

Accredited Official Statistics



Housing statistics for Scotland, 2023-24: Key Trends Summary

Key Points

Housing stock by tenure

- As of 31st March 2023, there were 2.7 million dwellings estimated in Scotland. Of these, 60% were owner-occupied, 3.7% were vacant or second homes, 13.2% were privately rented or lived in rent-free, and 23% were social rented properties.

New Housing Supply (new build, rehabilitations, and net conversions)

- New housing supply was 20,364 in 2023-24, a decrease of 3,984 homes (-16.4%) since 2022-23. The majority of new housing supply in 2023-24 was new build (97.9%), with small proportions of rehabilitations (0.3%) and net conversions (1.8%).
- New build completions decreased by 16.1% from 23,778 in 2022-23 to 19,943 in 2023-24. Commentary on **more recent data** on house building completions as well as house building starts and approvals can be found in the [housing statistics quarterly update publications](#).
- **Rehabilitations of properties** decreased by 50% from 114 in 2022-23 to 57 in 2023-24.
- There was a 20% decrease (-92 homes) in net **new dwellings created by conversions** in 2023-24 (364 homes) compared with 2022-23 (456 homes).

Owner occupied

- In 2023-24 6,038 local authority **scheme of assistance grants** were paid to householders, a 5% decrease (or 315 fewer grants) than 2022-2023. Scheme of Assistance grants totalled almost £37 million.
- The majority of these were for disabled adaptations, 4,194 grants which is 9% less than the 2022-23 figure of 4,602. Disabled adaptation grants in 2023-24 totalled £22.2 million which is an increase on the 2022-23 figure of £21.7m.

Private rented

- As of 31st March 2024, there were a total of 15,274 houses in multiple occupation licences in force, a decrease of 160 (1.0%) since the previous year.

Social rented

- The total social sector housing stock increased by 6,102, reaching 633,030 dwellings as of 31st March 2024, compared with 626,928 dwellings in the previous year. **There were 325,477 local authority dwellings and 307,553 housing association dwellings as of 31st March 2024.**
- In March 2024 there were 21,085 **supported houses** for older people and 29,813 supported houses for people with physical disabilities provided by local authorities. There was an increase (1.2%) in supported housing for older people and a decrease (-1.2%) in housing for people with physical disabilities between March 2023 and March 2024.

- During 2023-24 there were 25,423 permanent **local authority lettings** made, an increase of 1,773 lets (7.5%) compared to the previous year. Of all the local authority lettings made in 2023-24, 49% were to homeless households, 26% were to those on a housing waiting list, 21% were transfers to existing tenants, and 3% classified as other.
- There were 16,640 **notices of eviction proceedings** in 2023-24 relating to council tenants, an increase of 10.2% since 2022-23. The latest figure is 32.2% lower than pre-pandemic levels (2019-20). There were 561 proceedings resulting in evictions or abandonments in 2023-24, with the majority (91%) of these due to rent arrears as opposed to antisocial behaviour or other reasons, this percentage is higher than in 2022-23 (85%).
- As of 31st March 2024, 177,264 applications were recorded on 26 local authority or common housing register **housing lists**. This was a 1.2% increase compared with March 2023 (2,172 more households). It should be noted that people can apply to more than one local authority, and they also can apply for both council and Registered Social Landlords housing, leading to multiple counting on housing lists.

Introduction

This publication summarises housing stock by tenure to 31st March 2023, local authority housing management data (relating either to local authority social housing, home ownership, or the private rented sector), and new housing supply data up to 31st March 2024. Due to data source availability, there is variability in the time periods for different indicators.

There have been some changes made to this publication, since the last release of [Housing Statistics for Scotland, 2022-23: Key Trends Summary](#):

- A summary on [local authority total and vacant housing stock up to March 2024](#), was published separately in December 2024, so has not been included in this release.
- Sections on New House Building and Affordable Housing Supply have been removed, as **more recent data** on house building completions as well as house building starts and approvals together with data on Affordable Housing Supply delivery can be found in the [housing statistics quarterly update publications](#).

The details of the data sources and methodology can be found [here](#).

The focus of this report will be on national data. Data can be found for local authorities in the supporting excel tables.

An Accredited Official Statistics Publication for Scotland

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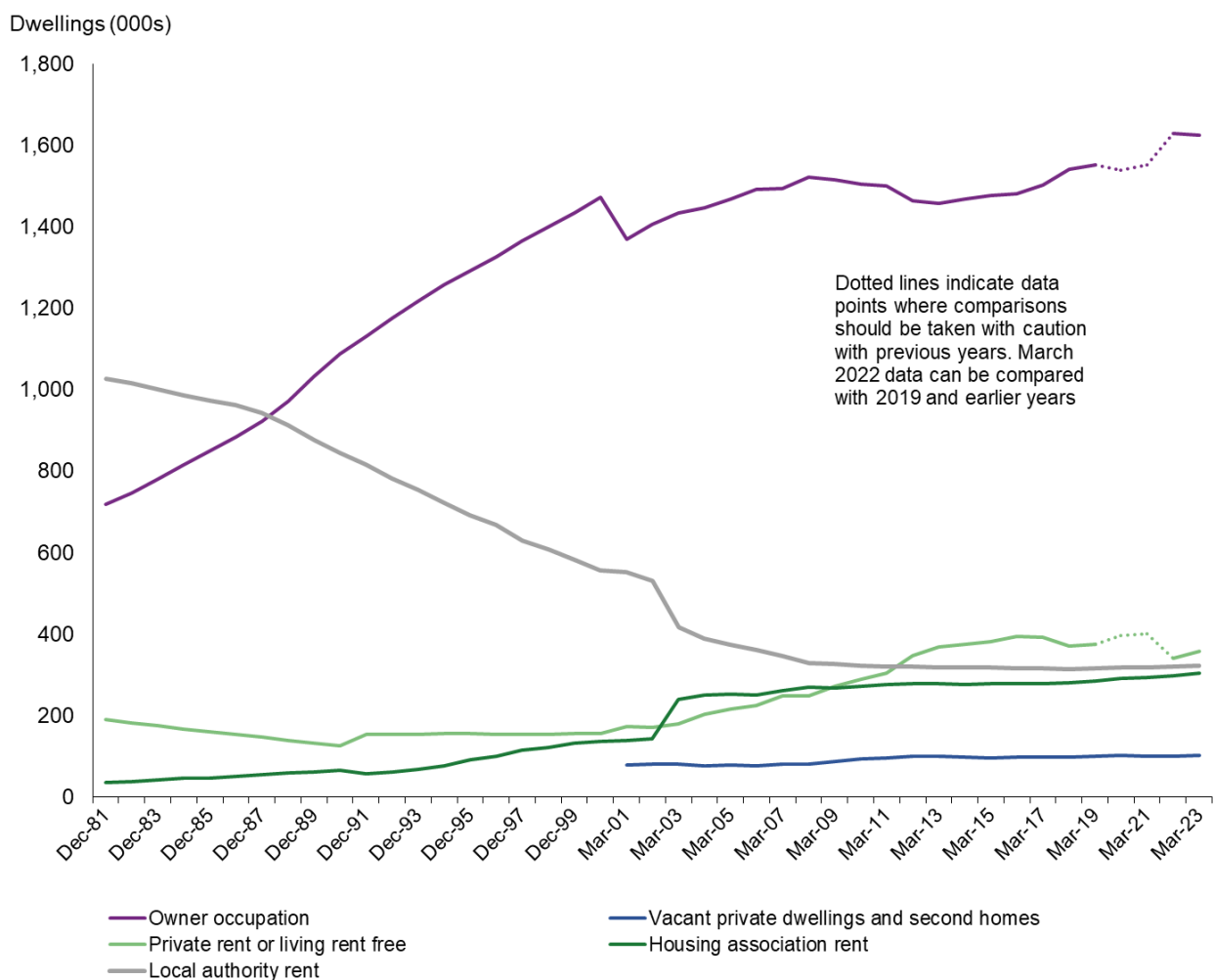
Stock by Tenure

