

Short Term Lets Licensing Statistics, Scotland, to 31 December 2023

Key Points

Applications received and validated by local authorities

Note: [] indicate the excel tab where the data is located in the supporting document.

- This publication presents data on all validated applications as at end of December 2023, and does not cover all applications received. Due to the large volume of applications received by 1st October 2023 deadline for existing hosts, some local authorities had not validated all applications by the time data was submitted for this publication. Additionally, there will be applications where authorities do not have the information required to validate an application and are working with applicants to obtain this information. This means the statistics in this publication are provisional and subject to upward revision in future releases.
- There were at least 23,576 applications for a short-term licence as of end December 2023. 14,539 short term lets licence applications were received and validated by local authorities relating to the period between 1 October 2022 (when the scheme opened) and 31 December 2023. There were at least 9,037 additional applications received but not yet validated as of end December 2023 – local authorities do not have to provide data to Scottish Government on applications that have not been validated so this publication reports a partial picture. **[Table 1]**
- Over half (55% or 7,989) of all validated applications (14,539) so far were received in the quarter (July to September 2023) just before the 1 October cut off for existing hosts and operators to apply for a provisional licence to continue operating. **[Chart 1]**
- The majority (11,505 or 79%) of validated applications relate to secondary letting (i.e. where a non-primary residence is let out), with 1,537 (11%) relating to home sharing, 837 (6%) for home letting, and 660 (5%) for a mixture of home sharing and letting. **[Chart 2]**

Applications status

- As of 31 December 2023, nearly half (49%) of the validated applications were granted a licence, and half (50%) of the applications were pending determination. A minority of applications were withdrawn, refused, lapsed or suspended (1%). **[Table 1]**

- Local authorities have 12 months to process an application from existing hosts and 9 months for new hosts. 96% (1,401) of applications received between October and December 2022 had a licence granted within 12 months. 1% (19) of the applications received in this period were withdrawn and 3% (38) were pending determination as of end December 2023. **[Chart 1]**

Licences or exemptions in operation

- 12,435 licences or exemptions were in operation as of 31 December 2023. Full licences accounted for over half (57% or 7,085) of this number and 43% (5,350) were provisional licences pending a final decision. There were 27 temporary licences and exemptions. However, there will be applications eligible for a provisional licences not reported in this publication if the local authority had not validated the application by 31 December 2023. **[Table 1; Table F]**
- 31,896 bedrooms and a total maximum occupancy of 63,798 people were reported in the licences or exemptions in operation granted. **[Table K]**

Introduction

This is the third statistical publication reporting on the operation of the short term lets licensing scheme under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022. Local authority licensing schemes opened to receive applications from 1 October 2022.

The supporting Excel file for this publication includes Excel versions of the charts and tables presented, along with detailed tables at a Scotland, local authority and data zone area level. Information on the operational context and data collection and data quality is available in the [Data and Methodology section](#).

This publication uses a different methodology to the previous publication for assigning dates. Previously an application was presented by quarter in which it was validated. Applications are now presented according to the quarter in which it was received. This change has occurred as local authorities have 9 to 12 months to assess the outcome of an application starting from the date an application was received. Where we do not have data on date application was received, date validated is used – this is particularly relevant to Glasgow City data.

An Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

These statistics are designated as Official Statistics in accordance with the Statistics and Service Registration Act 2007. They have been produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Statistics. Further information on Official Statistics is published by the UK Statistics Authority.

Summary of total valid applications received, granted and in operation

This publication reports a snapshot of data from when the Short Term Lets Licensing Scheme opened to receive applications on 1 October 2022 until 31 December 2023. Local authorities are only required to provide data on all applications they have validated. An application is validated once local authorities confirm that all the required information and documentation has been provided, and the host has made an application fee payment.

