

Local authority total and vacant housing stock, Scotland, March 2025

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Key Points

As of 31st March 2025:

- There were 327,746 local authority housing stock units, an increase compared to March 2024 (+7.0%, +2,269). There were 9,827 local authority housing stock units vacant, a decrease compared to the previous year (-16%, -1,924 units).
- In total, 3.0% of the total local authority stock was vacant, however this includes stock that will be demolished or cannot be currently let as it needs modernisation.
- Out of the total stock, 1.7% (5,102) of normal use (permanent lettings) stock was vacant, 9.2% (765) of stock used for temporary accommodation for homeless households was vacant, 2.7% (431) of stock in low demand areas was vacant. The majority of stock earmarked for demolition (99.5%) and modernisation (95.7%) was vacant.
- The total vacancy rate in March 2025 decreased when compared to the previous year (3.6% to 3.0%). Normal use of stock vacancy rate (excluding Edinburgh) has also decreased when compared to the previous year (1.9% to 1.6%). In 2025, including Edinburgh for the first time, the normal vacant stock rate was 1.7%.
- The total vacancy rate in 2025 was highest in Aberdeen City (9.9%) and in Perth and Kinross (0%) as they reported no vacant stock followed by Moray (1.1%). Most vacant stock in Renfrewshire is earmarked for demolition (56%). There was no vacant stock reported in Perth and Kinross.
- The highest vacancy rate for normal use stock was in Aberdeen City (7.9%), the rate has increased since 2020 (2.0%) and stock is vacant for longer. The lowest vacancy rate for normal use stock was in Perth and Kinross with (0%) as they reported no vacant stock followed by North Ayrshire (0.4%).
- Numerically, Edinburgh saw the largest annual decrease in vacant stock (-601 units; -47.2%) and Highland saw the largest annual increase in vacant stock (102 units; 37.5%).

Introduction

This statistical publication presents latest figures to end March 2025 on vacant local authority stock collected from local authorities in the annual Scottish Government housing return.

Timeseries for annual data, along with local authority breakdowns, are contained in the supporting Excel tables.

The Scottish Government collect data on local authority stock in the annual housing return. It is usually reported in our annual housing statistics publication alongside other information relating to the management of local authority stock, but there has been a delay in this report due to resourcing demands. The local authority stock data was ready for publication, so a decision was made to release this data as soon as possible.

An official statistics publication for Scotland

These statistics are official statistics. Official statistics are statistics that are produced by crown bodies, those acting on behalf of crown bodies, or those specified in statutory orders, as defined in the [Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007](#).

Scottish Government statistics are 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. More information about Scottish Government statistics is available on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Local authority stock, March 2025

As of 31st March 2025, there were 327,746 local authority housing stock units, an increase compared to March 2024 (+7.0% +2,269 units). There were 9,827 local authority housing stock units vacant, a decrease compared to the previous year (-16%, -1,924 units).

In total, 3.0% of the total local authority stock was vacant as of March 2025, however this includes stock that will be demolished or cannot be currently let as it needs modernisation.

Prior to March 2025, Edinburgh was not able to separately report on vacant normal use stock. For consistency, we have reported trends on vacant normal use stock excluding Edinburgh, as well as providing a 2025 total including Edinburgh.

In 2025, the vacancy rate for stock used for temporary accommodation for the homeless is 9.2% compared with 1.7% for normal letting stock. There are several potential reasons for this:

- Higher turnover, as the accommodation for homeless households should only be temporary whilst waiting for a permanent housing solution.
- There needs to be stock of this type available to house people presenting as homeless with immediate effect.

Table 1: Local authority housing stock by use and number of vacant units, March 2025, Scotland

Status	Housing stock	Vacant stock	Vacant stock rate	% total vacant stock in March 2025
Awaiting demolition	1,829	1,819	99.5%	18.5%
Low demand area	15,989	431	2.7%	4.4%
Used as temporary accommodation for the homeless	8,271	765	9.2%	7.8%
Part of a modernisation programme	1,775	1,669	95.7%	17.3%
Normal letting stock	299,830	5,102	1.7%	51.9%
Total stock	327,726	9,827	3.0%	100%

Note:

