

National Survey for Wales, 2014-15 Accommodation and energy saving measures

In 2014-15, the National Survey for Wales included a number of questions about people's accommodation such as their satisfaction with their property and whether they rent or own it. The survey also included questions that looked at whether people had any form of energy saving measures in their home, for example if they had cavity wall insulation or solar panels.

The 2014-15 results from the survey were first published in June 2015. This bulletin provides more detailed analysis of the results on accommodation and energy saving measures.

Key findings

- 68% of people were very satisfied with their accommodation and 26% fairly satisfied (94% satisfied).
- 77% of people in owner occupied houses were very satisfied with their accommodation, compared with 52% of people in private rented accommodation and 48% of people in social housing.
- 48% of people in private rented accommodation were very satisfied with maintenance and repairs done by their landlord, compared with 38% of people in social housing.
- 86% of users of social care services said that their accommodation was suitable for their needs.
- Where known and applicable, 94% of people said they had roof/loft insulation 74% cavity wall insulation and 31% of people solid wall insulation.
- People in private rented accommodation were less likely to have energy saving measures than those in owner-occupied houses or social housing.
- Further analysis showed that after taking other factors into account households in material household deprivation were less satisfied with their accommodation.



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Introduction

Housing has an important effect on health, education, work, and the communities in which we live. A stated aim of the Welsh Government is to help ensure that as many people as possible live in accommodation that is of a high standard. The [Housing \(Wales\) Act 2014](#) was passed in September 2014 with the main aims of the act being to provide:

- more homes;
- better quality homes; and
- better housing-related services.

The Act introduced new initiatives relating to all types of housing and included:

- a compulsory registration scheme for private rented sector landlords;
- introduction of standards for local authorities on rents, service charges and quality of accommodation;
- assisting the provision of housing by housing associations; and
- financial assistance for house purchases.

In order to help measure the effects of the legislation, in 2014-15 the National Survey included some questions about people's satisfaction with their accommodation.

Satisfaction with accommodation

One of the questions asked in the survey looked at people's satisfaction with their accommodation. Chart 1 below shows that in general people are very satisfied (68%) or fairly satisfied (26%) with their accommodation, with a small proportion being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3%), fairly dissatisfied (2%) or very dissatisfied (1%).

Chart 1: Satisfaction with accommodation

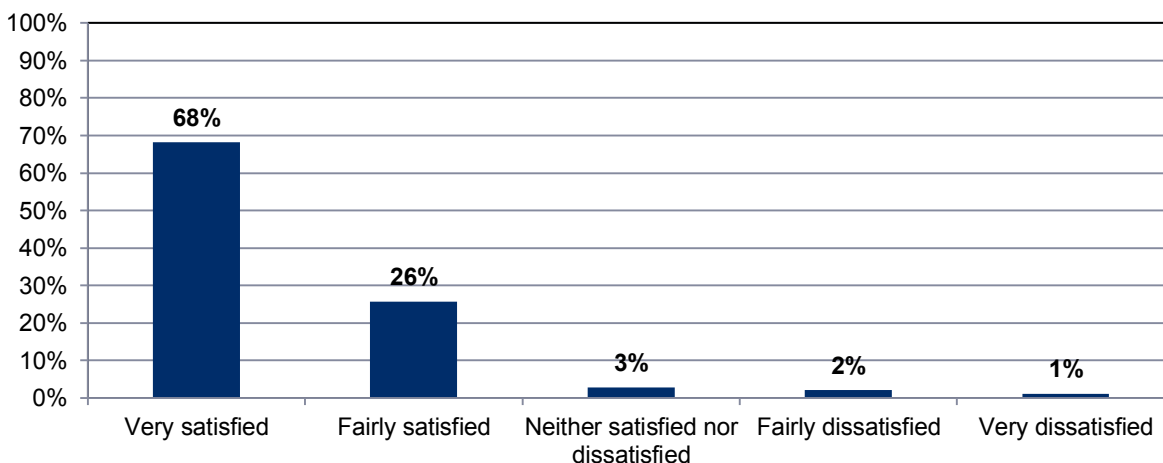
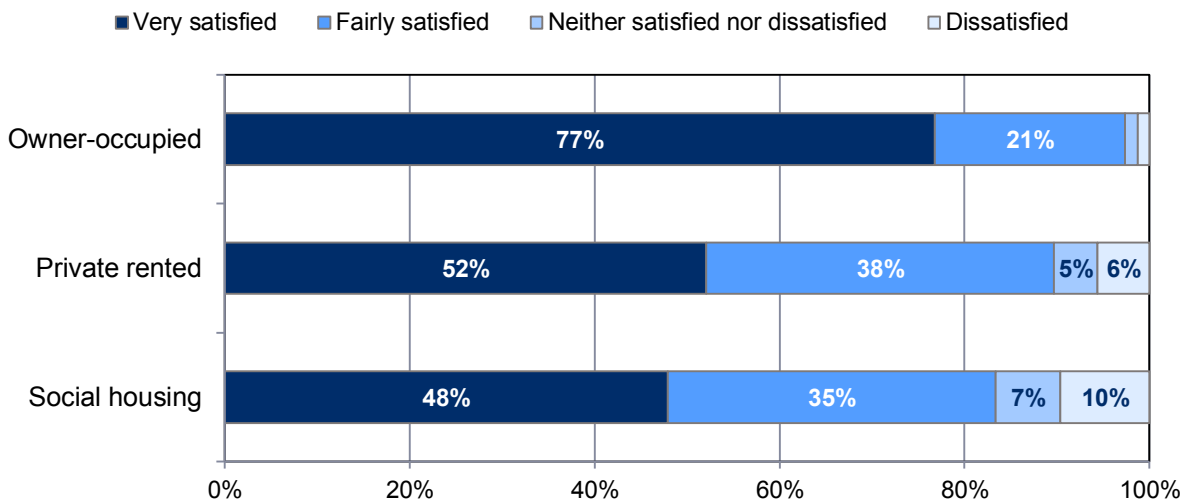


