

## **Registered Social Landlords in 2003: Profile of the HA Sector**

### **The number of Housing Associations:**

- At 31 March 2003 there had been a net decrease of one Housing Association (HA) over the previous year to bring the total number of HAs operating in England to 2,004. However, the number of HAs completing a valid Regulatory and Statistical Return (RSR) at 31 March was higher than in 2002, by 15 HAs (Table 1).

### **Total rental stock in ownership:**

- The HA sector stockholding continued to grow and by 31 March 2003 the 1,925 HAs returning valid RSRs owned 1,762,404 units for rent, 11% more than in 2002, compared with six percent between 2001 and 2002 (Table 2). The majority of this net increase was in social housing units, at 11 % since 31 March 2002. Consistent with 2002, 92% of stock owned by HAs was directly managed by the owning HA (Table 10).
- Ownership continued to be concentrated in large HAs. Those 11% of all HAs with between 2,500 and 10,000 units of total stock in ownership owned 55% of the total stock (Table 2).
- There was a continuation of the trend towards greater geographical diversity as the percentage of HAs owning property in two or more LA areas increased over the year (Table 7).
- At 31 March 2003, HAs also managed 175,972 units on behalf of others – slightly less than in the previous year. Over half of these units were managed on behalf of other HAs within the sector (Table 23). One hundred and twenty two HAs managed units within a group structure (nine less than in 2002) (Table 28).
- There was a large increase in the number of units managed under temporary housing schemes - by 20% over the year (Table 27).

### **Social housing:**

- Ninety eight percent of the total rental stock owned by HAs at 31 March 2003 was social housing (1,728,272 social housing units) (Table 3). General needs units accounted for 92% of all social housing owned, supported units accounted for eight percent (Table 5). Ninety three percent of social housing stock was directly managed by the owning HA (Table 11).
- Three percent of the social housing stock was vacant at 31 March 2003, similar to the 3.1% in 2002, and the lowest rate since 1992 (Table 14).
- HAs managed 161,135 social housing units on behalf of others, six percent less than in the previous year. Over half of these units were owned by other HAs within the sector (Table 24).

### **General needs social housing rental stock:**

- HAs owned 1,593,105 general needs housing units at 31 March 2003, an increase of 10% over the previous year. Ninety five percent of these were directly managed by the owning HA (Table 53). The percentage of general needs units that were vacant at 31 March 2003 was 2.8% compared with 2.7 % in 2002 (Table 45).
- HAs managed but did not own 139,564 general needs units at 31 March 2003 (Table 58). Seventy two percent of all social temporary housing units were general needs (Table 27 and Table 60).

- The weighted average assured net weekly rent charged for general needs self-contained tenancies in 2003 was £55.96. This was actually slightly lower than in 2002. The average secure net weekly rent charged in 2003 was £50.83, four percent lower than in the previous year. As a result the average assured general needs rent was actually nine percent higher than the average secure rent at 31 March 2003, as opposed to six percent in the previous year (Table 57).

#### **General needs lettings:**

- CORE recorded 158,569 general needs lettings between 1 April 2002 and 31 March 2003, slightly less than in the previous year (Table 80).
- The percentage of all lettings that were made to tenants nominated by a LA remained the same as in 2001/02 at 40% (Table 80).
- A third of all lettings in 2002/03 were made to single adults under 60 years old, this was also consistent with 2001/02. Thirteen percent of total lettings went to households accepted as statutorily homeless at the time of letting, a slightly higher percentage than in the previous year which was 12 % (Table 80).
- An indication of stock turnover figures can be calculated by lettings as a percentage of total stock owned. The average turnover rate in the HA stock was around 11% in England, with a low of eight percent in London and a high of 14% in the East Midlands (Table 83).

#### **Supported social housing rental stock:**

- At 31 March 2003, HAs owned 135,167 supported housing units, 18% more than at 31 March 2002. The majority of these units were directly managed by the owning HA (Table 73). Seven percent of the supported housing stock was vacant, compared with eight percent in 2002 (Table 68).
- Older people with support needs were the largest supported housing client group, followed by single homeless people. This is a reverse of the pattern observed in 2002 (Table 75).
- The weighted average net rent for supported housing stock was £59.79, almost 5% lower than the previous year (Table 76).

#### **Non-social housing:**

- At 31 March 2003, HAs owned 34,132 non-social housing units for rent – a net decrease of nearly three percent over the previous year. Non-social housing units were less likely to be directly managed by the owning HA than social housing, 80% compared with 92% respectively (Table 12).
- Two types of non-social housing dominated: student accommodation accounted for 37% of the non-social housing owned by HAs and market rented housing accounted for 27%; this distribution in the previous year was 34% and 25% respectively (Table 6).
- HAs also managed 14,837 non-social housing units on behalf of other organisations at 31 March 2003, a nearly two-fold increase (182 %) since 2002 (Table 25).

#### **Leased housing:**

- At 31 March 2003, HAs owned shares in 87,561 shared ownership, LSE and other shared equity units. The number of shared ownership units was 3,741 units lower than in 2002 and the number of Leasehold Scheme for the Elderly (LSE) units was also lower, following a downward trend since 1998 (Table 91).

- HAs also managed but did not own 7,348 shared equity units at 31 March 2003, nearly 1,887 less than the previous year (Table 94). At 31 March 2003, HAs retained the residual freehold interest on 60,635 units of leased housing that had been sold by them, over 3,515 units more than in 2002 (Table 96).

#### **Acquisitions and developments:**

- HAs acquired 104,791 rental units over the year to 31 March 2003, 40,680 units more than in 2002. The largest proportion of this increase resulted from a higher number of LSVT and tenants choice units entering the sector. Twenty percent of the total units acquired were new to the social housing sector (Table 100).
- Both the number of units built and purchased by HAs over the year increased – by 9% (Table 100).
- HAs built and purchased 5,994 units for rent without the use of public subsidy, 17% less than over the previous year (Table 101).

#### **Sales, transfers and demolitions:**

- HAs sold 20,101 units over the year to 31 March 2003 – more than over the previous year. This included 10,474 Right To Buy, Preserved Right To Buy, and Rent to Mortgage sales – the highest number of statutory sales made in the sector in any year to date (Table 108).
- Initial shared ownership sales were lower than in 2001/02 and accounted for 4,150 of all units sold in 2002/03, 90% of which had received SHG (Table 108). HAs also sold 5,477 units outright, an increase of over 2,500 units over the previous year. The vast majority (93%) of units sold outright had not received SHG subsidy (Table 112).
- HAs demolished 3,595 units over the year, over a thousand units less than over the previous year. Over five hundred of these had received SHG funding (Table 119).

#### **Paid staff:**

- HAs employed 94,864 FTE paid staff at 31 March 2003, 12% more than in the year before. Fifty five percent of these were staff dedicated to housing functions (Table 120). The average ratio of staff per 100 dwellings was lower than in 2002 at 5.4% compared with 5.9% respectively (Table 123).
- The majority of paid staff, where known, considered themselves to be of White: British origin, the next two most common groups by ethnic origin were Black/black British: Caribbean and Black/black British: African (Table 126).
- At 31 March 2003, 67% of all HA paid staff were female, 33% were male (Table 127).

#### **Further Information**

This summary is written by Jennie Abbott with Dawn Marshall of Dataspring, Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, University of Cambridge. The Tables and Appendices that accompany this summary were compiled by Jennie Abbott of Dataspring within the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research. The whole process was undertaken in collaboration with Pragati Somaia, Caroline Smart and Cindy Blaney of the Housing Corporation and many thanks are extended to them for their assistance.