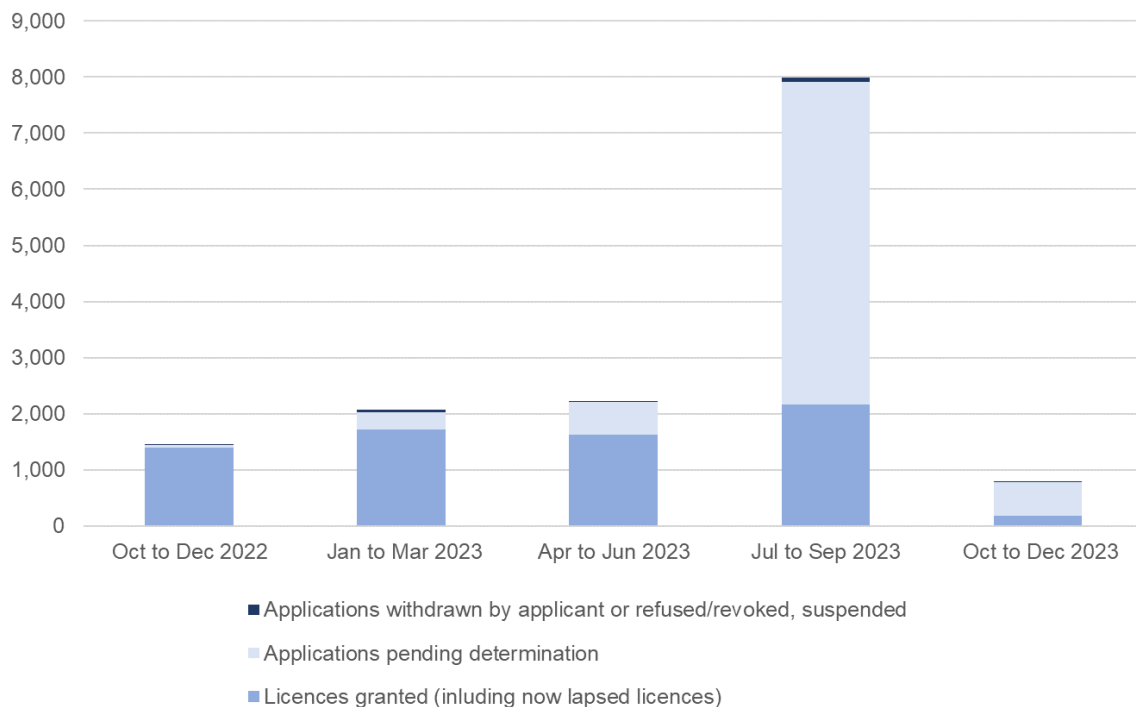
Due to the large volume of applications received by 1st October 2023 deadline for existing hosts to apply for licences, some local authorities had not validated all applications received up to the end of December 2023, by the time data was submitted for this publication. Additionally, there will be applications where authorities do not have the information required to validate an application and are working with applying hosts/operators to obtain this information. Some, but not all local authorities provided data on the number of applications that they received but not yet been validated. This means the statistics in the publication are provisional and subject to upward revision in future releases.

Table 1: Summary of total applications validated, granted and in operation, as at end December 2023

	Total received as of end Dec 2023	% valid applications	% licences in operation
Valid applications	14,539	-	-
Applications still to be validated that were reported	9,037	-	-
Licences granted (including now lapsed licences)	7,098	49%	-
Applications pending determination	7,279	50%	-
Applications withdrawn by applicant	146	1%	-
Applications refused / revoked / suspended	16	0%	-
Licences granted (excluding now lapsed licences and including temporary licences and exemptions)	7,085	-	57%
Provisional licences in operation	5,350	-	43%
Licences in operation	12,435	-	-
Licences lapsed	13	-	-

As Table 1 shows, 14,539 applications were received and validated by local authorities from 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2023. As of end December 2023, there were at least 9,037 additional applications received but not yet validated or invalid. This brings the total number of applications received to at least 23,576. As local authorities work to validate applications received before December 2023 the data presented in future editions of this publication will become more complete.

Chart 1: Total applications validated, granted by date received, as of end December 2023



As Chart 1 illustrates, there was a substantial increase in applications in July to September 2023 compared with previous quarters. Over half (55% or 7,989) of all validated applications so far were received in July to September 2023. This period was just before the 1 October cut off for existing hosts and operators to apply and obtain a provisional licence to continue operating. After this period the number of applications fell, but it is important to remember this data is not yet complete.

As of 31st December, nearly half (49%) of the validated applications were granted a licence, and half (50%) of the applications were pending determination. A minority (1%) of applications were withdrawn, refused or suspended.

Application status varied by local authority (Table E in the supporting documents), from 9% (4 out of 46) of applications pending determination in East Dunbartonshire to 89% in Dundee (186 out of 209 applications), Inverclyde (51 out of 57 applications), and Glasgow (329 out of 369). Variations will be caused by various factors, such as the number of applications received, particularly those received

before the October 2023 cut off for existing hosts and operators, as well as staff capacity within local authorities to process applications.