Chart 2 shows that satisfaction with accommodation varies by tenure type. The majority of people were satisfied with their accommodation across all three types of tenure. However, a higher proportion of people in private rented housing and social housing stated that they were only fairly satisfied with their accommodation, compared with those in owner occupied properties. A higher

proportion of people in social housing were dissatisfied with their accommodation (10%), while 1% of those living in owner-occupied accommodation were dissatisfied.

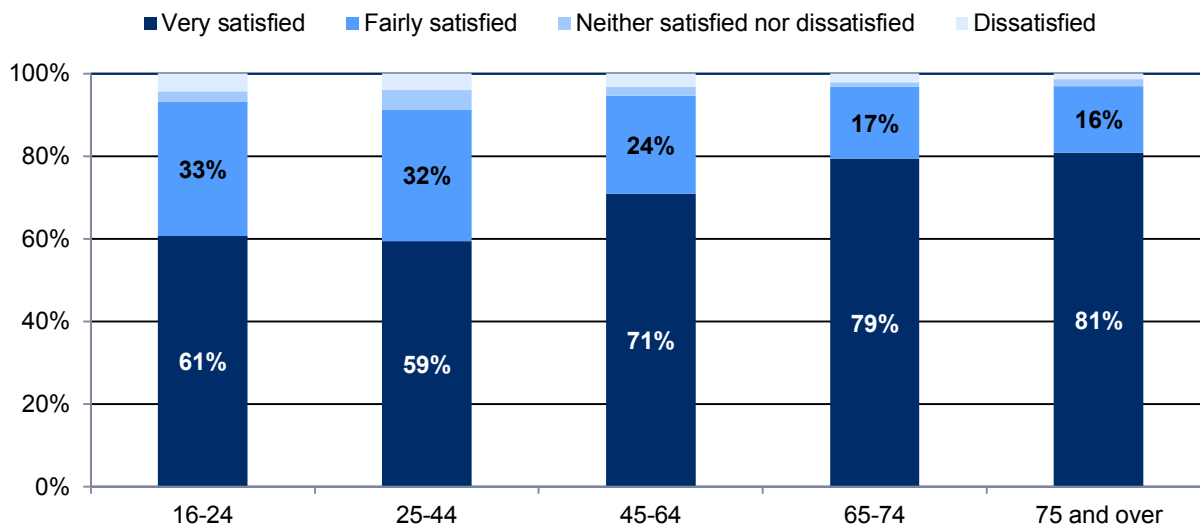
Chart 2: Satisfaction with accommodation, by tenure



The percentage of people who are very satisfied with their accommodation increases with age, as shown in Chart 3. However, when you look at the total numbers of people who were satisfied (either very or fairly) then the results show that there was little difference across the age groups.

These questions were also asked in the [English Housing Survey](#), where a similar pattern was observed. In 2013-14, 91% of people in England were satisfied with their accommodation, 94% of owner-occupiers were satisfied, 82% of private renters, and 81% of social renters.¹

Chart 3: Satisfaction with accommodation, by age



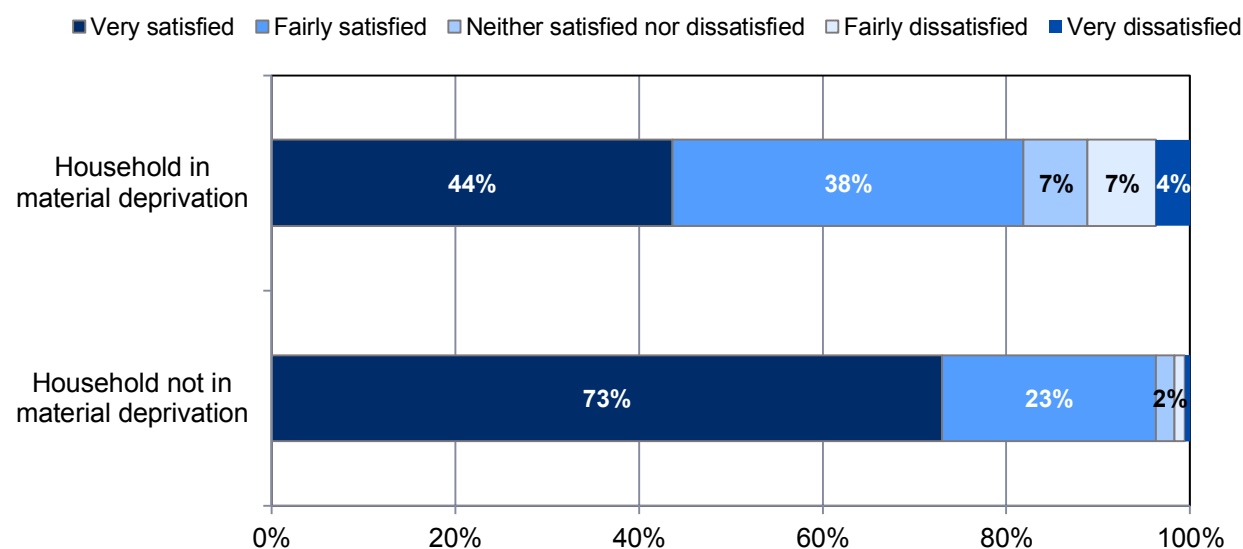
The National Survey included a number of questions that are used to give an overall picture of how materially deprived² a household is. These include questions such as whether the respondent has

