



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

CEFNDIR, DOGFENNU

Safon Ansawdd Tai Cymru 2023: adroddiad ansawdd

Mae'r adroddiad hwn yn ymdrin â'r egwyddorion a'r prosesau cyffredinol sy'n arwain at gynhyrchiad ein hystadegau. Saesneg yn unig.

Cyhoeddwyd gyntaf: 26 Chwefror 2026

Diweddarwyd ddiwethaf: 26 Chwefror 2026

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Gwybodaeth am [hawlfraint](https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint) (<https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint>).

Cynnwys

Introduction (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197297>)

Background information (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197299>)

Users and uses (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197301>)

Strengths and limitations of the data (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197303>)

Data processing cycle (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197305>)

Data quality concerns (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197307>)

Administrative data quality assurance (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197309>)

Accuracy (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197311>)

Timeliness and punctuality (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197313>)

Accessibility and clarity (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197315>)

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Comparability and coherence (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197317>)

Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics
(<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197319>)

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Introduction

The 2024 to 2025 statistics provide the first summary of the number of social homes that meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 (WHQS 2023). They are published as official statistics in development.

For the 2024 to 2025 financial year, Wales-level results were released through a set of data tables (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2026-02/welsh-housing-quality-standard-31-march-2025-086612.xlsx>). **From the 2025 to 2026 financial year onwards, the aim is to publish detailed results for each social landlord on StatsWales** (<https://stats.gov.wales/en-GB>), subject to improvements in data quality.

The statistics are a snapshot of compliance as at 31 March each year.

Background information

The **Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-canllawiau>) was first introduced in 2002. An **Audit Wales review in 2012** (<https://www.audit.wales/publication/progress-delivering-welsh-housing-quality-standard>) found that progress towards achieving the standard was slower than expected due to variation in how landlords interpreted the requirements, concerns about the quality of monitoring data and differences in landlord preparedness.

Welsh Government issued further guidance after 2012 extending the national deadline to 2020 and introducing an annual data collection to monitor progress. Due to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a final extension was given to a small number of social landlords until December 2021. Achievement of the WHQS, including acceptable fails, was confirmed shortly afterwards in 2022 in the publication **Welsh Housing Quality Standard: as at 31 March 2022** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-ar-31-mawrth-2022>).

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Between 2020 and 2023, Welsh Government worked with social landlords and stakeholders to redesign the standard. **WHQS 2023** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-0>) includes stricter requirements, particularly in relation to:

- energy efficiency and decarbonisation
- safety and security
- comfort and wellbeing

All existing social homes are expected to meet the new standard by 2034. Elements in part 3 (energy efficiency and decarbonisation) may be reached at different times.

Details about the assessment of compliance can be found in the **WHQS assessment methodology** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-methodoleg-asesu>).

Users and uses

The WHQS statistics help the Welsh Government and social landlords monitor progress towards all social homes achieving the standard by March 2034. They also support:

- monitoring housing trends
- policy development
- advice to Ministers
- informing debate in the Senedd Cymru and beyond
- geographic profiling, comparisons and benchmarking

There will be a variety of users of these statistics including national and local government, industry bodies, researchers, academics and students. As 2024 to 2025 is the first year of reporting against WHQS 2023, the results should be interpreted with caution. Social landlords are still implementing the new standard, and differences in interpretation, assessment approaches and data maturity mean the figures are not yet suitable for comparing performance between individual landlords.

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One social landlord provided only partial data, covering a small proportion of their homes, so their return was not included in the analysis. This, combined with the high number of 'assumed fail' assessments (where missing element assessments are automatically recorded as fails), means that the 2024 to 2025 data should not yet be considered a reliable baseline for monitoring future progress.

Despite these limitations, the statistics provide early insight into how the new standard is being applied and highlight where improvements in data quality and coverage are needed. As social landlords refine their assessment processes, strengthen internal data systems and address current gaps, the reliability, comparability and usefulness of the statistics are expected to improve. These official statistics in development are published at this stage to support transparency, involve users in their development, and help build quality into the process from the outset.