As of 31st March 2023, there were an estimated 2.7 million dwellings in Scotland. An estimated 60% of dwellings were owner occupied, 23% being social rented properties, 13.2% being private rented or where the household is living rent free, and 3.7% being vacant or second homes.

The number of dwellings in Scotland has increased by 38% over the last 4 decades from 1.97 million in 1981 to 2.7 million in 2023. This has coincided with an increasing Scottish population and the increased prevalence of smaller households.

Chart 1 illustrates trends across tenure types, showing a particular rise in owner occupation and a decrease in local authority stock from 1981 to 2003, attributed to the Right to Buy initiative, transfers of stock to housing associations, and a decline in local authority new builds. Note that vacant private dwellings and second homes were recorded separately from owner occupation from 2001.

Chart 1: Since 1981 the biggest changes have seen a reduction in local authority stock and increase in home ownership.



The reduction in owner occupation between 2008 and 2014 (of 4.0% or 55,000 dwellings) coincided with a large increase in the number of households renting privately or living rent free (of 51% or 127,000 dwellings). This trend was likely influenced by the 2008 financial crisis.

For the years following 2001, social rented stock estimates are derived directly from data held by the Scottish Housing Regulator. This estimate of social rented stock is then subtracted from total dwelling counts of occupied properties (National Records of Scotland data), and the remainder is apportioned between privately owner occupied and private rented stock, based on the tenure proportions recorded in the [Scottish Household Survey \(SHS\)](#). Estimates of stock of private vacant and second homes are based directly on the data from National Records of Scotland.

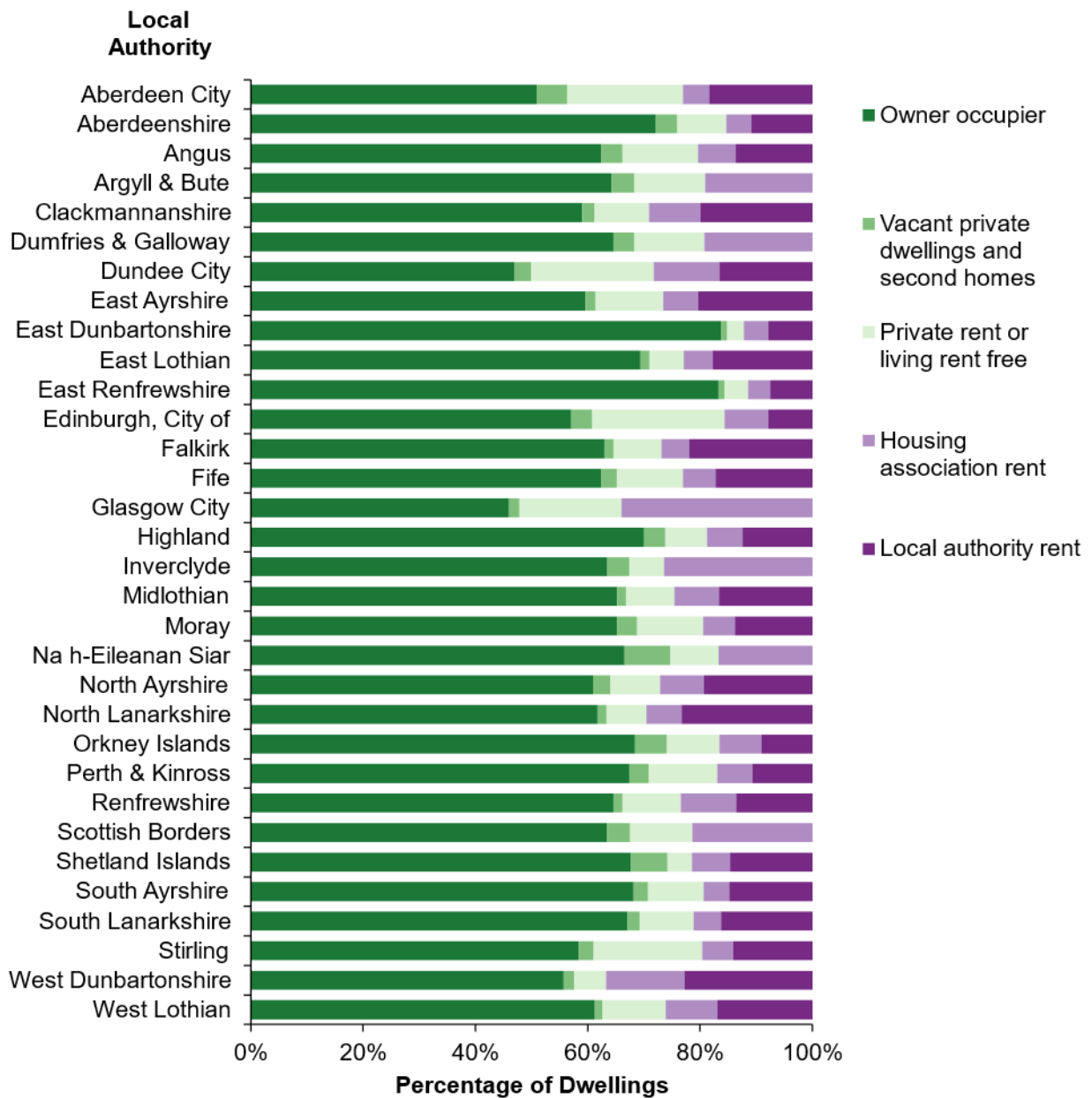
As the figures presented on private rented and owner-occupied dwellings are informed by proportions recorded in on the Scottish Household Survey, like other surveys, they subject to sampling margins of error. Social rented stock counts are provided by local authorities and the Scottish Housing Regulator so are not affected by the slight bias in the 2023 SHS.