¹ The [English Housing Survey](#) was carried out with the household representative (the person who owns/rents the home, the oldest person or the person who earns the most) and not a randomly-selected adult aged 16+ as in the National Survey. This difference in design may contribute to differences in results between the two surveys.

money to replace worn out furniture or whether they have enough money to make regular savings of £10 a month or more.

Satisfaction with accommodation appears to be linked to how materially deprived a household is. The results in Chart 4 show that there is a difference in satisfaction with their accommodation between those who are living in a materially deprived household to those who do not. When looking at satisfaction with their accommodation 73% of people not in a materially deprived household were very satisfied compared with 44% of those people living in a materially deprived household.

Chart 4: Satisfaction with accommodation, by material deprivation

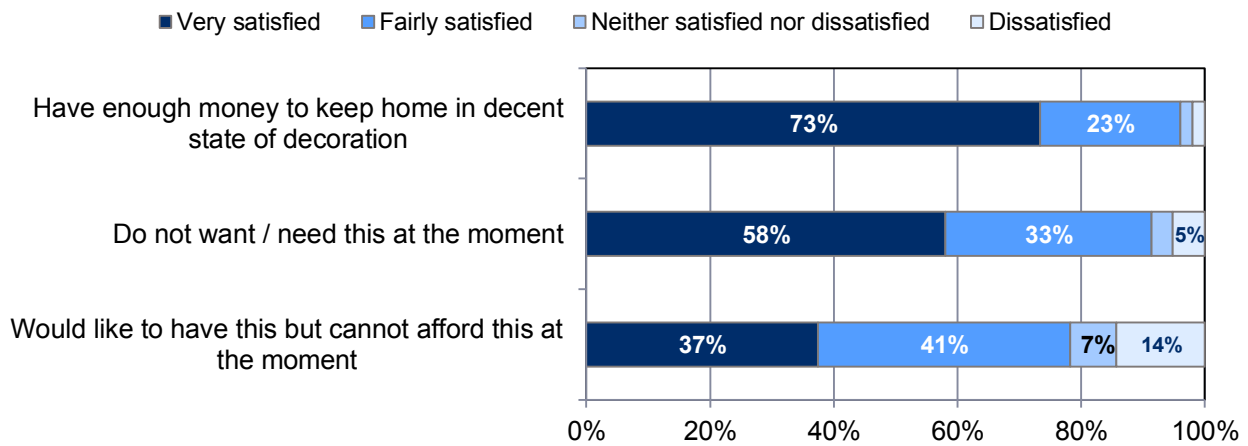


Dissatisfaction levels also varied depending on whether the household was materially deprived. Those who are materially deprived were more dissatisfied with their accommodation (7% fairly dissatisfied, 4% very dissatisfied) than those in households not in material deprivation (both 1%).

There are a number of questions in the survey which look at people's ability to maintain their home. People were asked if they had enough money to keep their house in a decent state of decoration, there was a large difference between those who had the money to do this and those who would like to but couldn't afford to. 73% of people who could afford to keep their house in a decent state of decoration were very satisfied compared with 58% of those who didn't want or need to, and 37% of those who said they would like to keep their home in a decent state of decoration but couldn't afford to. The results from this analysis can be seen in Chart 5.

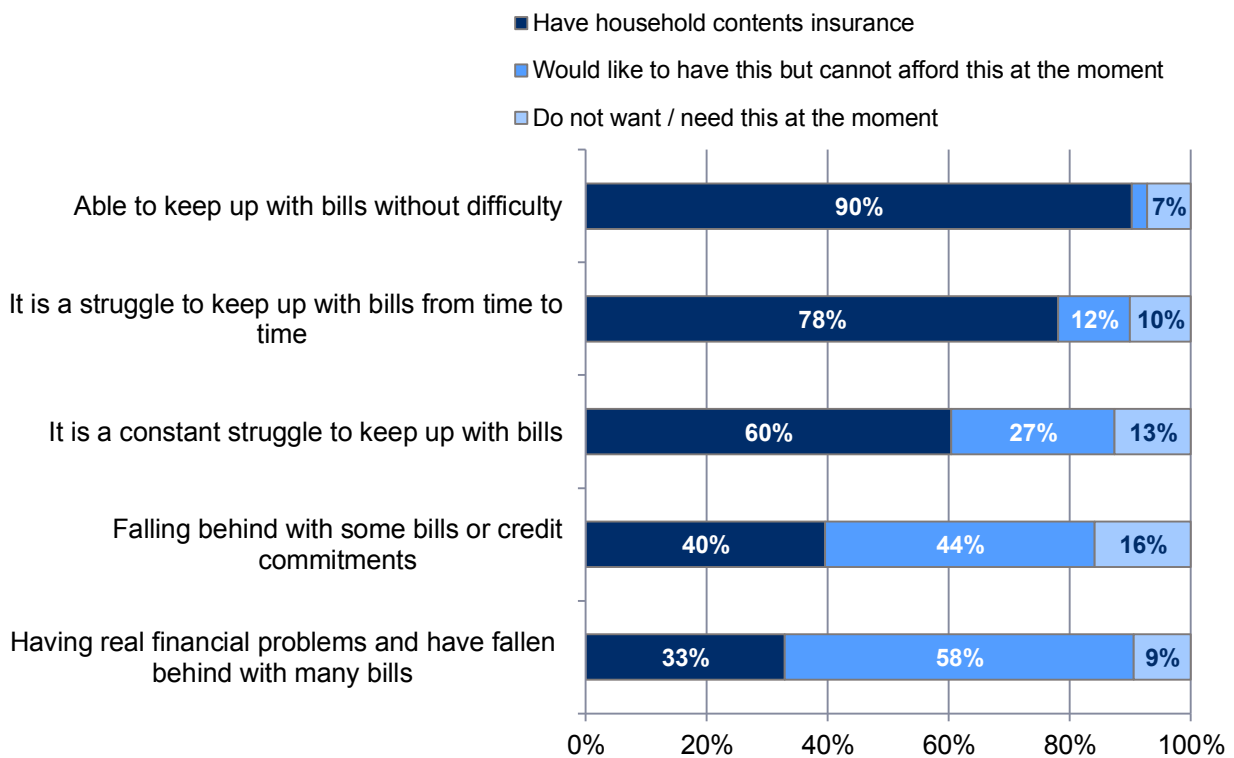
² A full explanation of how material deprivation is calculated can be found [here](#)

