 local authorities reported that they were operating a Common Housing Register with other housing associations in their vicinity. This has risen to 16 local authorities in 2013.

Users ought to bear this in mind when considering HSfS trends in housing lists, as this could potentially represent an increase in the coverage of housing lists. This would occur if there were any applicants who were only on housing association lists prior to the introduction of Common Housing Registers and hence previously not been included on Local Authority Only lists.

Details on the coverage of HSfS housing lists in terms of which Local Authorities have operated Common Housing Registers is available in the final worksheet of the HSfS Housing Lists statistics available at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/HousingLists>

* Some Local Authorities have not provided housing lists data dis-aggregated between waiting lists and transfer lists.

In terms of generating the Scotland level figures, all the applicants in such Local Authorities have been counted as being on the waiting list and none on the transfer list. This clearly introduces an inaccuracy into these sub-totals, especially if there have been changes to this reporting over time. Users are therefore advised to apply caution to the separate waiting and transfer lists, especially when making comparisons between different local authorities.

As there are both coverage and data quality issues with the HSfS housing list statistics, SG has in the past commissioned housing lists statistics from IPSOS Mori Omnibus Survey. Reference to these survey from the August 2010 and February 2011 surveys is contained in the HSfS publication, with full results available on the SG website at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/HousingListSurvey>

More recently, questions have been added to the Scottish Household Survey on whether households are on a housing list, or if they are using Choice Based Lettings or similar. Results are reported annually at:

<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/16002/PublicationAnnual>

Quality Assurance

It is difficult to quality assure the aggregate housing list figures provided by local authorities, especially for double counting. SG quality assurance is therefore restricted to raising queries on figures showing substantial changes from previous years.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)**

Information is published on the number of applications received during the year, the number refused, withdrawn and granted and the number of licenses in force on 31st March each year by type and number of occupants.

Source(s)

Information on houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) is collected annually from local authority systems.

Notes on data quality

Information on HMOs is generally believed to be of good quality. However, the returns received from some local authorities are inconsistent from one year to the next suggesting that these LAs have difficulties in tracking applications made in one financial year where the decision on that application is made in the next financial year.

A number of local authorities estimate the breakdowns of refusals by reason for refusal, the type of HMO and the number of occupants in each HMO.

Quality Assurance

The figures undergo quality assurance before publications. In particular figures are compared to those provided in previous years. Where there appears to be a discrepancy this is queried with the local authority. Any necessary changes are then made to ensure consistency over time.

**Communities Analysis Division**

Scottish Government