



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

Housing hazards: April 2022 to March 2023

Information on the condition of residential properties assessed by local authorities under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) between April 2022 and March 2023.

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Introduction

The **Housing, Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)** was introduced in 2006 to evaluate potential risks to the health and safety of an occupant from any deficiencies identified in a dwelling. This release presents information on dwellings in which HHSRS assessments were carried out between April 2022 and March 2023 (not all residential dwellings). Headline information about the HHSRS across all residential dwellings is available for 2017-18 in the **Welsh Housing Condition Survey headline results**.

This release previously presented information on houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) at 31 March of each year. This information is now presented separately in **Houses in multiple occupation (HMO) licensing**.

All information presented in this release has been collected in the annual Hazards and Licences returns from local authorities. More details about the data presented in this release can be found in the **Housing hazards and Houses in multiple occupation (HMO) licensing quality report**.

Main points

- In 2022-23, 5,093 HHSRS assessments were carried out, 17% more than the previous year but slightly fewer than that carried out prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (5,652 in 2018-19).
- Of the 5,093 assessments, 2,387 (47%) were carried out in HMOs.
- Category 1 hazards were found in 1,514 (30%) of assessments.
- The most common Category 1 hazard found in HMOs and non-HMOs was 'excess cold'.
- Action by local authorities resulted in the resolution of 1,006 Category 1 hazards.

Assessments

The HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool which helps local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety. It is used to determine whether residential premises are safe to live in. Whilst it covers all residential premises, it is more commonly used to assess standards in private sector housing.

The HHSRS assesses 29 types of housing hazard and provides a rating for each one. Hazards which score highly on the scale (and pose the greatest risk) are referred to as Category 1 hazards. If a dwelling is found to contain a Category 1 hazard, the local authority has a duty to take appropriate enforcement action. Hazards which score lower on the scale (and pose a lesser risk) are referred to as Category 2 hazards. When a Category 2 hazard is identified, the local authority may take enforcement action. Local authorities base all enforcement decisions, in respect of residential premises, on HHSRS assessments. Any dwelling found to contain a Category 1 Hazard would automatically 'fail' the **Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)**.

HHSRS assessments may be carried out for a number of reasons, including when an HMO is licensed, or when a complaint about a property is received from the occupier or a neighbour.

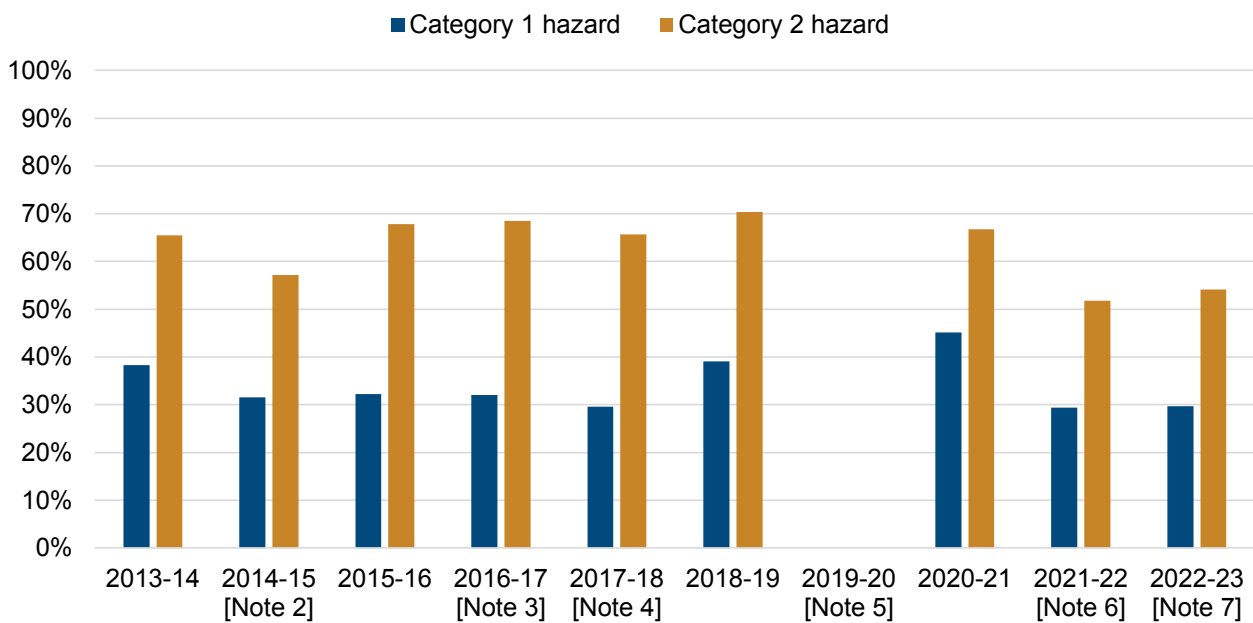
The **Fitness for human habitation (FFHH) Regulations** were introduced in December 2022 (during the period covered in this release) under **Section 91 of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (UK legislation)**. The FFHH Regulations aim to ensure landlords maintain dwellings to prevent them becoming unfit for human habitation. Please note that whether or not a dwelling is found to contain a hazard under the HHSRS does not pre-determine whether it is unfit for human habitation under the FFHH Regulations. For example, while a slight variation of floor surface may be considered a hazard under the HHSRS, it would be highly unlikely on its own to result in a determination that the dwelling