Chart 5: Satisfaction with accommodation, by enough money to maintain home decoration



Two questions relating to personal finances were used in the calculation of material deprivation. These questions looked at the ability to keep up with bills and financial commitments and whether the household had home contents insurance. The results of this are shown in Chart 6.

Chart 6: Having household contents insurance, by people’s ability to keep up with their bills

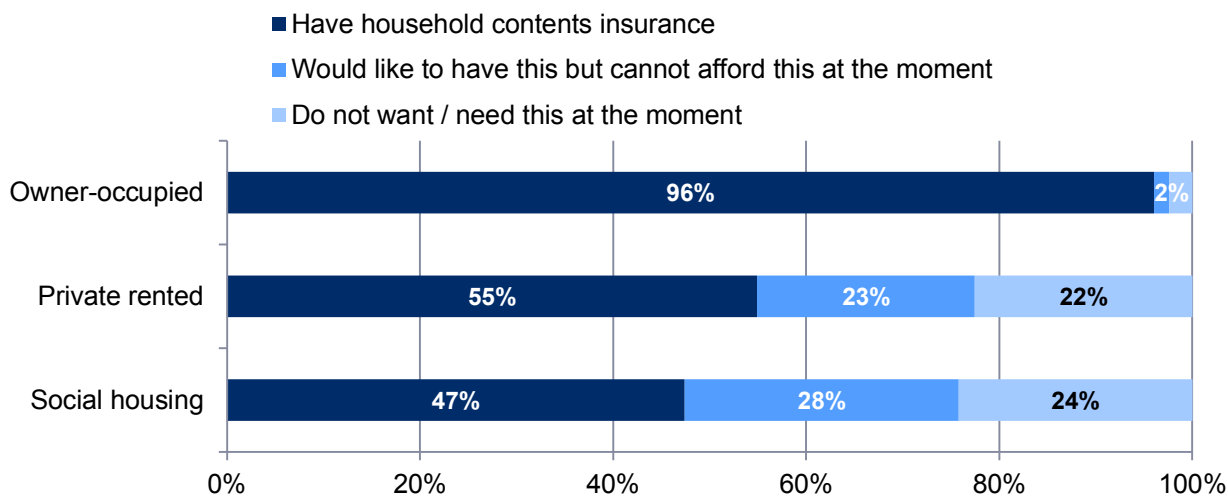


The chart shows that there is a correlation between difficulty paying bills and whether the household had contents insurance. Of those who were able to keep up with bills without any difficulty 90% had contents insurance and only 3% wanted it but could not afford it. In comparison, of those who were having real financial problems 33% had contents insurance and 58% would have liked to have it but could not afford it.

Chart 7 shows the relationship between tenure type and whether a household has home contents insurance. The results show a marked difference across tenure types - 96% of people in owner-

occupied houses having contents insurance compared with 55% of private rented tenants and 46% of people in social housing.

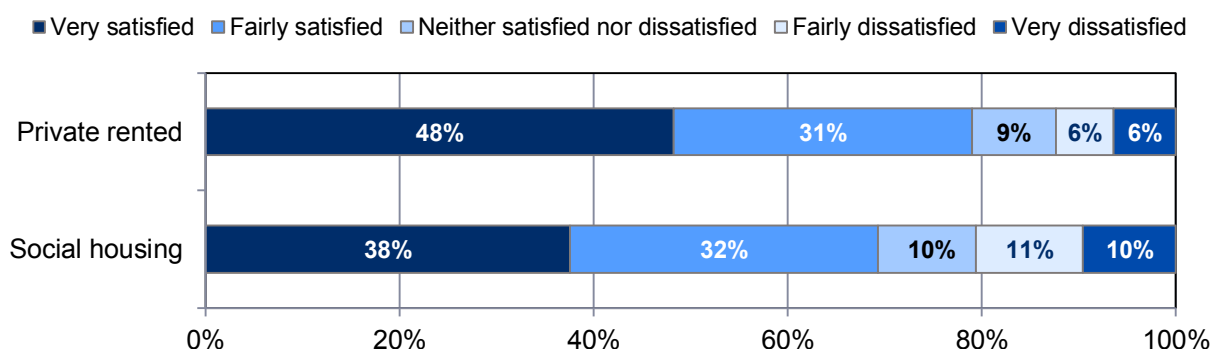
Chart 7: Ability to afford contents insurance, by tenure