Whilst the SHS tenure estimates may have a slight bias in 2022 and 2023, the results have been assessed to be comparable in the most part to 2019 and earlier years. The 2020 and 2021 SHS are not directly comparable to previous years or the to the SHS estimates from 2022, due changes in methodology for the SHS due to the pandemic period. Therefore, it is not recommended to compare data from 2022 (or 2019 and earlier) with the 2020 and 2021 estimates for private rented, living rent-free, or owner-occupied housing stock.

As Chart 1 indicates, private rented sector or living rent free stock estimates are 4.7% lower and owner-occupied stock is 4.7% higher in March 2023 than 2019. The [2023 SHS report](#) indicates the number of households in the private rented sector decreased by 2.9% between 2019 and 2023.

Chart 2 displays tenure estimates by local authority as of 31st March 2023, indicating varying rates of owner occupation, private renting or living rent free, and social renting across regions. Cities generally have lower owner occupation rates and higher private renting percentages.

Chart 2: Stock by tenure estimates vary by local authority area, as of 31st March 2023.



Further detailed figures are available in the [Stock by Tenure Excel web tables](#).

New Housing Supply

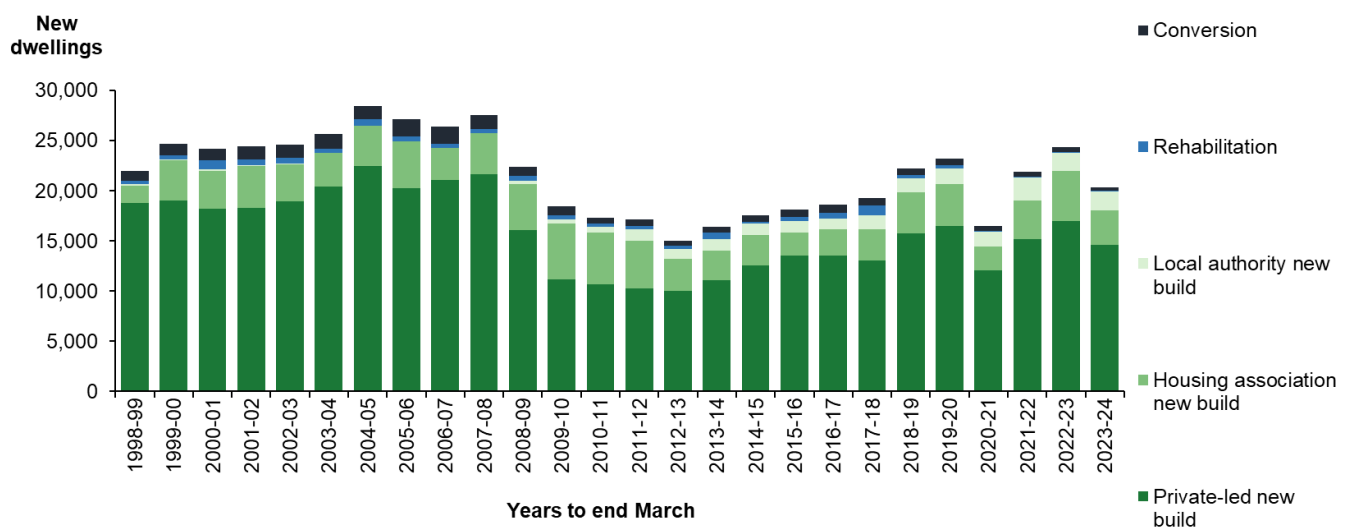
Housing stock by tenure is available up to March 2023. However, we have more recent data on new housing supply, up to March 2024. New housing supply comprises the following elements:

- **new house building:** houses completed by or for housing associations, local authorities, or private developers for market sale, below market rent or low-cost home ownership.
- **rehabilitation:** houses acquired by housing associations and refurbished either for rent or low-cost home ownership. Refurbishment of private dwellings funded wholly or partly through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP); and
- **conversion:** net new dwellings created by conversion from non-housing to housing use or by alterations to existing dwellings in all tenures.

The total supply of new housing decreased by 3,984 homes (-16.4%) between 2022-23 and 2023-24.

As Chart 3 illustrates, 2023-24 was the lowest total in the past 6 years, except for 2020-21, when the COVID 19 pandemic restrictions impacted housebuilding. New housing supply in 2023-24 was 12% lower than in the pre COVID 19 year of 2019-20 and 26% lower than 2007-08 (before the 2008 financial crisis).

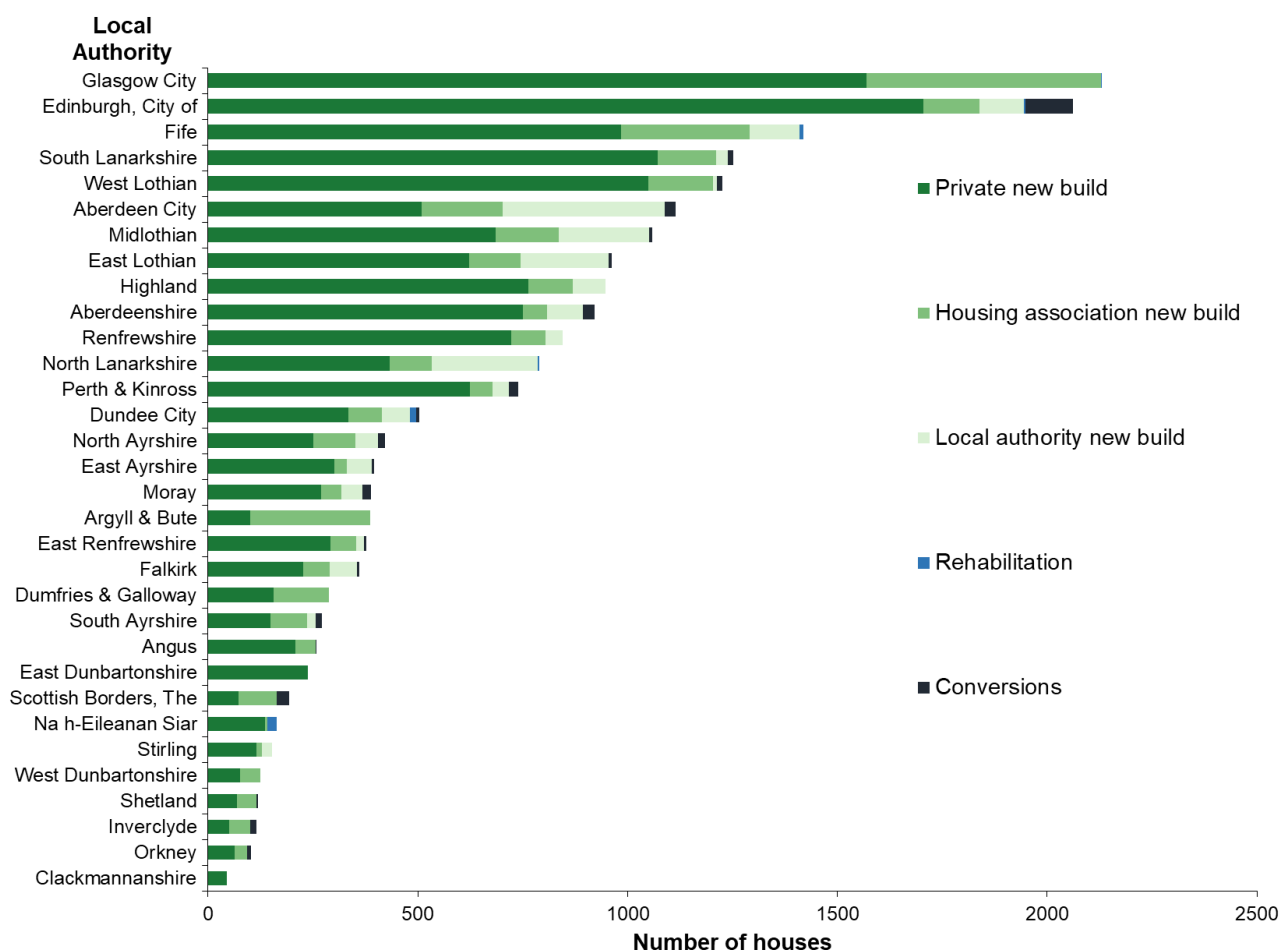
Chart 3: Total supply of new housing in Scotland in 2023-24 was lower than 4 of the previous 5 years.