Strengths and limitations of the data

Strengths

- Focus on Wales and designed to meet the needs of a range of users.
- Property-level data allowing robust validation and future detailed analysis.
- Regular annual reporting provides a consistent snapshot of compliance at 31 March each year.

Limitations

- Covers only self-contained social housing that is wholly owned and managed by a social landlord, excluding non-self-contained accommodation (such as hostels), shared ownership, and other tenures such as owner-occupied or privately rented homes.
- Some WHQS elements are assessed outside the statistical return. Five elements are instead assessed through each landlord's compliance policy as

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explained in the **WHQS assessment methodology** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-methodoleg-asesu>).

- Variation in assessment approaches and missing data limits comparability between social landlords.
- Because policy differs across devolved governments, there is also limited scope for direct UK comparisons.

Data processing cycle

Data source and coverage

Social landlords provide property level information on the WHQS elements required to assess compliance, along with supporting variables that provide additional context and general stock information.

Data collection

The statistics are based on annual returns completed by social landlords. A WHQS data specification and template are provided to help landlords map their internal data to a common set of categories. Landlords are encouraged to automate this process to reduce burden and improve accuracy.

Data providers were involved in developing the data specification, template and the guidance through a pilot data collection group which met between October 2024 and March 2025, and at workshops held for all social landlords in June 2024 and February 2025.

Social landlords are notified of the data collection timetable in advance, allowing sufficient time to collate their information and raise any issues. The annual return provides a snapshot of progress on 31 March each year, regardless of when the data are submitted. The submission deadline is aligned with the annual stock and rents statistical return, which identifies the aggregate stock figures required for the WHQS return. Guidance is provided throughout the process to support data providers in completing their submissions.

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The first year of the new standard brought several challenges. We held extra workshops and met individually with social landlords, which led to updates to the guidance. We also shared Q&A responses across the sector to keep all landlords informed of emerging issues, solutions and any changes needed as the first-year collection progressed.

Validation and verification

Social landlords are responsible for ensuring their data is accurate and complete (see administrative data quality assurance). The Welsh Government Housing Conditions Evidence Team then carries out further validation checks. Once submitted, each landlord's data is uploaded to the Welsh Government, where it goes through automated validation. Validation reports are then shared with landlords so they can correct any issues identified.

Additional checks include:

- identifying missing or unexpected values
- checking arithmetic consistency
- comparing with previous returns
- cross-checking with other housing datasets
- tolerance checks
- reviewing values outside expected ranges

Social landlords can also provide contextual information to help explain unusual results. For example, some report higher numbers of failed or missing element assessments for homes that are empty while major works are underway. Others note that they are prioritising certain WHQS elements in the early years, which can lead to many homes failing or missing assessments for the same element, such as element 3h (water butts). Some landlords have also highlighted practical issues, including difficulties arranging smart meter installations during re-let periods.

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Independent verification

Social landlords must report on the arrangements they have in place for the independent verification of their compliance with the standard in their compliance policy. This should include a description of the processes used and how independence is ensured. An initial independent review should take place two years after the standard comes into effect, with further independent verification carried out every two years thereafter (**WHQS 2023** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-0>) Chapter 5: compliance and certification).

Publication

Once the data are finalised, the statistical release is prepared. This includes compiling and analysing the data, drafting key messages and commentary, carrying out internal quality checks, and agreeing any policy context with the relevant policy team. The release is independently reviewed and signed off by the responsible statistician before publication on the Welsh Government website.

All stages follow the Code of Practice for Statistics, ensuring high standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

Data quality concerns

At 31 March 2025, 44 of the 45 social landlords submitted WHQS data covering 234,680 of the 245,310 homes within scope. Partial data was provided by the remaining landlord but was not included because it only covered a small share of their properties.