Rented accommodation

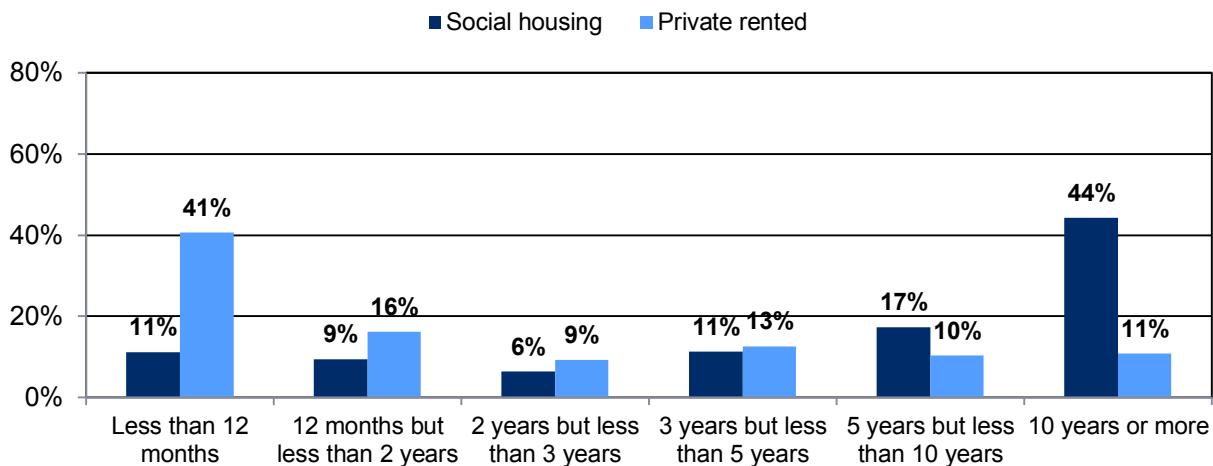
Those who lived in social housing or private rented accommodation were also asked about satisfaction with how their accommodation was maintained and repaired by the landlord. The results show that there was a difference between the satisfaction of those in social housing and those in private rented accommodation. As with general satisfaction levels discussed earlier, the majority of people were satisfied with their accommodation. However there is a difference between people in private rented and social housing when asked about maintenance and repairs. Chart 8 shows that a higher proportion of people living in social housing were dissatisfied with the way the landlord repairs and maintains the home than people living in private rented accommodation.

Chart 8: Satisfaction with landlord maintenance and repairs, by tenure



People living in social housing or private rented accommodation were asked how long they had lived in their current accommodation. Chart 9 shows that at the two extremes of the scale the two tenure types differ significantly. 41% of people in private rented accommodation had lived in their home less than 12 months, compared with 11% of those living in social housing. In comparison 44% of people in social housing had lived in their house for 10 years or more whereas only 11% of people in private housing had lived in their home for this length of time.

Chart 9: Tenure type by length of time at this address



Further analysis – main factors influencing satisfaction with accommodation

By looking at the charts in the previous sections, we can see that there is a relationship between people’s satisfaction with their accommodation by their age, tenure, their level of material deprivation, and whether they can afford to keep the home in a good state of decoration.

However these factors are often linked to each other (for example, people in material deprivation are also less likely to be owner occupiers). To get a clearer understanding of the effect of an individual factor we have used statistical methods to separate out the effects of particular factors³ on people’s satisfaction with their accommodation. These methods allow us to look at the effect of one factor while keeping other factors constant (sometimes called “controlling for other factors”).⁴

We found that the following were the key factors that influenced people’s satisfaction with their accommodation:

- type of tenure;
- household material deprivation;
- overall satisfaction with life;
- area deprivation (measured by the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, WIMD);
- feeling of safety walking alone in the local area at night; and
- views on whether the local authority does all it can to improve the local area.

³ A full list of the factors we looked at can be found in [Key quality information](#)

⁴ This method is known as logistic regression. More information about the method can be found in [Key quality information](#)