In 2023-24 new builds accounted for 97.9% (19,943 homes) of the total new housing supply, with 1.8% (364) net conversions, and 0.3% (57 homes) rehabilitations. There was a decrease in new builds (-16%; -3,835 homes), rehabilitations (-50%; -57 homes) and the net number of buildings converted (-20%, -92 homes) in 2023-24 compared with 2022-23.

The components of housing supply within each local authority area for 2023-24 are shown in Chart 4. The proportions of housing supply accounted for by each grouping vary by local authority.

Chart 4: Together Glasgow City, City of Edinburgh, Fife, South Lanarkshire, and West Lothian accounted for 40% of Scotland’s new housing supply.



Further detailed figures are available in the [Housing Supply Excel web tables](#).

Note that this measure of new housing supply does not consider any dwellings removed from the housing stock through demolitions. Annual figures on demolitions are published in the [Conversions and Demolitions Excel web tables](#). However, these demolitions figures are not comprehensive, and we advise that they should be considered as a minimum level of demolition activity in Scotland. This is due to local authorities differing in their ability to provide information on demolitions across tenures other than for local authority housing stock.

Social Housing Stock

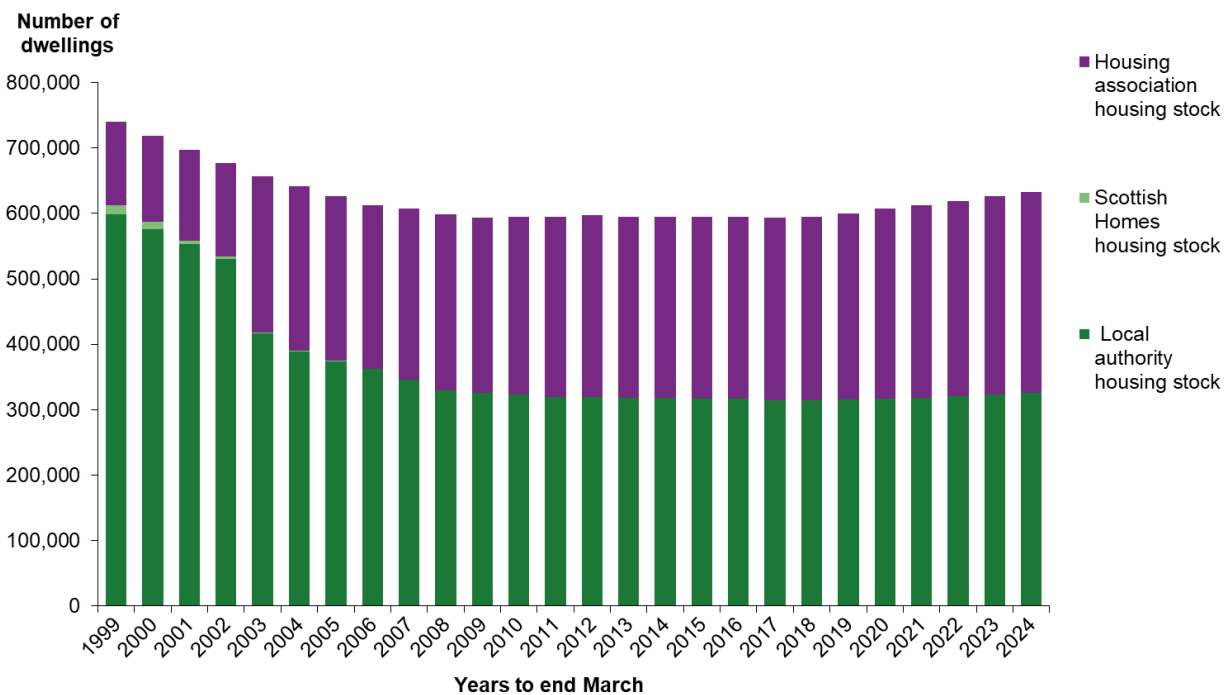
Housing stock by tenure is published up to March 2023. However, more recent data on social housing stock is available, up to March 2024.

The total social sector housing stock increased by 6,102 reaching 633,030 dwellings as of 31st March 2024. There were 325,477 local authority dwellings and 307,553 housing association dwellings as of 31st March 2024.

As of March 2024, local authorities own 51% of the social sector stock, with housing associations owning 49%. This compares local authorities owning 82% in 1999. Total social sector stock has been increasing steadily since 2018 while the proportion of housing association to local authority dwellings has stayed roughly the same. This is illustrated in Chart 5.

Local authority housing numbers declined from the 1980s but began stabilising in the 2010s. The drops in local authority housing stock since the 1980s can be explained by three main factors: tenants buying homes under Right to Buy, stock transfers to Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), and a decrease in new local authority builds. These factors have become less significant over time, particularly as the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014, included a provision to end Right to Buy for new applications in July 2016. Further details of previous trends in Right to Buy sales are available in the [Sales of Social Sector Housing Excel web tables](#).

