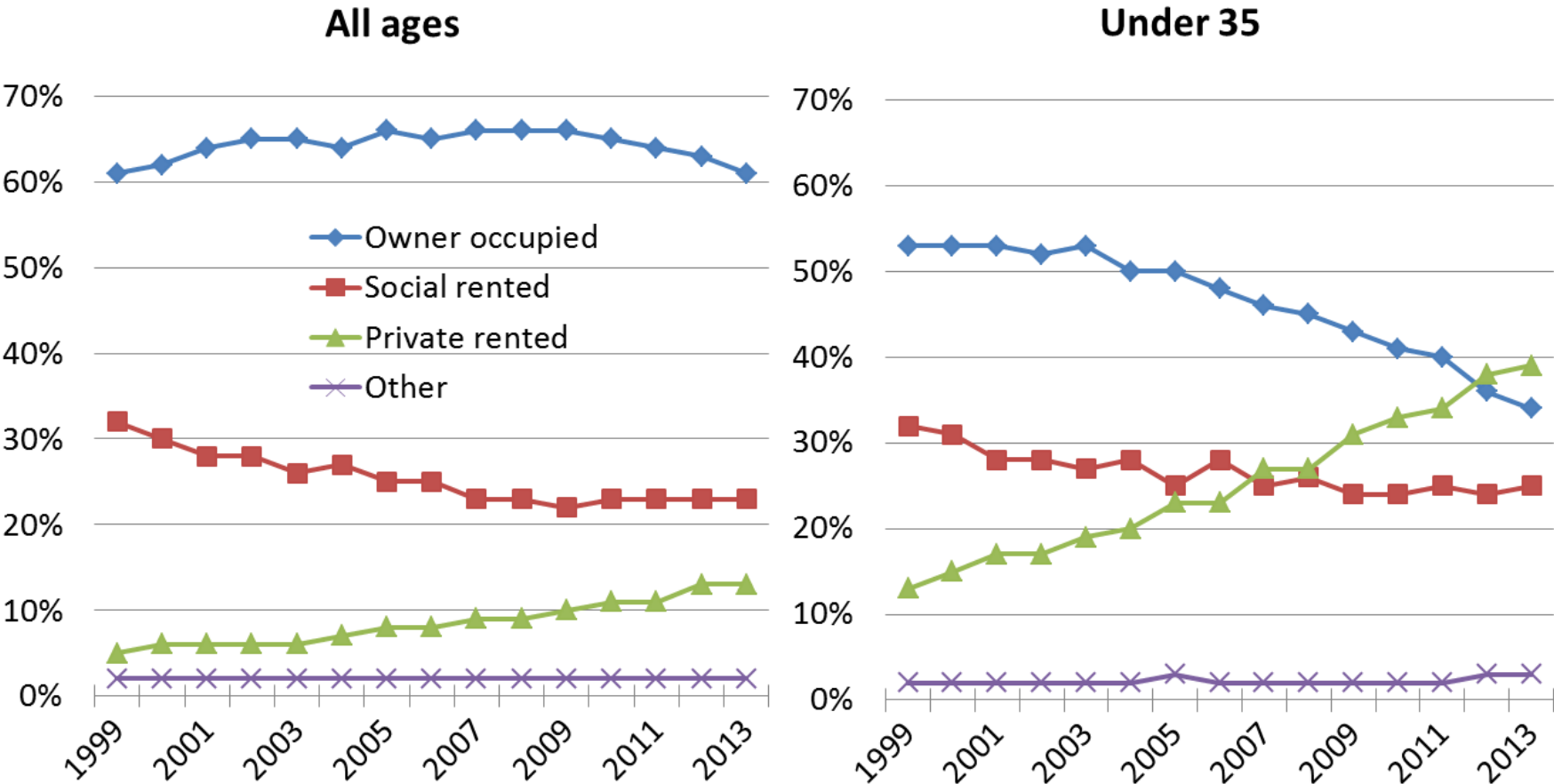


Generation Rent, Inequalities and 'Settling Down'

DR JENNY HOOLACHAN, CARDIFF UNIVERSITY, HOOLACHANJ@CARDIFF.AC.UK

DR KIM MCKEE, UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING AND UK COLLABORATIVE CENTRE
FOR HOUSING EVIDENCE (CACHE), KIM.MCKEE@STIR.AC.UK

Housing Tenure Shifts (Scotland)