is unfit for human habitation.

In 2020-21, only a small number of assessments were carried out, as public health measures imposed to minimise the transmission of coronavirus limited the ability of local authorities to carry out assessments. In this year, where assessments were carried out, they were focused on the most-high risk cases. In 2021-22, the pandemic affected local authorities in different ways, some local authorities continued to carry out a smaller number of assessments to reduce risk to staff and clients, while other local authorities undertook a large number of assessments to work through the backlog of cases accumulated in previous years. The number of assessments carried out in 2022-23 (5,093) has reached a level slightly lower than that observed in the years prior to the pandemic (5,652 in 2018-19).

In 2022-23, the highest number of assessments were carried out in Cardiff and Swansea (957 and 952 assessments respectively). Comparatively, fewer than 100 assessments were carried out in this year in 10 of 22 local authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Ceredigion, Flintshire, Isle of Anglesey, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Newport, Wrexham and Vale of Glamorgan).

Figure 1: Percentage of all assessments found to contain at least one Category 1 or Category 2 hazard, 2013-14 to 2022-23 [Note 1]



Description of Figure 1: Described in text below.

[Note 1] Assessments may contain both Category 1 and Category 2 hazards.

[Note 2] Includes estimated figures for Flintshire.

[Note 3] Includes estimated figures for Denbighshire and Wrexham.

[Note 4] Includes estimated figures for Cardiff.

[Note 5] Data not collected for 2019-20 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Note 6] Includes estimated figures for Pembrokeshire.

[Note 7] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

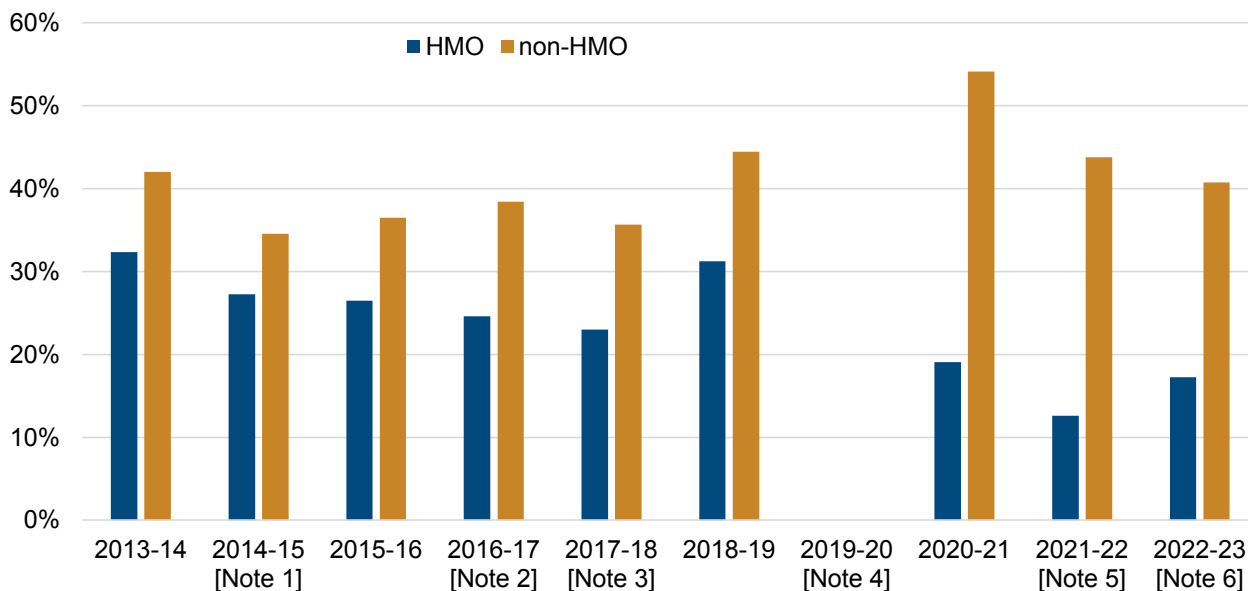
Between 2013-14 and 2018-19, the percentage of assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard fluctuated between 30% and 39%. Over the same period, the percentage of assessments found to contain a Category 2 hazard fluctuated between 57% and 70%. In 2020-21, there was a considerable increase in the percentage of assessments found to contain Category 1 hazards (45%) and a small decrease in the percentage found to contain a Category 2 hazard (67%), in part due to the impact of the pandemic on local authority operations.