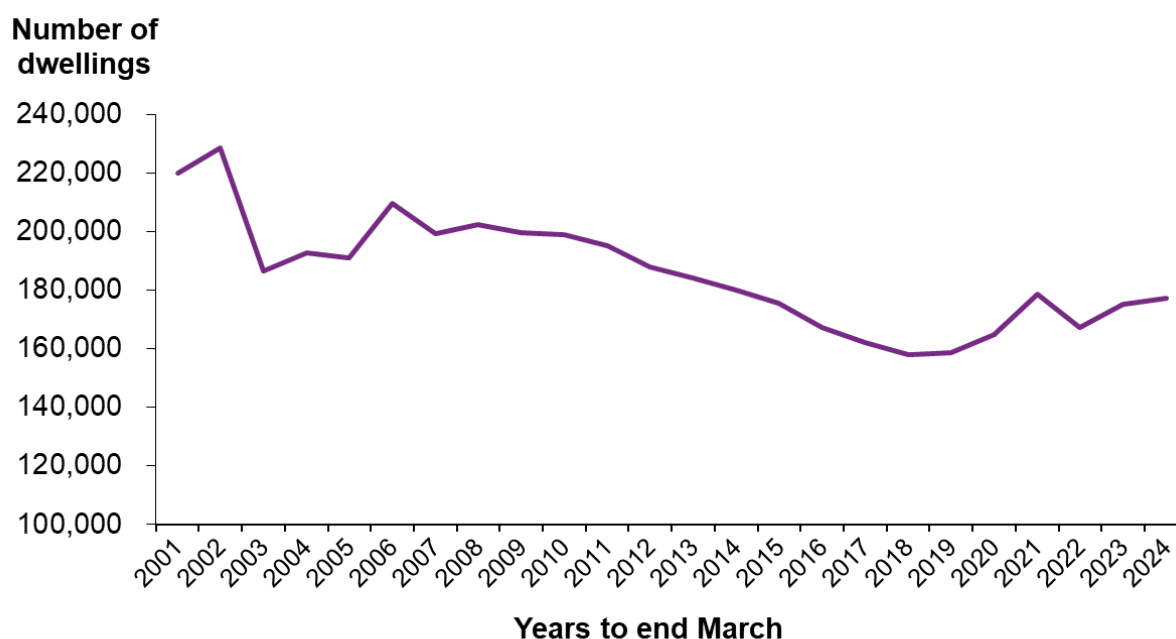
Chart 5: Total social sector stock has been increasing steadily since 2018 while the proportion of housing association to local authority dwellings has stayed roughly the same.



Housing Lists

A snapshot of the local authority housing list on 31st March 2024 shows 177,264 applications. A 1.2% increase or 2,172 more households than 2023, although the latest figure is 22% below the peak in 2002. This is illustrated in Chart 6.

Chart 6: The number of housing list applicants has increased between March 2023 and March 2024.



Of the 177,264 applications on local authority or common housing register lists, 42,000 (23.7%) were recorded as being on transfer lists and 135,300 (76.3%) on waiting lists for entry into social housing.

However, seven out of twenty-six local authorities with housing stocks do not have separate waiting and transfer lists. Where this is the case, everyone is counted on waiting lists and none on the transfer list. This means that the waiting list figure is over-estimated, and the transfer list figure is under-estimated.

There are several other points to consider when considering waiting list data:

- the separate reporting of waiting and transfer lists by local authorities has changed over time, which means historic trends are not consistent or reliable.
- Some applicants may no longer need a social house if, for example, they take up tenancies with other housing providers, however they may not be removed from the housing list immediately.
- The administrative data reported through Local Authority and Common Housing Register collections do not include six local authorities (including Glasgow) which have transferred all their housing stock to Registered Social Landlords.

- The number of applications is reported rather than actual numbers of people who wish to access social housing. It should be noted that people can apply to more than one local authority, and they also can apply for both council and Registered Social Landlords housing, leading to multiple counting on housing lists, although this has become less of an issue over time due to the increase in use of Common Housing Registers.

Population/household surveys are a useful source of information to provide additional insight on the population waiting for social housing. Since 2013, a question on housing lists was introduced to the Scottish Household Survey. This survey avoids double counting and covers the whole of Scotland. Although it does not cover the population living in communal establishments or in temporary accommodation.

Further detailed Local Authority administrative data are available in the [housing lists Excel web tables](#).

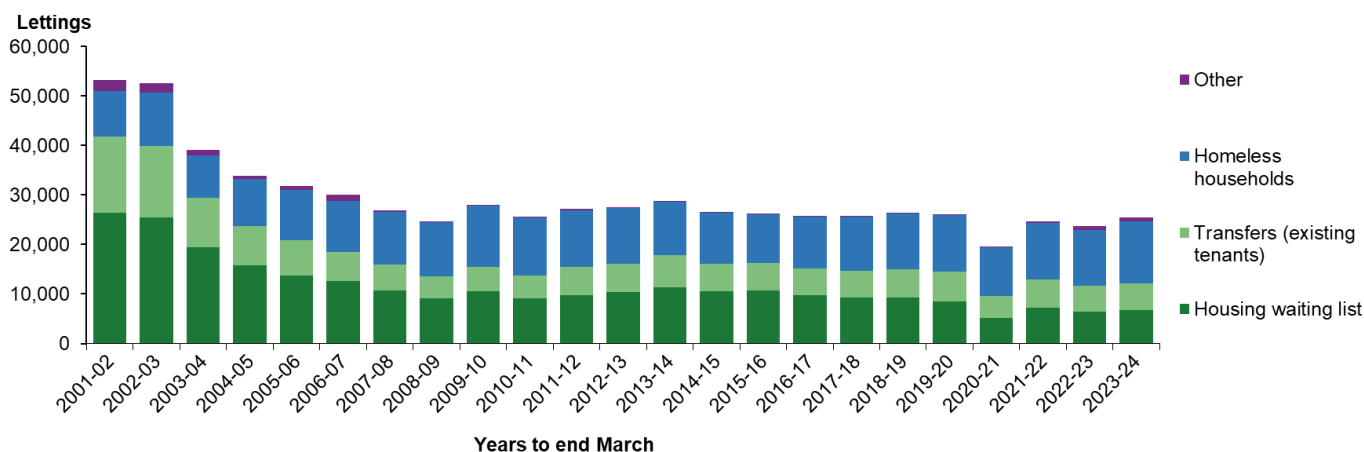
New Local Authority Lettings

During 2023-24, 25,423 permanent lettings were made. The number of permanent lettings increased (7.5% or 1,773 lets) compared to 2022-23.

Of all the local authority lettings made in 2023-24, 49% were to homeless households, 26% were to those on a housing waiting list, 21% were transfers to existing tenants, and 3% classified as other.