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Challenges faced by landlords

Many social landlords experienced difficulties due to:

- shifting from aggregate to record-level reporting
- limitations in local systems and software
- data maturity and resourcing gaps
- reliance on manual completion of templates rather than system-generated extracts

Stock number inconsistencies

Social landlords were asked to ensure their WHQS stock numbers matched their annual stock and rents return.

Of the 44 landlords included:

- 13 (29%) matched their figures exactly
- 24 (55%) were within a 1% tolerance
- 7 (16%) were outside tolerance

The overall national WHQS stock figure remained within 1% of the stock and rents totals for WHQS.

Invalid and missing element assessments

Social landlords are required to assess each element using evidence collected stock condition surveys, property visits and other intelligence e.g. maintenance records. Where this evidence is not available, the element assessment must be left blank in the data return, to be assigned as missing data assumed fail during the analysis.

Social landlords report they apply different approaches to identifying missing assessments. Some use only evidence collected within a defined timeframe,

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treating older information as out-of-date and therefore missing. Others have reported applying 'cloned' assessments, where assessments from similar property types are used for homes that have not yet been individually assessed. It would therefore be misleading to compare individual landlords on the basis of their levels of missing data.

To be valid, element assessments must use the response codes specified in the WHQS data specification. Any element assessment submitted that uses an invalid response code is overwritten and recorded as missing data assumed fail.

Of those social landlords who submitted WHQS data for 31 March 2025:

- 26 landlords (59%) provided complete and valid element assessment responses for all homes
- 18 landlords (41%) had missing or invalid element assessment responses for one or more homes
- 24,610 homes (10%) had at least one missing element assessment response

Among the 18 social landlords with missing element assessments, the percentage of homes affected ranged from <1% to 86% of homes (this could just be one element assessments missing from all homes, or a small number of homes missing several elements).

Other issues

Publication of this first year's statistics was delayed as the new data collection and quality assurance processes took time to embed across social landlords. Improvements to data submission systems and the introduction of reproducible analytical pipelines (RAP) will support more efficient and timely outputs in future.

Long-term empty and unoccupied properties are included in the data and are generally recorded as fails, as they are typically undergoing major works before being re-let. A small proportion of homes will therefore always be non-compliant, meaning 100% compliance with the standard is not realistically achievable.

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The complexity of the new standard also led to differing interpretations across landlords. Policy officials continue to work with the sector to promote greater consistency in understanding and applying the requirements.

Actions taken to address data quality issues

Extensive validation work was carried out during 2025, including individual feedback to social landlords, follow-up meetings, a sector-wide data quality workshop and a revised submission deadline. This additional work contributed to the delay in publishing the 31 March 2025 figures, allowing further improvements to be made before release.

As this was the first year of the new data collection, and given challenges in achieving complete and consistent data, only national-level headline results are published. More detailed breakdowns, including landlord-level figures, will be reintroduced as data quality improves.

Engagement with social landlords has included:

- a WHQS data quality workshop (September 2025)
- follow-up meetings with individual landlords (October to November 2025)
- targeted guidance informed by queries raised
- sharing initial results for landlords' review and feedback
- ongoing joint engagement between the WHQS Policy team and the Housing Conditions Evidence Team to support consistent interpretation and recording

We will continue to keep users informed through updated guidance, future workshops and regular communication with social landlords, with the aim of improving the clarity, reliability and value of the statistics as the dataset matures.

A WHQS statistics development plan for 2026 and beyond is included in the **WHQS statistical release 31 March 2025** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-ar-31-mawrth-2023>).

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Administrative data quality assurance

This release has been assessed using the UK Statistics Authority's **Administrative Data Quality Assurance (ADQA)** (<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/administrative-data-quality-assurance-toolkit/>) toolkit. The WHQS statistics are assessed as requiring the highest level of quality assurance - comprehensive assurance. They have a high risk of data quality issues due to multiple data suppliers, complex data collection processes, varied systems, and limited independent verification. They are of high profile, due to political sensitivity, links to public health issues and media interest in housing safety and standards.