In 2022-23, 30% of assessments were found to contain a Category 1 hazard, consistent with the previous year and the years observed prior to the pandemic. Compared to the previous year, there was a small increase in the percentage of assessments found to contain a Category 2 hazard (from 52% in 2021-22 to 54% in 2022-23), though this percentage remains below that observed in earlier years.

At a local authority level, the proportion of assessments found to contain either a Category 1 or Category 2 hazard was lowest in Swansea. Of the 952 assessments carried out in Swansea, 4% were found to contain a Category 1 hazard and 19% a Category 2 hazard. Powys reported the highest proportion of assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard (with 72% of the 247 assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard), while Cardiff reported the highest proportion of assessments containing a Category 2 hazard (with 953 of 957 assessments found to contain a Category 2 hazard) [Note 8].

[Note 8] Excluding the Vale of Glamorgan where all 38 assessments were found to contain a Category 2 hazard.

Figure 2: Percentage of assessments found to contain at least one Category 1 hazard by dwelling type, 2013-14 to 2022-23



Description of Figure 2: Described in text below.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Flintshire.

[Note 2] Includes estimated figures for Denbighshire and Wrexham.

[Note 3] Includes estimated figures for Cardiff.

[Note 4] Data not collected for 2019-20 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

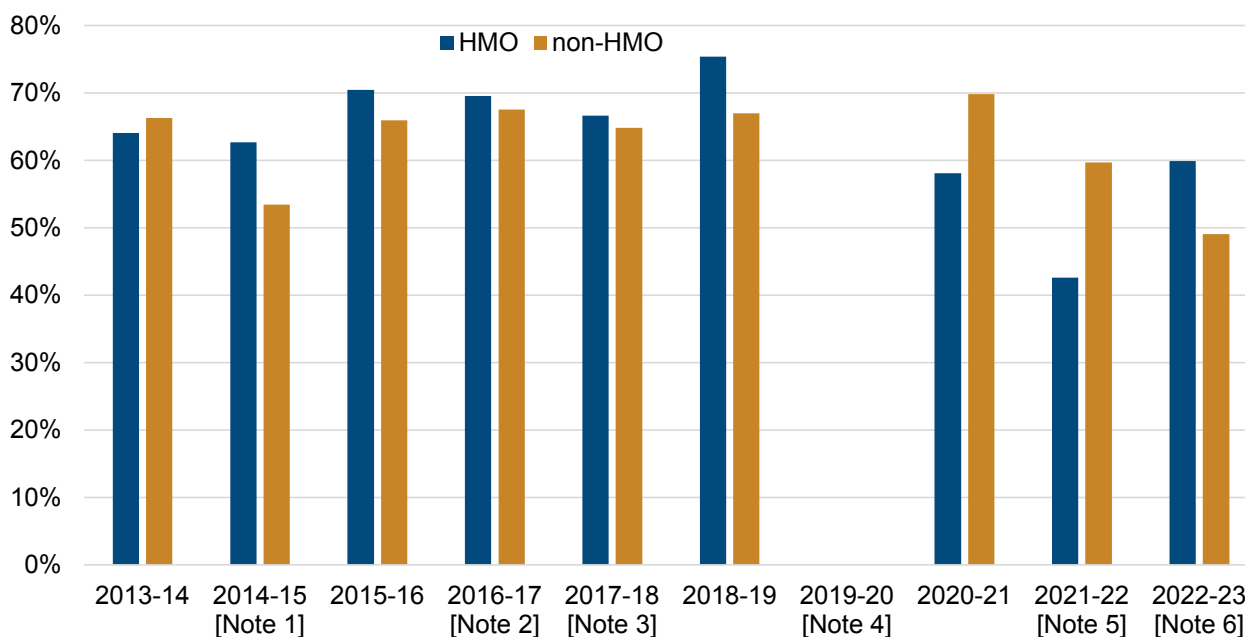
[Note 5] Includes estimated figures for Pembrokeshire.