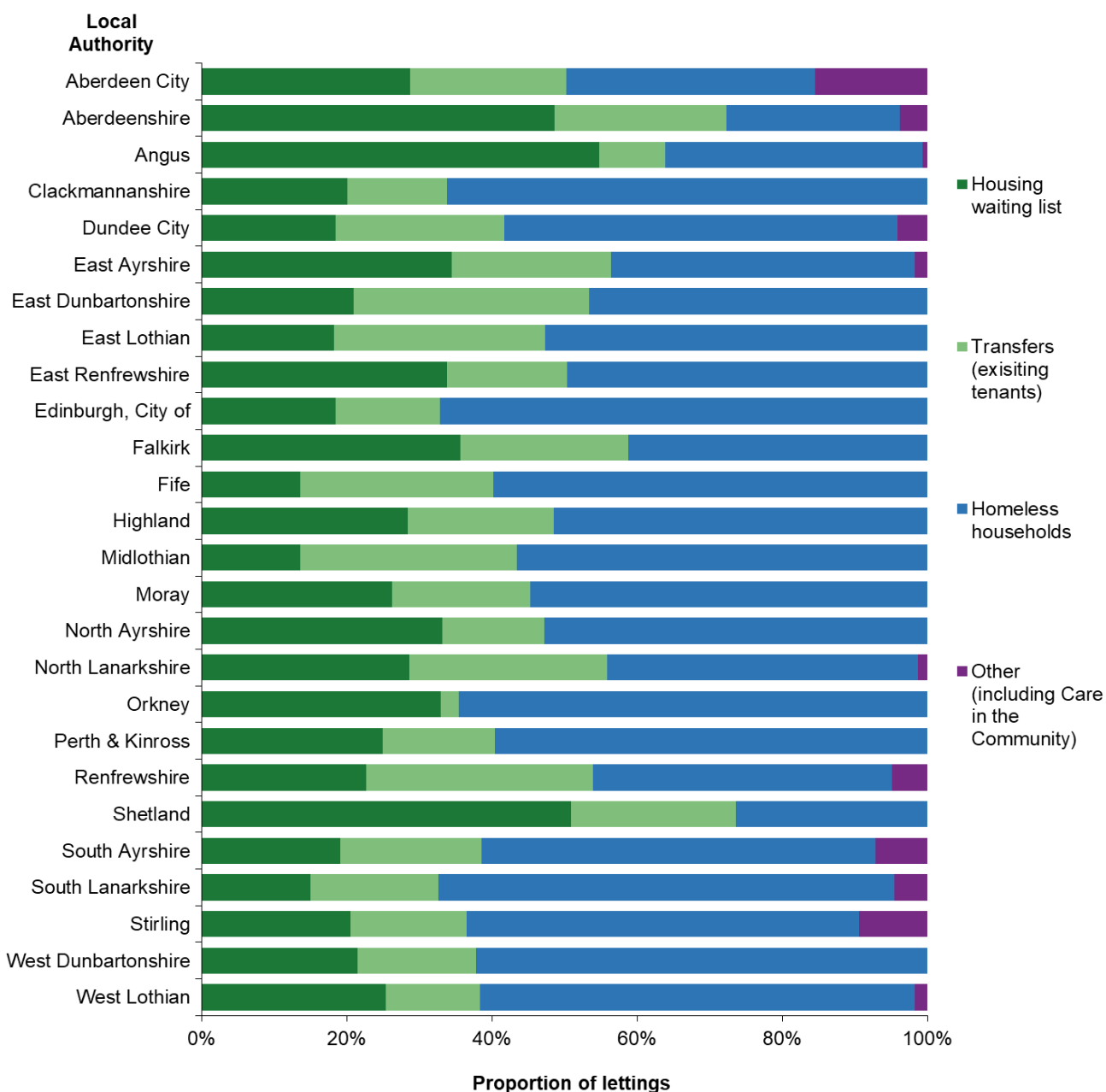
Chart 7 displays how the number of new local authority rentals has evolved over time and by source of tenant. There was a decline from 2001-02 to 2008-09, followed by stable levels from 2014-15 until the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21. It is important to recognise that the change in number of rentals will also relate to changes in the overall local authority stock numbers as well as availability. Notably, the chart reveals an increasing share of permanent lettings going to homeless households, while the proportion going to those on a housing waiting list has decreased.

Chart 7: In 2001-02, 17% of permanent lettings were to homeless households (9,138), this has risen to 49% (or 12,553 households) in 2023-24.



There are geographical variations in the proportion of new permanent lettings by source of tenant, as illustrated in Chart 8. For example, lets to homeless households made up 67% of all permanent lettings in Edinburgh compared to 24% in Aberdeenshire.

Chart 8: The proportion of permanent local authority lettings by sources of tenant in 2023-24 varied in each local authority.



Further detailed figures are available in the [local authority lettings Excel web tables](#).

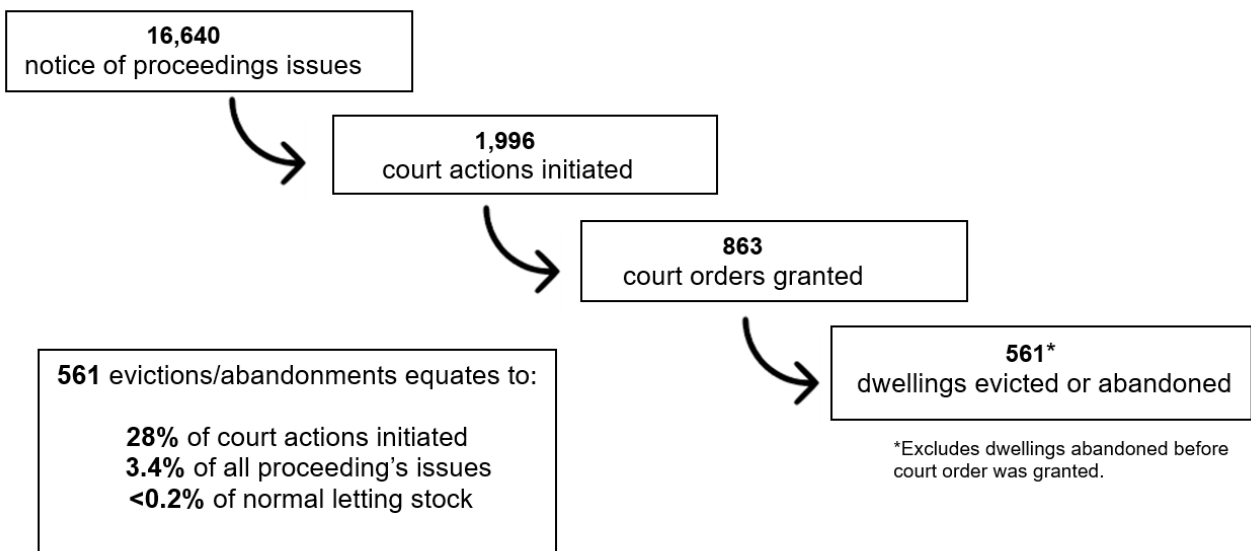
The Scottish Government also publishes a range of information on [Homelessness Statistics](#), including the number of lets for homeless households, collected through the HL1 return.

Local Authority Evictions

In 2023-24, there were 16,640 notices of eviction proceedings issued by local authorities and 561 cases resulting in evictions or dwellings abandoned. There was an increase of 10.2% in the number of notices of eviction proceedings issued compared with 2022-23 but remains lower (32.2%) than levels before the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019-20. There was an increase of 115.8% in the number of evictions or dwellings abandoned following an eviction order since 2022-23 – however evictions and abandonment levels remain 51.3% lower than levels before the pandemic.