The following outlines our assessment of the current level of assurance for each of the four statistical practices in the quality assurance matrix.

Our current level of assurance for each ADQA practice

Operational context and data collection

- Basic. We understand how landlords record and manage the data and the risks to quality.

Communication with suppliers

- Enhanced. We maintain regular engagement, provide guidance, and support data submission and validation.

Suppliers' QA procedures

- No documented assurance. Landlords have not yet been required to provide formal documentation, although the standard recommends internal QA and improvement plans.

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Producer quality assurance

- Basic. Checks include automated validation, consistency checks and follow-up with landlords where needed.

Accuracy

Accuracy refers to how close the published figures are to the true values. Data for 31 March 2025 were received from 44 of the 45 social landlords in Wales (excluding Abbeyfield societies, Almshouse Charities and Co-ownership societies). These submissions form the basis of the results published in this release.

Revisions

We follow the Welsh Government's statistical revisions policy. Revisions may be made if more complete or corrected data become available, or where we introduce methodological improvements. Any future revisions will be clearly explained and published in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

Timeliness and punctuality

Timeliness refers to the gap between the reference period and publication. Punctuality refers to whether we publish on the date we announce.

- All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice for Statistics by pre-announcing the date of publication through the upcoming pages on the **Statistics and Research** (<https://www.gov.wales/statistics-and-research>) website.
- If publication needs to be postponed, we follow the Welsh Government's revisions, errors and postponements arrangements.
- We publish releases as soon as practical after the end of each reporting

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period.

For this first year of the new standard, data collection challenges meant that the release planned for autumn 2025 was delayed until February 2026, allowing time for further quality improvements.

Accessibility and clarity

Accessibility refers to how easily users can find and obtain the data. Clarity refers to the supporting information, explanation and presentation.

- WHQS statistics are published on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of release, in a pre-announced and accessible format.
- More detailed data are provided through open format accessible spreadsheets (for 2024 to 2025).
- We aim to provide a balanced combination of commentary, tables, charts and maps, focusing on clear explanations and avoiding unnecessary length.
- We aim to inform known users of the publication of the statistics when they are published. An e-mail is circulated to the **Housing Information Group** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/grwp-gwybodaeth-tai>).
- All outputs follow the Welsh Government's accessibility policy.
- Outputs are regularly peer reviewed internally to ensure quality.

Comparability and coherence

Comparability

Comparability refers to the degree to which data can be compared over time or across different groups.

The WHQS statistics provide an annual snapshot of social landlord progress. However, comparisons need to consider differences between landlords, including:

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- stock profile (such as age, property type and construction)
- landlord size and system capability
- different interpretations of the standard
- approaches to assessment
- varying levels of data maturity and quality assurance

WHQS 2023 is a new standard, with new and strengthened elements. Moving from aggregate data to detailed property level data represents a major shift. As a result, comparisons with earlier WHQS collections are limited.

As data quality improves and social landlords apply the standard more consistently, comparability over time and between social landlords is expected to improve. This will be supported by ongoing guidance, workshops and engagement with the sector.

Coherence

Coherence refers to how consistent the data are with other related sources.

WHQS data come from social landlords' administrative systems, mapped to common variables using the WHQS data specification. This supports consistency, but differences in systems, assessment approaches and levels of data maturity mean coherence is not yet fully achieved.

Related statistics for other UK countries

Housing quality measures differ across the UK because legislation, policy approaches and data collections vary between nations. Direct comparisons with other countries are therefore limited. WHQS 2023 also includes new and strengthened elements and a move to property level data, which reduces comparability with older standards and with similar measures elsewhere in the UK.

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Statement of compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

Our statistical practice is regulated by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR). OSR sets the standards of trustworthiness, quality and value in the Code of Practice for Statistics that all producers of official statistics should adhere to.