[Note 6] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

Since the introduction of the HHSRS in 2006, the percentage of assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard has been higher in non-HMOs compared to HMOs. In 2020-21, the disparity between HMO and non-HMO assessments grew, perhaps in part due to the pandemic, with public health measures making it more difficult to undertake assessments in HMOs.

In 2022-23, there was a relatively equal split of assessments carried out in HMOs and non-HMOs (of the 5,093 assessments, 47% were carried out in HMOs and 53% in non-HMOs). In this year, the percentage of HMO assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard increased from 13% to 17%, while the percentage of non-HMO assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard decreased from 44% to 41%.

Figure 3: Percentage of assessments found to contain at least one Category 2 hazard by dwelling type, 2013-14 to 2022-23



Description of Figure 3: Described in text below.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Flintshire.

[Note 2] Includes estimated figures for Denbighshire and Wrexham.

[Note 3] Includes estimated figures for Cardiff.

[Note 4] Data not collected for 2019-20 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Note 5] Includes estimated figures for Pembrokeshire.

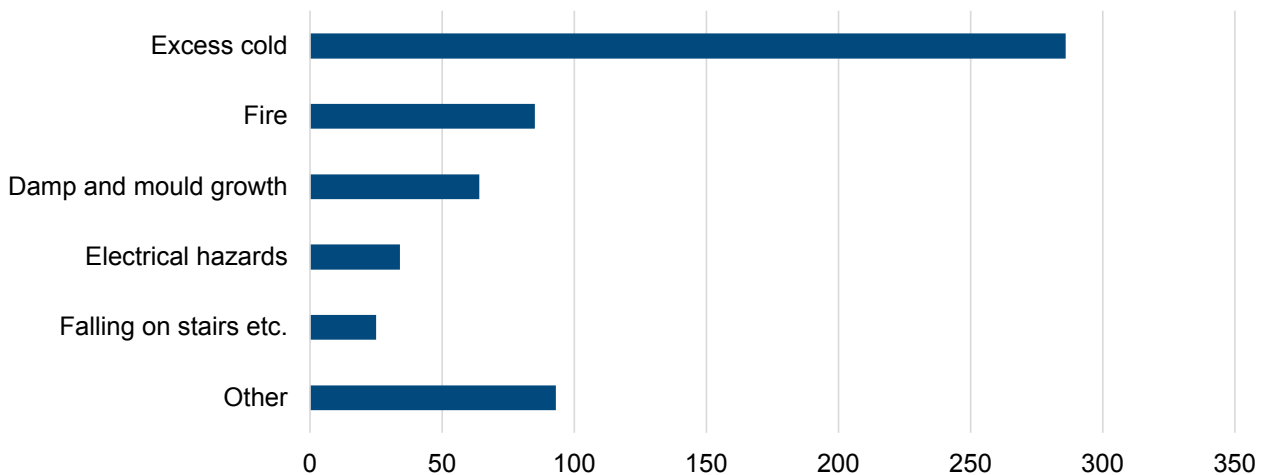
[Note 6] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

Between 2014-15 and 2018-19, a higher percentage of Category 2 hazards were found in HMO than non-HMO assessments (in 2018-19, 75% of HMO assessments were found to contain a Category 2 hazard compared to 67% of non-HMO assessments). In 2020-21 and 2021-22, this trend was reversed, with a higher percentage of Category 2 hazards found in non-HMOs. In the most recent year, the percentage of HMO assessments found to contain a Category 2 hazard increased from 43% to 60%, while the percentage of non-HMO assessments found to contain a Category 2 hazard decreased from 60% to 49%.