Chart 10: Factors influencing satisfaction with accommodation

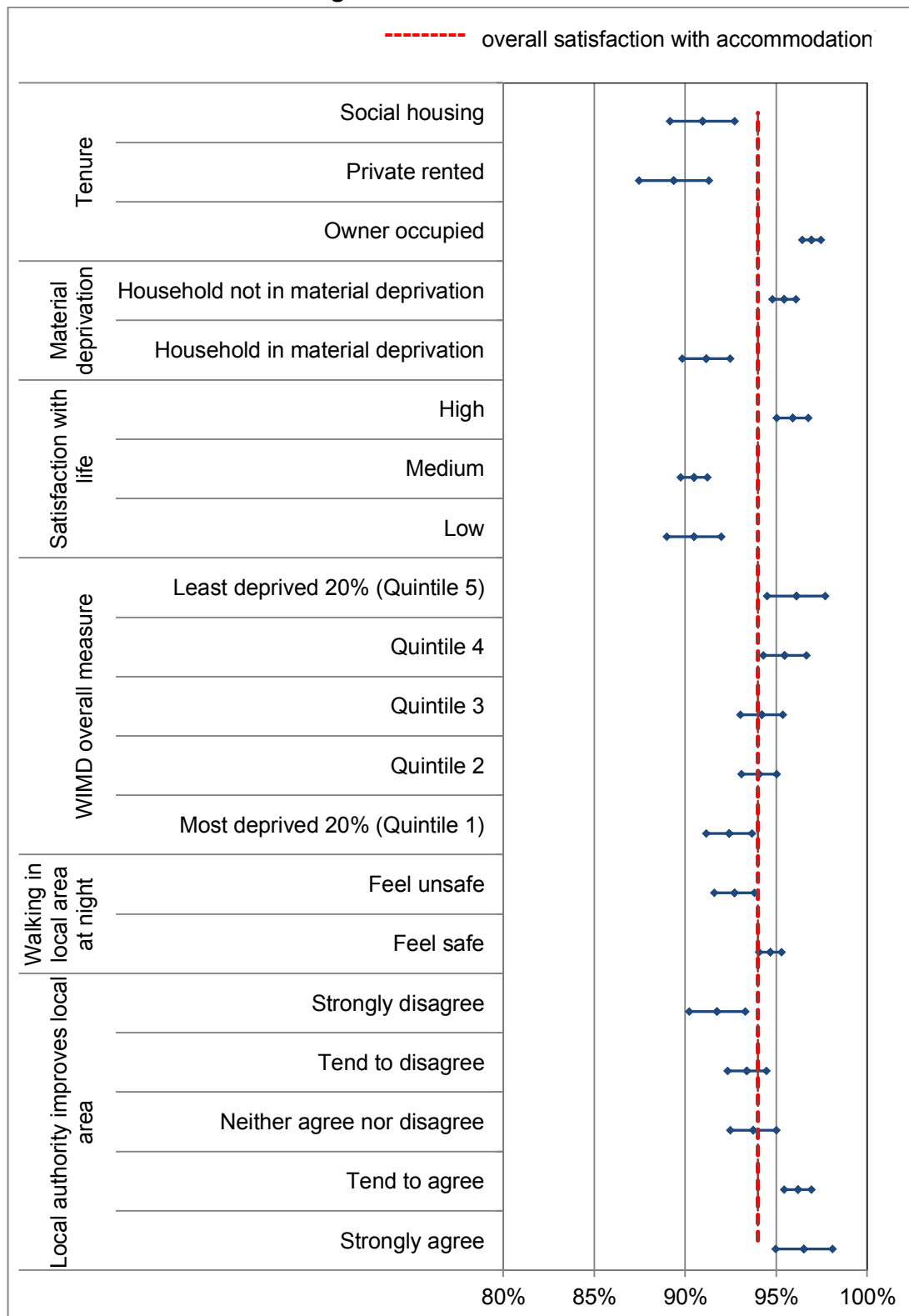


Chart 10 shows the likelihood of people being satisfied with their accommodation, by each of these factors, once we have controlled for all of the other factors. The red vertical dotted line shows the overall survey headline figure (94%) for satisfaction with accommodation. Using this line for comparison it is possible to see how each of these factors (when the others are held constant) is likely to affect people’s satisfaction with their accommodation.

It is important to note that the scale on this chart only goes from 80% to 100%, in order to focus on the differences between the factors. Confidence intervals displayed as error bars have been added to show the likely variation in each result. When the confidence intervals for two possible responses to the same question do not overlap, it suggests that the difference between the two results is statistically significant.⁵

Chart 10 shows that when we control for all of these factors, owner occupiers are more likely to be satisfied with their accommodation than if they are renting privately or in social housing. It should be noted that there was no significant difference between being in social housing or renting, once we had controlled for all other factors.

People who record a high satisfaction with life are also more likely to be satisfied with their accommodation than those who have low levels of satisfaction with life, after the other factors are held constant.

Levels of deprivation also affect satisfaction with accommodation. Household deprivation and area deprivation have separate effects on satisfaction with accommodation. The effect of deprivation is more marked when looking at household deprivation than at area deprivation. People in deprived households are less likely to be satisfied with their accommodation. The chart also shows that when the other factors are held constant there is a noticeable pattern between area deprivation and satisfaction – this indicates a small but significant difference when comparing satisfaction levels of people living in the most deprived areas with those living in the least deprived areas.

The analysis also demonstrated that, after controlling for the other factors mentioned, people who feel unsafe walking in the local area after dark are less likely to be satisfied with their accommodation.

Another finding was that people who agreed that their local authority was doing all it can to improve their local area were more satisfied with their accommodation. Conversely those who disagreed that the local authority was improving their area were less satisfied with their accommodation.

These findings improve our understanding of the survey results and confirm many of the trends discussed earlier in the bulletin. However, this analysis also allows us to interpret the results with greater certainty by considering one factor in isolation whilst holding other factors constant. For example, Chart 2 illustrates high levels of satisfaction with accommodation, the percentages varying by tenure type with 77% of owner occupiers being very satisfied, 52% of private renters and 48% of people in social housing. However, without carrying out further analysis it is not clear whether this is indeed related to tenure or to some other factor (for example, people who are in material deprivation are also less likely to be owner occupiers). The results of the regression analysis shown in Chart 10 confirm there is indeed a difference between tenure groups, after taking other factors such as material deprivation into account.