12,435 licences or exemptions were in operation as of 31 December 2023. Full licences accounted for over half of this number and provisional licences pending a final decision accounted for 43%. There were 27 temporary licences or exemptions. It is important to note that there may be some existing operators who are able to operate but not reported in this publication if the local authority had not validated their application and provided a provisional licence by 31 December 2023.

Local authorities have 9 months (for new hosts) and 12 months (for hosts operating before and applied for a licence before 1 October 2022) to process an application from the date it is received. The majority (96%) of the 1,458 applications received between October and December 2022 had a licence granted within 12 months. A minority of the applications received in this period were withdrawn by the applicant or pending determination as of end December 2023.

Valid applications: local areas

Table 2 shows valid applications received broken down by local authority. Highland, Edinburgh, Fife and Dumfries & Galloway accounted for nearly half (6,771 or 47%) of all validated applications (14,539) received up to 31 December 2023. However, local authorities are only required to provide data on all applications they have validated, so many local authorities will have received more applications than are summarised in Table 2.

With the data reported so far, most local authorities saw a peak in applications (July to September 2023) before the October 2023 cut off period for existing operators to obtain a provisional licence. Edinburgh had the greatest number and highest proportion of the July to September 2023 valid applications (20%; 1,565 out of 7,989). Please refer to Table 2 in the supporting excel file published.

Table 2: Total valid applications received and validated between October 2022 and end of December 2023 by local authority

Local Authority	Total Received and validated to end December 2023
Scotland	14,539
Aberdeen City	419
Aberdeenshire	991
Angus	230
Argyll & Bute	478

Clackmannanshire	59
Dumfries & Galloway	1,087
Dundee City	209
East Ayrshire	71
East Dunbartonshire	46
East Lothian	274
East Renfrewshire	37
Edinburgh City	1,847
Falkirk	79
Fife	1,090
Glasgow	369
Highland	2,747
Inverclyde	57
Midlothian	98
Moray	178
Na h-Eileanan Siar	679
North Ayrshire	385
North Lanarkshire	50
Orkney Islands	327
Perth & Kinross	369
Renfrewshire	110
Scottish Borders	391
Shetland Islands	344
South Ayrshire	474
South Lanarkshire	221
Stirling	642
West Dunbartonshire	83
West Lothian	98

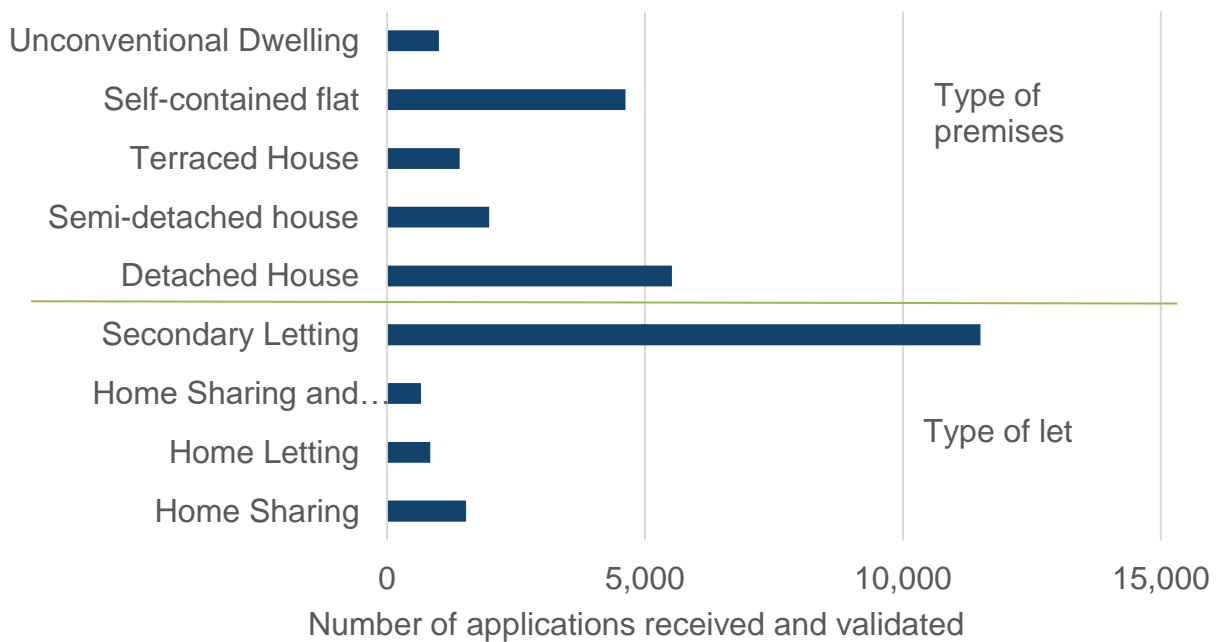
Table A in the supporting documents Excel workbook lists the number of applications received and validated by individual data zone area. Statistical data zones are the key geography for the dissemination of small area statistics in Scotland, designed to have roughly standard sized populations of 500 to 1,000 household residents.