The diagram below (Figure A) illustrates the numbers of court actions taken against local authority tenants in 2023-24. The number of court orders granted is usually higher than the number of tenancies terminated due to the proportion of cases where a way to resolve the rent arrears and avoid eviction is found prior to enforcement of the court order.

Figure A: Of the 561 tenancy terminations in 2023-24, 91% (512) were due to rent arrears – an increased proportion compared to 2022-23 (85%).



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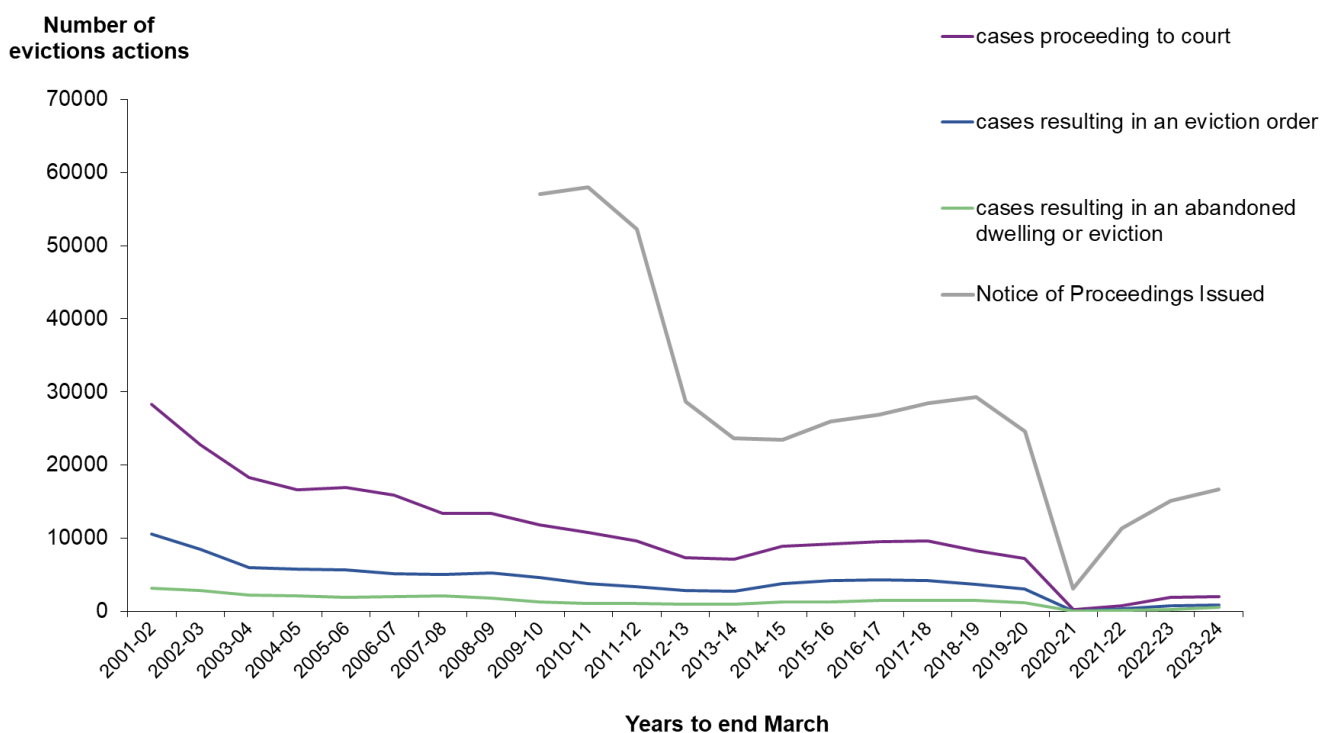
Chart 9 illustrates trends over time in the number of notices of eviction proceedings. Key aspects to consider are:

- Pre-action requirements, effective since 1 August 2012, aim to better protect tenants facing eviction due to rent arrears. Social landlords must try all options to resolve arrears with tenants before pursuing eviction. These changes mainly impact the early stages of eviction proceedings (notice of proceedings issued) rather than the later stages.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on 7 April 2020 eviction notice periods were extended to 6 months for most cases. An eviction ban was then in place from

11 December 2020, until 31 March 2021. During this time, only exceptional circumstances, like serious anti-social or criminal behaviour, allowed enforcement of eviction orders. Consequently, there was a drop in evictions as well as abandoned dwellings.

- Since the pandemic restrictions were lifted the number of notices of eviction proceedings, and subsequent stages (actions initiated, court orders granted, and dwellings evicted or abandoned) have increased but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- The Cost of Living (Tenant Protection) Scotland Act came into force in October 2022. The Act put in place a temporary moratorium on evictions (a pause on the enforcement of an eviction order or decree), with exceptions in a limited number of circumstances where there are substantial rent arrears

Chart 9: The COVID-19 eviction restrictions in 2020-21 resulted in a fall of notice of proceedings issued. Since restrictions were lifted numbers have been rising but have not reached pre-pandemic levels.



Further detailed figures are available in the [local authority evictions Excel web tables](#).

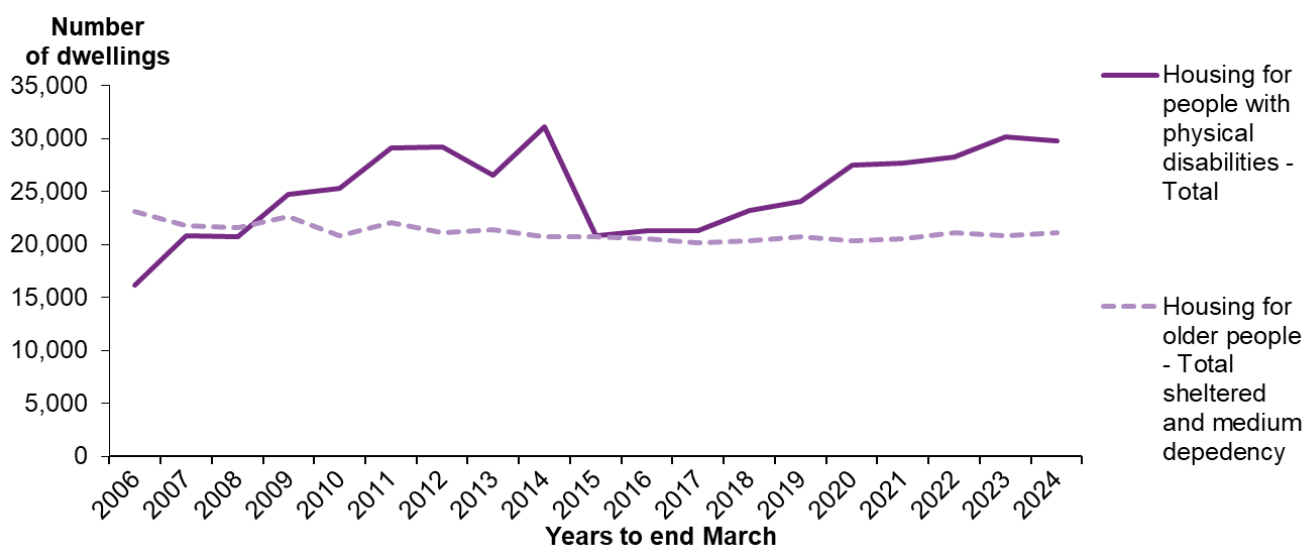
Local authority housing for Older People and People with Physical Disabilities

The number of sheltered, very sheltered, and medium dependency houses for older people provided by local authorities has increased by 1.2% in the latest year from 20,829 homes in March 2023 to 21,085 homes in March 2024.