All of our statistics are produced and published in accordance with a number of statements and protocols to enhance trustworthiness, quality and value. These are set out in the Welsh Government's **Statement of Compliance** (<https://www.gov.wales/about-statistics-and-research#Statementofcompliance>).

These official statistics in development demonstrate the standards expected around trustworthiness, quality and public value in the following ways.

Trustworthiness

These WHQS 2023 statistics demonstrate trustworthiness through transparent processes, strong governance and adherence to professional standards.

- The data collection, validation and publication processes are carried out by qualified Welsh Government analysts, working independently and following the Code of Practice.
- Publication dates are announced in advance. Each release undergoes internal peer review and final sign-off by the responsible statistician.
- Any concerns about data quality or compliance are addressed promptly and openly.
- We have maintained sustained engagement with social landlords, policy colleagues and technical teams during the development of the new reporting system promoting transparency and strengthening confidence in the integrity of the statistics.
- Tenant engagement played an important role in designing the new standard including the new data collection approach and how more detailed analysis can support tenant scrutiny, which aligns with the Code's commitment to

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Gwybodaeth am **hawlfraint** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint>).

valuing users and serving the public good.

- Social landlords must engage tenants on their plans for meeting the standard and explain how they interpret, collect and maintain their WHQS assessment data which supports transparency, improves the underlying data and enhances trust in the resulting statistics.

Quality

Quality has been a priority throughout the development and first year of the WHQS 2023 data collection, demonstrated by the following.

- A structured quality assurance process is in place, including automated checks, comparisons with previous returns and related datasets, and follow-up with landlords when issues are identified.
- The dataset has been reviewed using the **UK Statistics Authority's Administrative Data Quality Assurance (ADQA) toolkit** (<https://osr.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/administrative-data-quality-assurance-toolkit/pages/3/>), which helps identify risks and assess the suitability of administrative data for statistical use
- Where risks were identified, we have worked closely with landlords to improve guidance, strengthen shared understanding and support targeted improvements in data quality.
- We have been open about the remaining issues, which are expected for a new and complex property-level collection, and the foundations established this year will support better consistency, accuracy and coherence in future years.

Further detail on data quality challenges and mitigation is provided in **Data quality concerns** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html#197307>).

Value

These statistics provide public value by supporting transparency, enabling evidence-based decision making and offering early insight into progress towards

Cafodd y ddogfen hon ei lawrlwytho o LLYW.CYMRU, efallai nad dyma'r fersiwn mwyaf diweddar.

Ewch i <https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html> i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

Gwybodaeth am **hawlfraint** (<https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint>).

meeting a major national housing standard. This is demonstrated through the following.

- Users across Welsh Government, local authorities, registered social landlords, tenant groups, researchers and the wider public benefit from accessible outputs and clear explanations.
- Commentary highlights both the strengths and limitations of the data, helping users interpret the figures appropriately.
- The release supports monitoring progress towards the 2034 target, informs policy development and contributes to wider discussions about housing quality, decarbonisation and tenant wellbeing.
- Publishing these statistics while they are still in development allows users to engage early, helps build quality into the statistical process and demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement and meeting user needs.

You are welcome to contact us directly with any comments about how we meet these standards. Alternatively, you can contact OSR by emailing regulation@statistics.gov.uk (<mailto:regulation@statistics.gov.uk>) or via the OSR website.

Efallai na fydd y ddogfen hon yn hollol hygyrch.

Drllenwch ein [datganiad hygyrchedd](https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hygyrchedd-llywycymru) (<https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hygyrchedd-llywycymru>) i gael rhagor o wybodaeth.

Cafodd y ddogfen hon ei lawrlwytho o LLYW.CYMRU, efallai nad dyma'r fersiwn mwyaf diweddar.

Ewch i <https://www.llyw.cymru/safon-ansawdd-tai-cymru-2023-adroddiad-ansawdd-html> i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

Gwybodaeth am [hawlfraint](https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint) (<https://www.llyw.cymru/datganiad-hawlfraint>).