Three 'Generation Rent' Projects

All three projects were led by Kim McKee:

1. Mind the (Housing) Wealth Gap 2012-2015 (Leverhulme Trust)
2. Housing 'Generation Rent' What are the Challenges for Housing Policy in Scotland? 2015 (Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland)
3. The 'Frustrated' Housing Aspirations of Generation Rent (UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, CaCHE)

Summary of Findings

1. 'Settling down' and tenure insecurity
2. Housing (un)affordability and precarity
3. The double disadvantage of housing and income insecurity
4. The rural distinctiveness of housing and income insecurity
5. Inter- and intra-generational inequalities

'Settling Down' and Tenure Insecurity

We do want to have a family, we do want to get married, there are not going to be any of those things unless we have a solid house! If we rented, I could be 8 months pregnant and get a Notice to Quit and be exited out, next month! [...] And I suppose there is lots of things, can you even make it your own? [...] it is somebody else's home and we are just living there! (Sarah, female, 25)

Housing (Un)Affordability and Precarity

The first thing was the cost! It's very expensive to find something under £400 for even a 2-bedroom flat, it's really expensive! And I also found it hard to find another flatmate. And then [the letting agent] asked a lot of things, like credit checks and references and if you've previously rented before [...]. They were also asking for hefty deposits, some of them were like three times the rent! (Leah, female, 19)

Housing and Income Insecurity

How are you supposed to meet anyone and actually form this wonderful [family] life, if you are always moving from place to place? [...] you're expected to up and move all the time and shift from place to place...It is just insane!
(Mhairi, female, 27)

Rural Distinctions

We can't avoid the fact that a lot of the houses that families lived in when I grew up are now second homes. Even if I could afford to live in that village, it would be hard trying to find a place that's not somebody's second home! It's definitely had an impact on prices of houses and rent, and the community itself, the fact that these second homeowners are moving in and prising us out a bit. (Sophie, 27, Cornwall, Social Housing)

The job market is more competitive and down here it's...saturated, is not the right word but there just aren't 'big money jobs' out there. (Stuart, 29, Cornwall, Homeowner)

Inter-generational Inequalities

We cannot afford to live in a decent sized family home despite both being well educated and with a reasonable income. My parents were able to bring us up in a lovely family home with a mortgage based on one teacher's salary. It was three roads down from where we live now. (Paige, 31, Homeowner)

I just feel so sorry for people today. I mean I was lucky, really lucky. It's just impossible, certainly not to get the housing you would really like [.] I mean if you take my day, my day I could have got a job anywhere, but now. (Patrick, 65+, Homeowner)

Intra-generational Inequalities

*I know that I'm lucky [.] There are a lot of people in my situation who don't have family support because their families aren't able to provide it financially.
(Audrey, 28, Private renter)*

Key Messages

- If the PRS continues to grow, the challenges of insecurity and unaffordability are likely to persist and will affect an increasing proportion of the population
- Many young people are struggling to navigate the double disadvantage of housing and income insecurity/precarity
- These challenges appear to have geographical consistency but there are some additional difficulties experienced by those living in rural areas
- Young people perceive their current situations to be more difficult than their parents but they do not necessarily feel resentful towards their parents (as conflict narratives would suggest)

Key Messages (continued)

- Intra-generational inequalities are most visible with regard to those whose parents are willing and able to provide them with financial security as they navigate precarious housing and employment markets. This means that those without such parental support are likely to be further disadvantaged.
- Further research is needed to explore the experiences of other demographic groups living in the PRS (e.g. low-income, families, older people, formerly-homeless people, vulnerable people)
- Further research is also needed to examine the long-term impacts of changing tenures given that today's younger generation are unlikely to accumulate the same level of housing wealth as the 'Baby Boomer' generation did. There is a concern that we are storing up a future crisis of pensioner poverty on a larger scale than we see now.

Private Housing (Tenancies) Scotland Act 2016

- As of 1st December 2017 all new PRS tenancies are open-ended (private residential tenancy not a short assured tenancy)
- 18 statutory specified criteria for repossession ('no fault' ground has been removed)
- Rent increases once every 12 months, with 3 months notice
- Tenant can appeal excessive rent rises to a rent officer
- Possibility to regulate rents in hot spots via 'Rent Pressure Zones'
- The Act builds on a raft of previous interventions in the PRS (e.g. landlord registration)

References

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