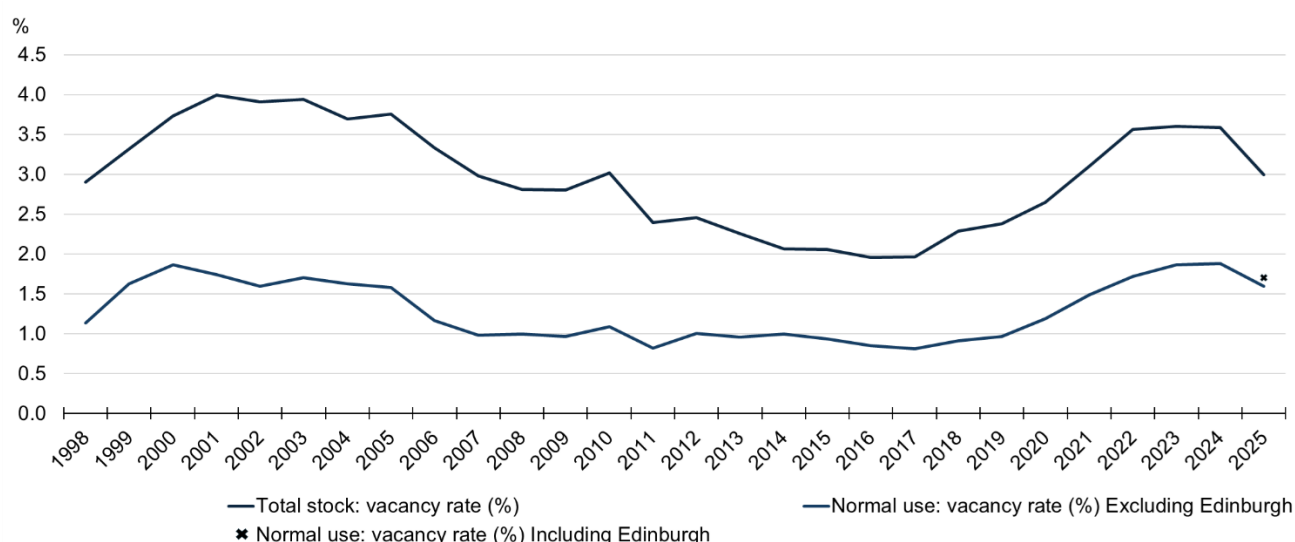
1. There were a further 52 housing stock units that local authorities could not categorise into the above categories (known as the 'other' category). There was also 11 vacant unit in the other category.

Table 1 shows the composition of vacant stock by type of use. It shows that just over half (52%) of vacant stock is in the category of normal letting stock, where it is likely the property is being prepared to be relet. However, only 1.7% of normal use stock is vacant. Most of the stock awaiting demolition and housing stock part of a modernisation program is vacant, which is to be expected.

As Chart 1 illustrates, the peak total vacant stock rate was in 2001 (4.0%) decreasing to 2.0% in 2017. Since 2017 there was an increase, reaching 3.6% in 2022 and remaining at that level until a decrease in 2025 to 3.0%.

In terms of normal letting stock (excluding Edinburgh), the vacant stock rate peaked in 2000, 2023 and 2024 with all these years reaching a rate of 1.9%. The lowest points of 0.8% were observed in 2011, 2016 and 2017. Since 2017, the rate has increased to 1.9% in 2024, then decreased to 1.6% in 2025. In 2025, including Edinburgh for the first time, the normal vacant stock rate was 1.7%.

Chart 1: Vacant stock rate, local authority stock, Scotland, 1998 to 2025



Note:

1. Normal use stock from 1998 to 2009 included a small number of units for other use than normal use. These have been excluded from 2010.
2. Prior to March 2025, Edinburgh reported no vacant normal use stock as they were unable to identify stock that is going through the letting process but have reported there will be units going through this process.
3. Perth and Kinross reported no vacant stock in March 2025.

Local Authority breakdowns, March 2025

Chart 2 presents data by local authority and the type of vacant stock for 2025. It shows that Aberdeen City has the highest amount of stock vacant (2,336 units; 24% of Scotland's total vacant stock). The majority (76%) of vacant stock in Aberdeen City was normal use stock.