⁵ See [Key quality information](#)

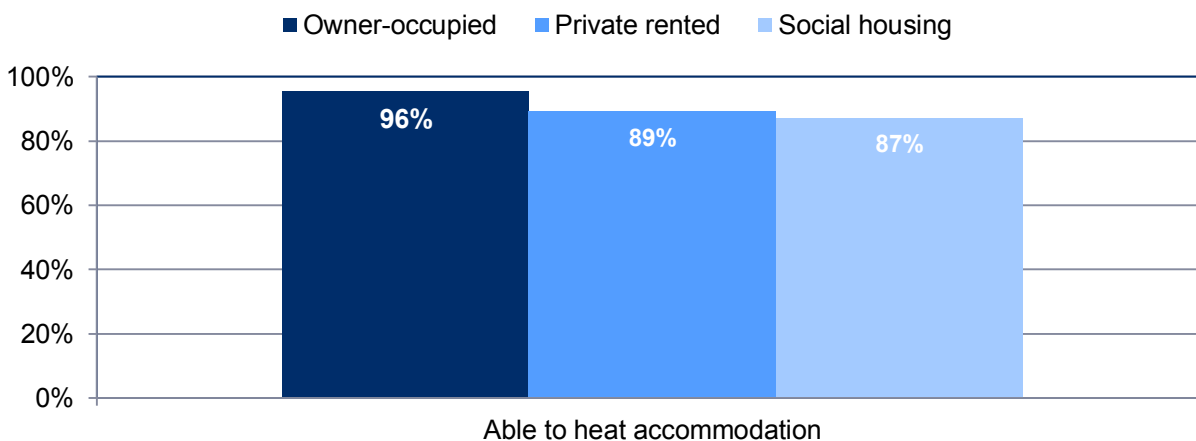
Social care services and accommodation

The survey also included a number of questions on social care services. One of these questions looked at the suitability of accommodation to meet the needs of people receiving social care (either the respondent or someone else in their household). 86% of respondents receiving social care agreed that their accommodation was suitable (54% strongly agreed and 32% tended to agree). In comparison when those who care for someone in their household were asked this question 73% agreed (42% strongly agreed and 31% tended to agree) that the accommodation was suitable for the person they cared for. Further information on social care services and accommodation can be found [here](#).

Heating and energy saving measures

As discussed earlier, people were asked a number of questions about household material deprivation. One of these questions was whether they had enough money to keep their home warm enough during the winter. Chart 11 shows that although most people did have enough money to heat their home, there was a difference across tenure type with 96% of people in owner-occupied housing having enough money to do this, 89% of private rented tenants, and 87% of those in social housing.

Chart 11: Ability to heat home by tenure



In 2014-15 the survey included a number of new questions on home energy saving measures. These covered solar panels, roof/loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and solid wall insulation. The Welsh Government's [Fuel Poverty Strategy 2010](#) included a commitment to reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty in Wales, and to take action to achieve the target that as far as reasonably practicable no household in Wales will be living in fuel poverty by 2018. A household is considered to be in fuel poverty if they spend 10% or more of their net income on energy costs.

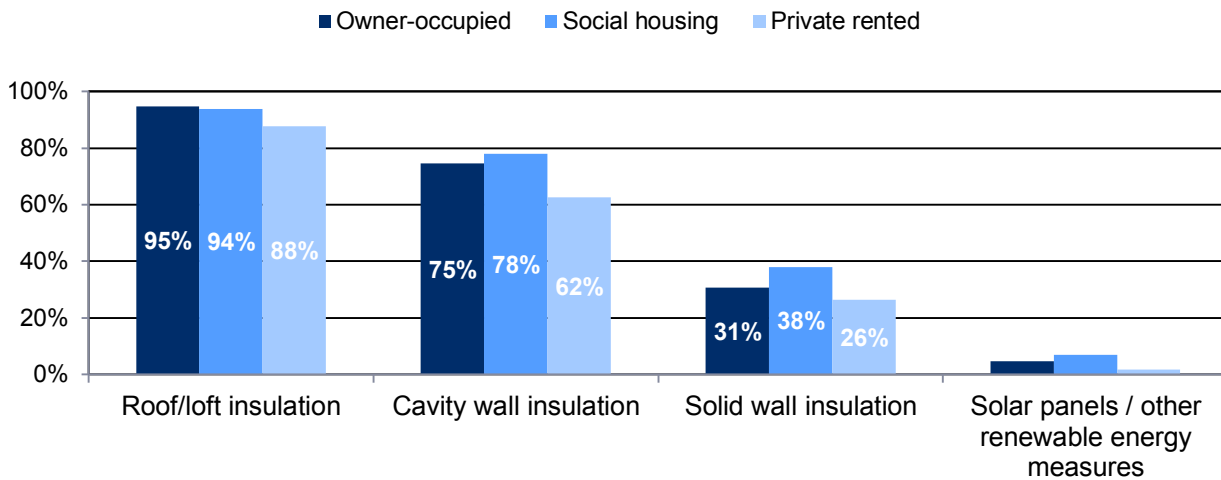
The strategy, alongside working with power companies to lower costs, focuses on energy efficiency of homes in Wales. In Wales there are currently two schemes that focus on energy efficiency which are NEST and ARBED more information about these schemes can be found [here](#).