A total of 2,841 data zones have had at least one application received and validated to 31 December 2023, which equates to 42% of the total 6,796 data zones in Scotland.

In previous publications the rates of applications received and validated per 10,000 dwellings across different local authority areas were also presented. These have been temporarily stopped until more of the applications received for the period before 1 October 2023 have been validated and included in the data to ensure an accurate comparison of the rates per dwelling at a local authority level.

Valid applications received: type of premises and let

Chart 2: Applications received and validated, by type of premises and let as of end of December 2023



Of the total 14,539 applications received and validated by 31 December 2023:

- The majority relate to secondary letting (79%)
- 11% for home sharing
- 6% for home letting
- 5% for a mixture of home sharing and letting.
- The majority relate to houses, 38% were detached, 14% were for semi-detached and 10% for terraced houses
- 32% were self-contained flats accounted for 32% of applications
- 7% were unconventional dwellings such as yurts or camping pods etc.

Tables B and C in the supporting Excel document show the number of applications received and validated by each local authority, by type of premises and type of let respectively.

This shows some variations in the proportions of types of premises across different local authority areas, some of which may reflect different underlying profiles of total dwellings in each area. For example, 78% of applications received and validated in Na h-Eileanan Siar have been in relation to lets for detached houses compared with 6% in Edinburgh (where self-contained flats account for 79%).

In terms of types of let only 46% of applications received and validated in Glasgow and 47% in Edinburgh have been for secondary letting, compared to 79% nationally. Glasgow instead had the highest rate of home sharing applications (43%). Edinburgh had a roughly even split between home sharing (18%), home letting (17%) and home sharing and home letting (18%).

Licences in operation: local areas

Table 3 shows that local authorities with the highest numbers of total licences (provisional or granted) and exemptions in operation as of 31 December 2023 include Highland, Edinburgh, Dumfries and Galloway, Aberdeenshire, and Fife which together account for over half (6,792 or 55%) of all licences in operation as of 31 December 2023. However, there will be applications eligible for a provisional licence where the application was not validated by 31 December 2023 and therefore not reported in this publication.

Table 3: Total licences (granted or provisional) in operation as of 31 December 2023 by local authority

Local Authority	Total Licences (granted or provisional applications) in operation
Scotland	12,435
Aberdeen City	354
Aberdeenshire	943
Angus	190
Argyll & Bute	439
Clackmannanshire	31
Dumfries & Galloway	978
Dundee City	186
East Ayrshire	53
East Dunbartonshire	44
East Lothian	240

East Renfrewshire	35
Edinburgh City	1,530
Falkirk	71
Fife	925
Glasgow	233
Highland	2,416
Inverclyde	51
Midlothian	72
Moray	154
Na h-Eileanan Siar	541
North Ayrshire	360
North Lanarkshire	44
Orkney Islands	313
Perth & Kinross	300
Renfrewshire	93
Scottish Borders	359
Shetland Islands	333
South Ayrshire	355
South Lanarkshire	51
Stirling	622
West Dunbartonshire	79
West Lothian	40

16% (1,155) of the 7,085 full licences granted were with additional conditions. Na h-Eileanan Siar (41%; 476) and Argyll & Bute (35%; 403) accounted for most of these

licences. Local Authorities can set out additional conditions to short term let properties. The additional conditions for [Na h-Eileanan Siar](#) and [Argyll & Bute](#) can be found on the local authority website guidance pages. Examples include prevention of nuisance and disturbance conditions. Please refer to Table E in the supporting excel file for more information.

The rates of total licences in operation per 10,000 dwellings across different local authority areas were previously published. These have been temporarily stopped until more of the applications received for the period before 1 October 2023 have been validated and included in the data to ensure an accurate comparison across local authority areas.