Hazards found in HMOs

HMOs cover a wide range of housing types in the private rented sector. They are often occupied by younger, lower-income single people and some vulnerable/disadvantaged groups.

Figure 4: Number of Category 1 hazards found in HMO assessments by hazard type, 2022-23 [Note 1] [Note 2]



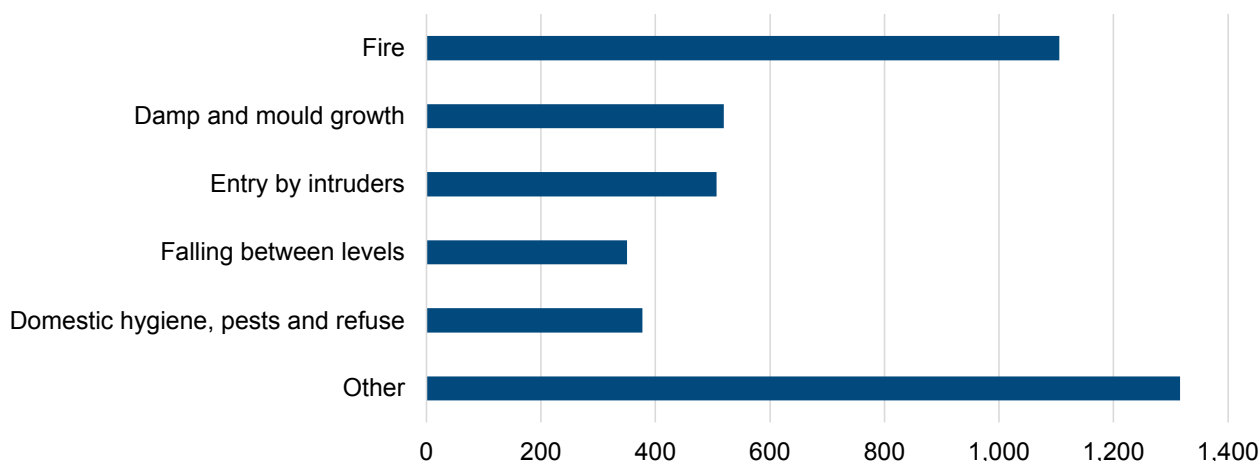
Description of Figure 4: Horizontal bar chart showing the most commonly found hazard was 'excess cold', followed by 'fire' and 'electrical hazards'.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

[Note 2] Assessments may contain more than one type of Category 1 hazard.

Since 2012-13, 'excess cold' has been the most common Category 1 hazard found in HMOs. In 2022-23, 'excess cold' accounted for 286 of Category 1 hazards found in this type of dwelling (49%), the largest proportion recorded to date.

Figure 5: Number of Category 2 hazards found in HMO assessments by hazard type, 2022-23 [Note 1] [Note 2]



Description of Figure 5: Horizontal bar chart showing the most commonly found hazard was 'fire', followed by 'damp and mould growth' and 'entry by intruders'.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

[Note 2] Assessments may contain more than one type of Category 2 hazard.

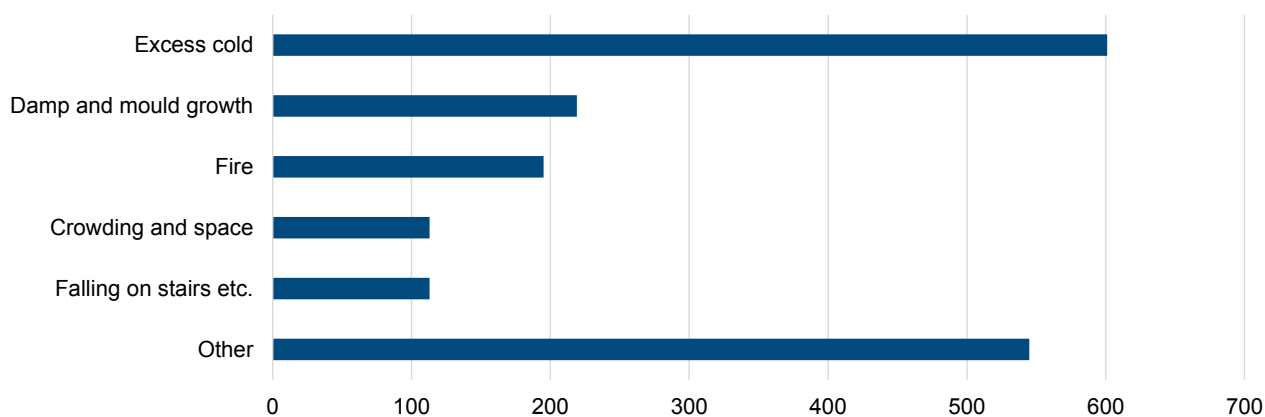
Since 2008-09, the most common Category 2 hazard found in HMO assessments (outside of 'other') has been 'fire'. Risk of 'fire' accounted for 1,105 Category 2 hazards found in this type of dwelling in the most recent year (26%).