Chart 2: Vacant local authority stock by normal use of stock, 2025

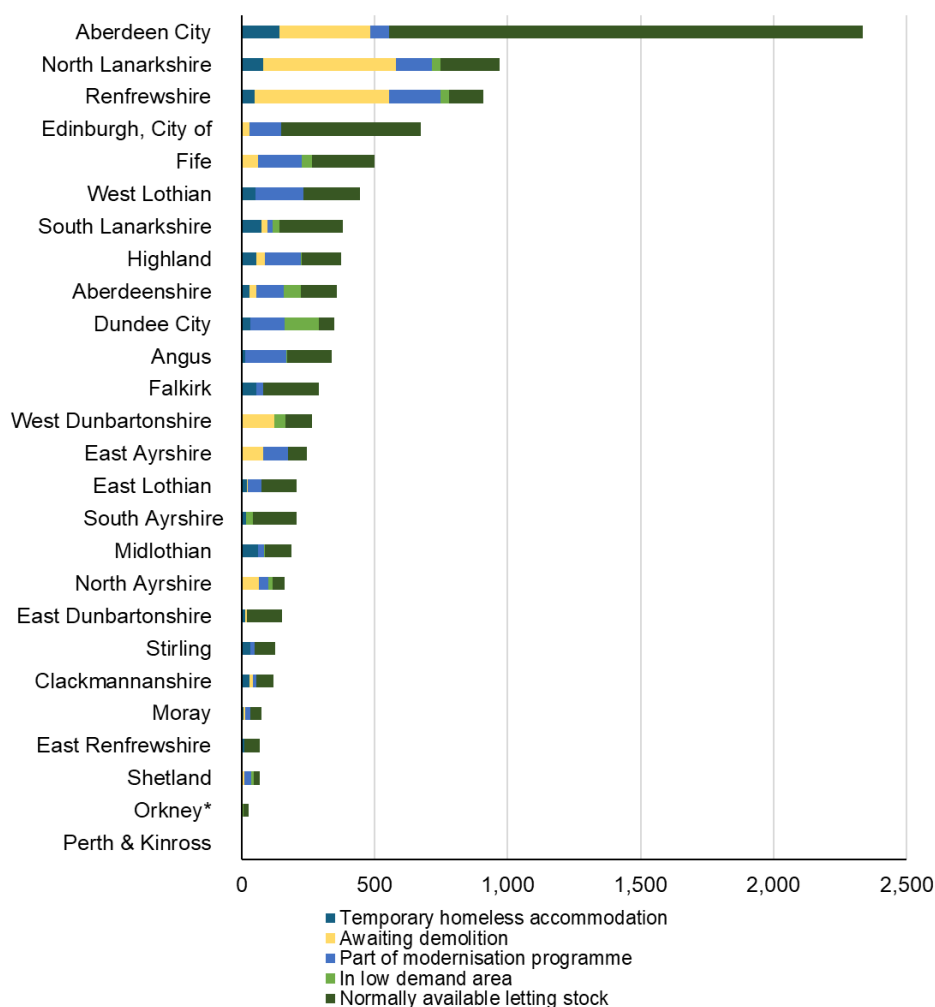


Table 2 and 3 illustrates how the annual change as well as vacancy rates vary by local authority. The total vacancy rate in 2025 was highest in Aberdeen City (9.9%) and lowest in Perth and Kinross (0%) as they reported no vacant stock followed by Moray (1.1%). As chart 2 shows, most vacant stock in Renfrewshire (56%) and North Lanarkshire (51%) is earmarked for demolition (56%).

The highest vacancy rate for normal use stock was in Aberdeen City (7.9%) The rate in Aberdeen City has increased since 2020 (2.0%). Over this period,

when looking at length of vacancy, Aberdeen City has seen an increase in properties vacant for 26 weeks to two years (6.2% in 2020 to 45.4% in 2025). The lowest vacancy rate for normal use stock was in North Ayrshire (0.4). Perth and Kinross reported no vacant stock.

Numerically, Edinburgh saw the largest annual decrease in total vacant stock (-601 units; -47.2%) and Highland saw then largest annual increase in vacant stock (102 units; 37.5%).

Numerically, Dundee (-239 units; -80.0%) and Aberdeen City (-236,-12%) saw the largest annual decreases in total normal use vacant stock. East Dunbartonshire (+74 units, +125.0%) and East Lothian (+60 units, +81.0%) saw the largest annual increases.

Table 2: Total vacant local authority units, annual change, and total vacancy rate, by local authority, Scotland, 2025