Table G in the supporting documents Excel workbook lists the number of licences in operation by individual data zone area. A total of 2,514 data zones have had at least one licence or exemption in operation of 31 December 2023, which equates to 37% of the total 6,796 data zones in Scotland.

Licences in operation: premises type, type of let and accommodation information

As Table 4 shows most licences in operation relate to secondary lettings (81%; type of let) and houses (62%; premises type), with the most common premises being a detached house. This is a very similar profile to applications validated.

Table 4: Licences in operation as of 31 December 2023, by type of premises and type of let

As of end December 2023	Licences in operation as at end	% Licences in operation as at end
Total Licences	12,435	
Type of short term let		
Home Sharing	1,257	10%
Home Letting	630	5%
Home Sharing and letting	519	4%
Secondary Letting	10,029	81%
Type of premises		
Detached House	4,839	39%
Semi-detached house	1,692	14%
Terraced House	1,177	9%
Self-contained flat	3,872	31%

Unconventional Dwelling	855	7%
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Tables H and I in the supporting Excel document show the number of licences in operation by each local authority, by type of premises and type of let. Like applications received and validated, the local authority breakdowns show some variations in the proportions of types of premises across different local authority areas, some of which may reflect different underlying profiles of total dwellings in each area.

Overall, at least, 31,896 bedrooms and a total maximum occupancy of 63,798 people were reported in the licences or exemptions in operation. There were some licences that did not provide this information (3% of licences missing information for bedrooms, 3 licences missing information for total occupancy).

Authorities with the highest average number of bedrooms per licence include Fife (3.9 bedrooms per licence), West Dunbartonshire (3.3), with the lowest including Edinburgh (1.8) and Inverclyde (1.9).

Authorities with the highest average maximum occupancy per licence include West Dunbartonshire (7.3 average maximum occupancy per licence) and Midlothian (6.5), with the lowest including Glasgow (3.5), and Edinburgh (3.7).

Accommodation information has been provided for 83% (10,354) of the 12,435 licences or exemptions in operation, equating to a total of 11,803 accommodation units. Excluding authorities with fewer than 10 total records with accommodation information, authorities with the highest average number of accommodation units per licence in operation include Clackmannanshire (1.6 units per licence) and South Lanarkshire (1.6).

Table J in the supporting excel file has accommodation information for each local authority.

8,345 (67%) of licences have EPC data associated with them. 41% of these have an EPC rating in the A-C range. Further EPC rating data can be found in the Scotland Summary table presented in the supporting tables.

Glossary

Short Term Let – for the purposes of this report the meaning of a Short Term Let encompasses the licences that form the licensing scheme as set out in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022.

In general a short term let can be considered to be where a property is being rented but is not the primary residence of the people renting it, although the exact scope of lets covered by the Order may differ to this, for example lets related to premises which are already covered by any other existing licensing schemes such as for caravan parks or alcohol licences may be excluded.

The Short Term Lets Licensing Data Collection Specification sets out information on the different categories used within the data collection, which includes that:

Licence types are split into:

- Full Licences are a standard licence for short-term letting and have not been renewed. This includes both applications from new hosts, as well as formerly provisional licences which have been granted by the licensing authority to existing hosts in operation prior to 1st October 2022.
- Renewed licence are licences which have been renewed by the applicant
- Provisional licences are issued to existing short term let providers (for application received prior to 1st October 2023) for properties that were let prior to 1st October 2022 and allow them to continue operating until a decision is made by the licensing authority
- Temporary licences can be granted by the licensing authority for a duration that does not exceed six weeks.
- Temporary exemptions from the requirements to a licence can also be granted by a licensing authority.

The **main forms of short-term** letting include:

- Home Sharing are where an owner of a property lets out a room or rooms in their primary residence while they are living in the property.
- Home Letting are where an owner of a property lets out their primary residence while they are staying elsewhere.
- Secondary Letting are where an owner of a property does not normally stay at the property which they are letting out, i.e. where an owner's non-primary residence is let out.

The different possible **status of a licence** applications include:

- Granted - no additional conditions, where the application has been granted, with no additional conditions other than those mandatory conditions which are required by legislation.
- Granted - with additional conditions, where the application has been granted, with additional conditional added along with those mandatory conditions required by legislation.

- Withdrawn, where the application has been withdrawn by the applicant.
- Pending determination, where the application is being determined by the licensing authority
- Revoked, where the licence was granted, but subsequently revoked
- Lapsed, where the licence was granted, but has expired without renewal
- Suspended, where the licence was granted, but has been suspended
- Refused, where the application was refused licence by the local authority
- Invalid, where the application did not contain sufficient information for determination.