Hazards found in non-HMOs

Single household dwellings are known as non-HMOs.

Figure 6: Number of Category 1 hazards found in non-

HMO assessments by hazard type, 2022-23 [Note 1] [Note 2]



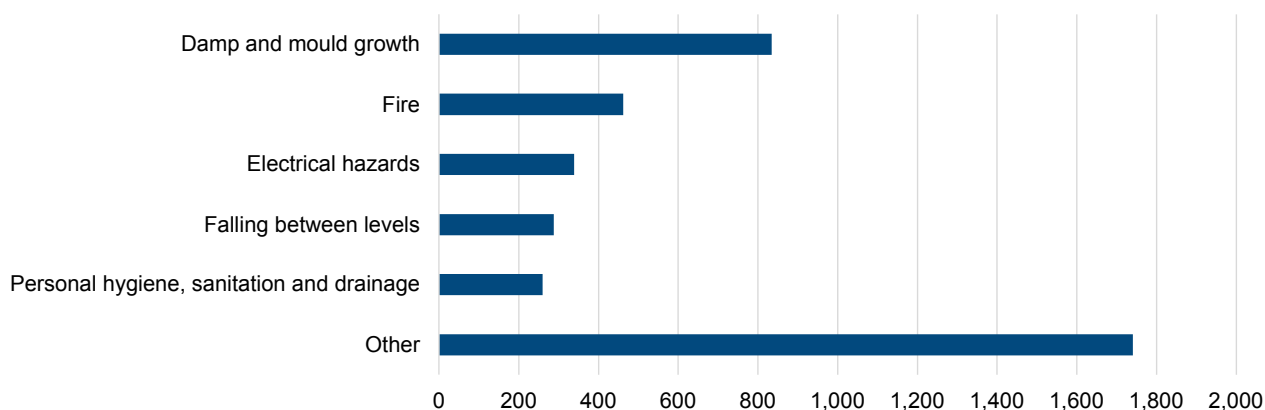
Description of Figure 6: Horizontal bar chart showing the most commonly found hazard was 'excess cold', followed by 'damp and mould growth' and 'fire'.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

[Note 2] Assessments may contain more than one type of Category 1 hazard.

In 2022-23, the most common Category 1 hazard found in non-HMO assessments was 'excess cold'. 'Excess cold' accounted for 601 Category 1 hazards found in this dwelling type (34%).

Figure 7: Number of Category 2 hazards found in non-HMO assessments by hazard type, 2022-23 [Note 1] [Note 2]



Description of Figure 7: Horizontal bar chart showing the most commonly found hazard was 'damp and mould growth', followed by 'fire' and 'electrical hazards'.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

[Note 2] Assessments may contain more than one type of Category 2 hazard.