Housing for people with physical disabilities has decreased by 1.2%, from 30,173 in March 2023 to 29,813 in March 2024.

Councils offer or arrange housing support services tailored to the specific needs of older and vulnerable individuals, to give them the opportunity to stay in their own homes. Housing options for those with variable needs include very sheltered, sheltered, medium dependency, wheelchair accessible, and ambulant disabled accommodations. The total numbers in each category may change annually based on the current needs of tenants or provider re-classifications.

Chart 10: The total number of supported housing for older people has been relatively stable since 2006. There has been more variability in housing provided for people with disabilities.



Further detailed figures are available in the [housing for older people and people with disabilities Excel web tables](#).

Homeowners' Scheme of Assistance

Homeowners are primarily responsible for maintaining their own property in a decent state of repair. However, local authorities have statutory powers to maintain and improve the general condition of private sector housing in their area.

Under the Scheme of Assistance, introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006, local authorities can provide financial (loans or grants) and non-financial help (guidance, advice, or practical help) for private housing which is in disrepair or below the tolerable standard or needs to be adapted because a person is disabled. The local authority will determine and provide information on what assistance is available based on local priorities and budgets.

In 2023-24 6,038 scheme of assistance grants were paid to householders, a 5% decrease (or 315 fewer grants) than 2022-2023.

Total spend related to the Scheme of Assistance was almost £37 million, of which £22.5 million was accounted for by assistance grants approved for disabled adaptations (61.5% spend), £2.3 million on assistance for work under notice (6.4% spend) as well as £6 million on other type of assistance (16% spend). Other spend relates to administrative costs, at £5.8 million (16%).

Most assistance grants were for disabled adaptations, 4,194 grants which is 9% less than the 2022-23 figure of 4,602. The amount spent on disabled adaptation grants has increased 2% compared with the previous year, from £21.7 million to £22.2 million.

Non-financial assistance (including information and advice as well as practical assistance) was 140,952 in 2023-24. The amount spent on non-financial assistance has decreased 34% compared with the previous year, from £213,729 to £140,952.

Further detailed figures are available in the [Scheme of Assistance Excel web tables](#).

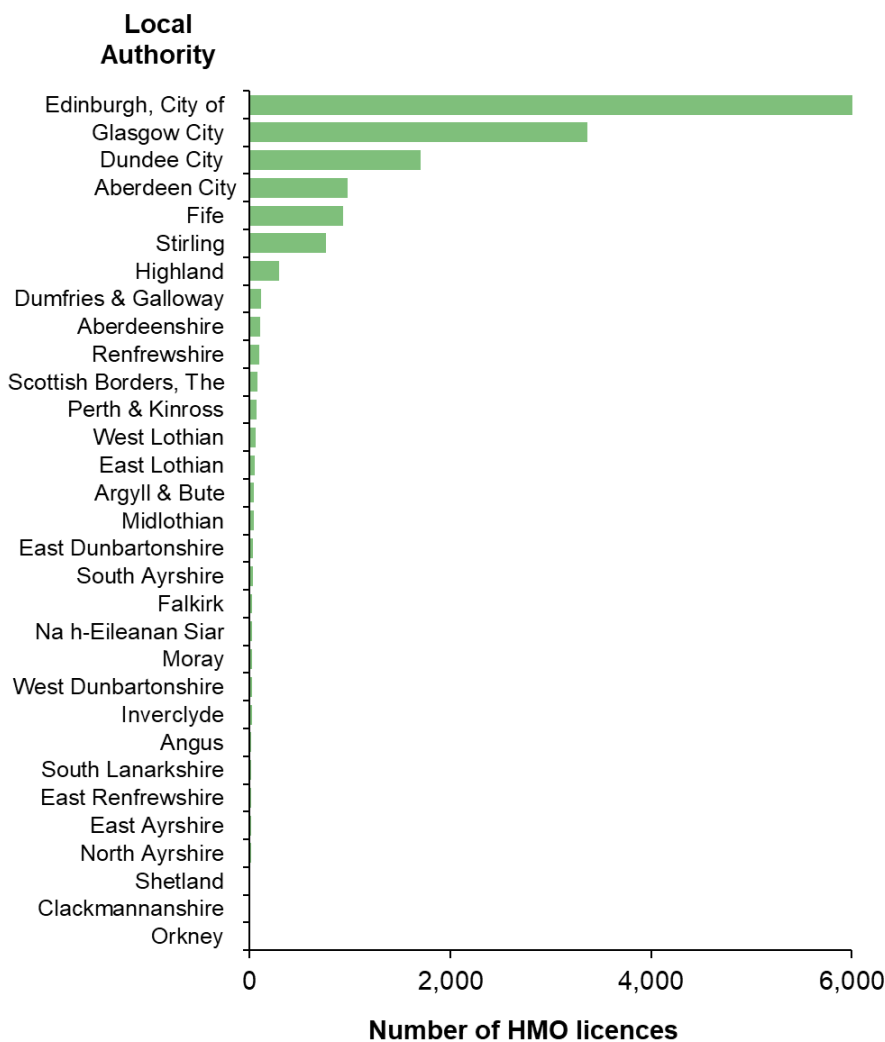
Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property that is shared by three or more people who are members of more than two families. It can also be known as a house share. HMO landlords must have a licence from the local authority. This ensures that the property is managed properly and meets certain safety standards.

The most recent figures as of 31st March 2024 show 15,274 licences in force. There has been a 1.0% decrease in licences since March 2023.

Chart 11 shows that the City of Edinburgh alone holds an estimated 41% of Scotland's HMO licences.

Chart 11: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Stirling, and Fife accounted for 92% of all Houses in Multiple Occupation licences in force in Scotland as at 31st March 2024.



There were approximately 6,969 new and renewal applications received in 2023-24, 19% more than 2022-23. New applications made up around 22% of these, and the remainder were applications for license renewals.

Further detailed figures are available in the [HMO Excel web tables](#).

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