The **types of premises** which the application can be for include:

- Detached house
- Semi-detached house
- Terraced house
- Self-contained flat
- Unconventional dwelling (which includes yurts, camping pods, caravans (excluding those located within licensed caravan sites) used mainly for holiday lets. ie. any accommodation requiring a licence that is not a dwelling or house.

Data and Methodology

General notes

The summary statistics reported in this publication on number of applications received are based on the number of applications received and validated (i.e. applications received and determined valid by local authorities). Local authorities differ in their ability to report on invalid / incomplete licences, so any national figures reported on this basis are likely to provide a partial picture only.

Applications for short term lets are either for Full, Renewal, Temporary, or Exemption licences. In addition, if an application is received before 1 October 2023 from an existing host of a short term let, that application receives a provisional licence, under which the host can continue operating until they received a determination. When an application which has received a provisional licence is granted, that provisional licence is changed to a full licence. An application from a new host, or received after 1 October 2023, is recorded as a new licence and needs to be granted before the new host can operate.

Under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022, local authorities have 12 months to process an application from existing hosts and 9 months for new hosts to reach a final decision on the application.

Note that the licences by type figures presented reflect the status of the application as at the end of the quarterly period prior to the point of the data extraction taking place. Some of the applications recorded in the Full Licence category for a given

quarter may have been previously Provisional or New Licences at an earlier time point in the same quarter, however this initial status is not always separately identifiable.

Operational context

This is the third statistical publication reporting on the operation of the short term lets licensing scheme under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022.

The scheme is administrated by local authorities, who as per the Order are required to maintain a public register of the applications and licences, and to share data on applications and licences for statistical purposes with the Scottish Government.

Local authority licensing schemes opened to receive applications from 1 October 2022. Existing hosts and operators had until 1 October 2023 to apply for a licence and can continue operating under a provisional licence whilst their applications are being determined, although if an application was not received by this date, they will not be able to operate until they make an application, and a full licence has been granted.

Data collection

The Scottish Government collects record level data from local authorities, collected quarterly through a dedicated web portal managed by Scottish Government called ProcXed. A data specification sets out the data to be provided, along with values and definitions for each data field. As specified, local authorities are only required to report validated applications for licences to the Scottish Government although some may voluntarily supply non-validated records for completeness.

Communication with data supply partners

The Scottish Government maintains a regular correspondence the local authority contact who supply the licensing data, through working group meetings as well as the use of the Improvement Service Knowledge Hub to share key documentation and provide a forum for discussion and support.

Data quality

The Scottish Government receives data from the local authorities into a web portal known as ProcXed. This performs a basic validation automatic error checking which prompts local authorities to correct any errors it detects in the supplied data.

Once this data collection concludes the data is downloaded by Scottish Government statisticians and the data is processed to ensure that it is consistent between quarters and to detect any further errors. Errors are corrected as part of a Reproducible Analytical Pipeline.

Once draft statistics are collated, as a further quality check the summarised statistics collated by Scottish Government statisticians are then sent to local

authorities to confirm that they represent an accurate representation of what they have reported in the record level data.

For this publication, 12 out of 32 local authorities responded to confirm, with any issues raised corrected before proceeding. It is possible that some of the data for the remaining 20 authorities that did not respond may contain some errors which may be subject to future revision.

Whilst the data quality steps as set out above should help to minimise the risk of any data issues being present, the fact that this is a relatively new data collection based on new processes being applied by local authorities means that there may be some potential for some initial teething issues being present. If any future data issues are identified, we will aim to work with the local authorities involved to receive corrected data and to apply any necessary revisions to figures in future publications.

Due to a change in methodology moving from reporting on date validated to reporting on date received, revisions tables are not included in this publication but will resume for the next publication.

Tell us what you think

We have streamlined this publication to make it easier to follow and to focus on the most recent key findings, whilst ensuring supporting Excel tables contain most of the data previously published at both a Scotland and Local Authority level.

Please note that we have paused the publications of rates per 10,000 at local authority level and rates per 1,000 at data zone level. This will be reinstated once we have more stable data for applications received up until 1 October 2023, where a complete picture of existing hosts and providers can be obtained.

We are always interested to hear from our users about how our statistics are used, and how they can be improved.

Feedback survey

We'd appreciate it if you would complete our short [feedback survey](#) on this publication.

Enquiries

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Future publications

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