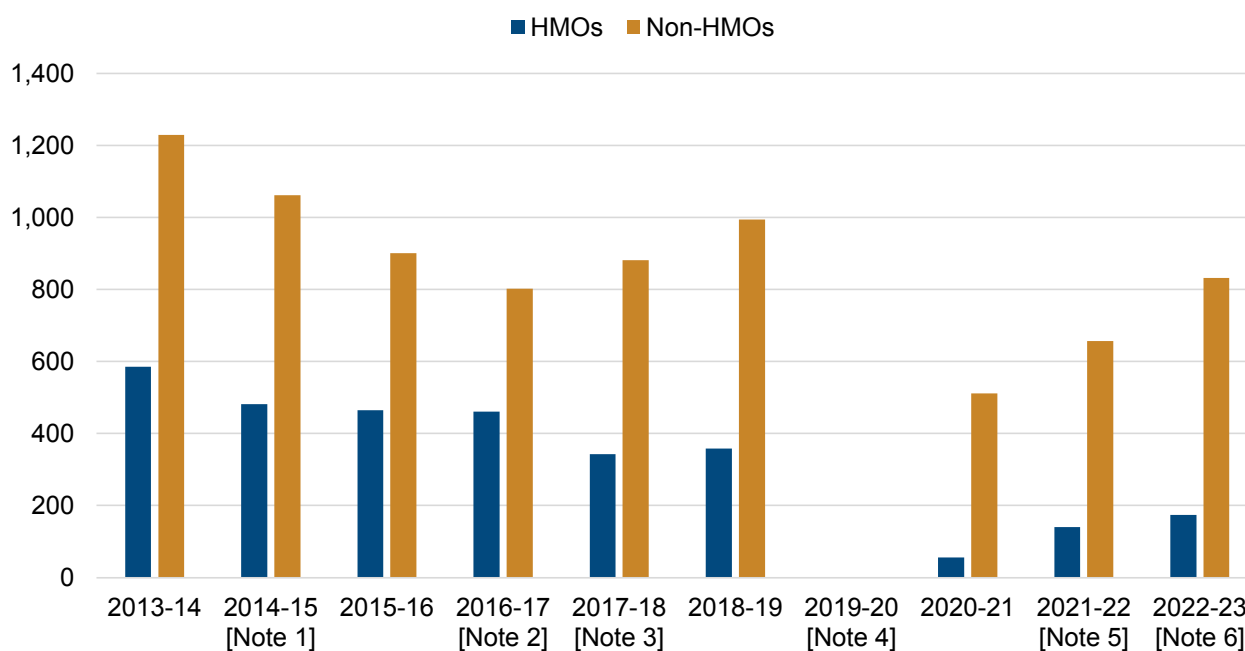
Since 2008-09, the most common Category 2 hazard found in non-HMO assessments (outside of 'other') has been 'damp and mould growth'. In 2022-23, 'damp and mould growth' accounted for 834 Category 2 hazards in this type of dwelling (21%).

Enforcement action

Local authorities can implement a range of actions when they identify a hazard, including serving a hazard awareness notice or an improvement notice requiring work to remove or reduce the hazard, making a prohibition order to restrict the

use of all or part of the dwelling or taking action themselves where they consider that the hazard needs to be dealt with as an emergency. The enforcement action taken may not always result in the resolution of a hazard.

Figure 8: Number of Category 1 hazards resolved by dwelling type, 2013-14 to 2022-23



Description of Figure 8: Described in text below.

[Note 1] Includes estimated figures for Flintshire.

[Note 2] Includes estimated figures for Denbighshire and Wrexham.

[Note 3] Includes estimated figures for Cardiff.

[Note 4] Data not collected for 2019-20 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Note 5] Includes estimated figures for Pembrokeshire.

[Note 6] Includes estimated figures for Neath Port Talbot.

Between 2013-14 and 2018-19, the number of Category 1 hazards resolved in HMOs decreased from 585 to 358. Over the same period, the number of Category 1 hazards resolved in non-HMOs fluctuated between 802 and 1,229. In 2020-21 and 2021-22, a lower number of Category 1 hazards were resolved, likely due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on local authority operations.

In 2022-23, action by local authorities resulted in the resolution of 1,006 Category 1 hazards. This was an increase on the previous two years (where 567 and 797 hazards were resolved respectively) but lower than the number of resolutions achieved in the years prior to the pandemic (1,352 in 2018-19). The majority of resolutions occurred in non-HMOs (83%). This is to be expected, given that most Category 1 hazards are found in non-HMOs (in 2022-23, 73% of assessments found to contain a Category 1 hazard were non-HMOs assessments).

It is important to note that the assessment of some hazards may have been carried out in previous financial years. Some assessments may also identify more than one Category 1 hazard. For these reasons, it is not possible to determine the proportion of Category 1 hazards that have been resolved in a given year.

Quality and methodology information

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as

National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2012 following [assessment](#) by the Office for Statistics Regulation.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Expanded commentary to include more policy and operational context.
- Separated Housing hazards, Houses in multiple occupation (HMO) licensing and Demolitions publications to improve accessibility and usability of data.
- Enhanced trustworthiness by reducing/removing pre-release access.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

This release includes contextual information relevant to the indicator 31 ‘Percentage of dwellings which are free from hazards’, which was referenced in the Well-being report in the previous link.

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

Contact details

Statistician: Holly Flynn

Email: stats.housingconditions@gov.wales

Media: 0300 025 8099

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