	Total stock	Vacant stock	Annual % vacant stock change	Annual vacant stock change	Total vacancy rate, 2025
Scotland	327,746	9,827	-16%	-1924	3.0
Aberdeen City	23,550	2,336	2%	36	9.9
Aberdeenshire	13,367	358	-17%	-72	2.7
Angus	7,773	338	2%	8	4.3
Clackmannanshire	5,068	120	9%	10	2.4
Dundee City	12,647	347	-38%	-210	2.7
East Ayrshire	12,157	243	-30%	-104	2.0
East Dunbartonshire	3,864	152	75%	65	3.9
East Lothian	9,415	207	-29%	-83	2.2
East Renfrewshire	3,245	67	2%	1	2.1
Edinburgh, City of	20,634	672	-47%	-601	3.3
Falkirk	16,999	289	-21%	-79	1.7
Fife	31,243	500	-38%	-303	1.6
Highland	15,250	374	38%	102	2.5
Midlothian	7,677	186	29%	42	2.4
Moray	6,410	73	28%	16	1.1
North Ayrshire	13,319	162	-29%	-65	1.2
North Lanarkshire	36,880	971	6%	52	2.6
Orkney	1,033	36	80%	16	3.5
Perth & Kinross	8,226	-	-100%	-125	0.0
Renfrewshire	12,078	908	-28%	-349	7.5
Shetland	1,666	67	-12%	-9	4.0
South Ayrshire	8,313	205	32%	50	2.5
South Lanarkshire	25,923	380	-24%	-120	1.5
Stirling	6,116	126	-34%	-66	2.1
West Dunbartonshire	10,547	265	-22%	-76	2.5
West Lothian	14,346	445	-12%	-60	3.1

Table 3: Normally available letting vacant stock, annual change, and total vacancy rate, by local authority, Scotland, 2025

	Normal use letting stock	Normal use vacant stock	Annual % normal use vacant stock change	Annual normal use stock change	Normal use vacancy rate, 2025
Scotland	299,830	5,102	-10%	-538	1.7
Scotland (Excluding Edinburgh)	280,740	4,577	-19%	-1,063	1.6
Aberdeen City	22,645	1,783	-12%	-236	7.9
Aberdeenshire	12,934	137	-3%	-4	1.1
Angus	7,444	168	-8%	-15	2.3
Clackmannanshire	4,904	66	6%	4	1.3
Dundee City	10,358	58	-80%	-239	0.6
East Ayrshire	11,483	69	-61%	-107	0.6
East Dunbartonshire	3,775	133	125%	74	3.5
East Lothian	9,203	134	81%	60	1.5
East Renfrewshire	3,117	58	-6%	-4	1.9
Edinburgh, City of	19,090	525	n/a	n/a	2.8
Falkirk	16,540	210	-26%	-73	1.3
Fife	26,911	235	-42%	-170	0.9
Highland	14,715	150	1%	1	1.0
Midlothian	7,084	100	52%	34	1.4
Moray	6,240	42	17%	6	0.7
North Ayrshire	11,099	46	-39%	-29	0.4
North Lanarkshire	32,896	225	-21%	-59	0.7
Orkney	830	19	171%	12	2.3
Perth & Kinross	8,099	-	-100%	-92	0.0
Renfrewshire	10,169	130	-40%	-85	1.3
Shetland	1,356	21	-28%	-8	1.5
South Ayrshire	7,438	162	42%	48	2.2
South Lanarkshire	23,687	239	-24%	-75	1.0
Stirling	5,798	77	-34%	-39	1.3
West Dunbartonshire	8,222	101	-29%	-41	1.2
West Lothian	13,793	214	-11%	-26	1.6

Length of time vacant

Table 4 illustrates that the length of time that properties have been vacant is closely related to the reason for the vacancy. Normal letting stock, or temporary homeless accommodation tends to be empty for less time than other types of vacant stock, which is to be expected as stock earmarked for demolition will not be used again, stock waiting for modernisation will not be used until it has been modernised.

Table 4: Vacant local authority units by length of time, Scotland, 2025

	< 2 weeks	2 to 6 weeks	6 to 26 weeks	26 weeks to 2 years	> 2 years	Length of vacancy unknown
Used as temporary homeless accommodation	33%	30%	21%	9%	2%	4%
Awaiting demolition	1%	3%	13%	42%	40%	0%
Part of a modernisation project	5%	9%	29%	27%	22%	7%
Low demand area	14%	27%	37%	14%	8%	0%
Normal letting stock	12%	23%	34%	23%	5%	4%
Total vacant stock	10%	18%	28%	26%	15%	3%

Data and methodology

1. To provide vacancy rates for each use of stock, the stock reported in stock 2 return is used. In a small number of cases the total stock reported in the stock 2 data collection, focusing on the normal use of stock do not match exactly the stock 1 return (used for tsStockType and tsStockAge). This is due to how the data were provided, data quality checks have since been added to the publication process. In these instances, the difference is minimal (less than 0% difference).
2. Up until 2010, normal use stock included 'other' properties not available for normal use but not easily categorised into temporary homeless accommodation, stock to be demolished, low demand, or stock to be modernised. 'Other' units represent a very small number of units.
3. Prior to 2025, Edinburgh could not give a breakdown on vacant normal use letting stock.

Tell us what you think

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

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