Respondents were asked whether their loft, cavity walls or solid walls were insulated, and whether they had solar panels or other renewable energy measures. These questions resulted in a higher proportion of 'Don't know' responses than many other questions in the survey, 13% didn't know if their cavity walls were insulated and 15% didn't know if their solid walls were insulated. Where respondents knew what energy saving measures were in place the findings show that:

- 94% of people had roof/loft insulation;
- 74% had cavity wall insulation;
- 31% of people had solid wall insulation; and
- 4% of all properties had solar panels or other renewable energy measures.

Chart 12 shows the different types of energy saving measures by the different tenures. The results show that across all the measures people living in private rented accommodation were less likely to have the measure compared with owner-occupiers or those in social housing.

Chart 12: Energy saving measures, by tenure



Households in material deprivation were less likely to have roof/loft insulation and/or cavity wall insulation than non-materially deprived households. For roof/loft insulation this was 89% of those in material deprivation, compared with 95% of non-deprived households. 69% of people in materially deprived households had cavity wall insulation compared with 75% of people in non-materially deprived households.

94% of those who knew whether or not their roof was insulated said that it was. The 2008 [Living in Wales Survey](#) had a similar result (91%).⁶ The 2014-15 National Survey gave an overall figure for cavity wall insulation (where the respondent knew if the walls were insulated or not) of 74%. This is a substantial increase since the 2008 Living in Wales finding (52%) which in turn was an increase over the 2004 Living in Wales figure of 42%.

⁶ The Living in Wales Survey was carried out with the household representative (the person who owns/rents the home, the oldest person or the person who earned the most) and not a randomly-selected adult aged 16+ as in the National Survey. This difference in design may contribute to the difference in results between the two surveys.

Key quality information

Background

The National Survey was carried out by TNS-BMRB and Beaufort Research on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported here are based on interviews completed between 1 April 2014 and 12 April 2015 (fieldwork was extended slightly beyond the one year mark, in order to increase the sample size).

Approximately 25,000 addresses were chosen randomly from the Royal Mail's Small User Postcode Address File. Interviewers visited each address, randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household, and carried out a 25-minute face-to-face interview with them. A total of 14,285 interviews were achieved. The overall response rate was 64%.⁷

Interpreting the results

Percentages quoted in this bulletin are based on only those respondents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Missing answers occur for several reasons, including refusal or an inability to answer a particular question and cases where the question is not applicable to the respondent.

Where a relationship has been found between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to identify whether one factor causes change in another.

The results of the National Survey are weighted to compensate for unequal selection probabilities and differential non-response (i.e. to ensure that the age and sex distribution of the final dataset matches that of the Welsh population).

Quality of the data

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 Official Statistics](#).

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

A summary [Quality report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

⁷ More details on how the response rate is calculated are available in the [Technical Report](#).

Sampling variability

Estimates from the National Survey are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Part of the uncertainty comes from the fact that any randomly-selected sample of the population will give slightly different results from the results that would be obtained if the whole population was surveyed. This is known as sampling error.⁸ Confidence intervals can be used as a guide to the size of the sampling error. These intervals are calculated around a survey estimate and give a range within which the true value is likely to fall. In 95% of survey samples, the 95% confidence interval will contain the 'true' figure for the whole population (that is, the figure we would get if the survey covered the entire population). In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are included in the tables of survey results published on [StatsWales](#).

As with any survey, the National Survey is also subject to a range of other sources of error: for example, due to non-response; because respondents may not interpret the questions as intended or may not answer accurately; and because errors may be introduced as the survey data is processed. These kinds of error are known as non-sampling error, and are discussed further in the [Quality report](#) for the survey.

Significant differences

Where the text of this release notes a difference between two National Survey results, we have checked to ensure that the confidence intervals for the two results do not overlap. This suggests that the difference is statistically significant (but as noted above, is not as rigorous as carrying out a formal statistical test), i.e. that there is less than a 5% (1 in 20) chance of obtaining these results if there is no difference between the same two groups in the wider population.

Checking to see whether two confidence intervals overlap is less likely than a formal statistical test to lead to conclusions that there are real differences between groups. That is, it is more likely to lead to "false negatives": incorrect conclusions that there is no real difference when in fact there is a difference. It is also less likely to lead to "false positives": incorrect conclusions that there **is** a difference when there is in fact none. Carrying out many comparisons increases the chance of finding false positives. Therefore, when many comparisons are made the conservative nature of the test is an advantage because it reduces (but does not eliminate) this chance.

Logistic regression

There are different types of regression analysis that are used for different purposes. The type used here is called binary logistic regression. This is the regression technique most commonly used for survey data.

We used logistic regression to isolate the direct effects of individual factors (such as age and gender) on a particular outcome (such as satisfaction with accommodation). It allows us to look at the effect of each factor separately while keeping constant a range of other factors.

After considering a wide range of factors from the survey results, those with the greatest influence on satisfaction with accommodation are: tenure type, household material deprivation, Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), overall satisfaction with life, feeling of safety walking alone in the local area after dark and extent of feeling that the local authority does all that it can to improve the local area.

⁸ Sampling error is discussed in more detail in the [Quality Report](#) for the National Survey.

Using the statistical model that was produced, we were then able to explore the link between each factor and satisfaction with accommodation, by adjusting the values in the statistical model for each respondent. This is sometimes known as average marginal effect. The results provide an indication of which characteristics/situations have the strongest influence on the original question (e.g. satisfaction with accommodation) when all other factors within the model are held constant.

More details about how we did the analysis are available on request.

Technical report

More detailed information on the survey methodology is set out in the [technical report](#) for the survey.

Revisions

More information on our revisions policy is available [here](#).

Release policy

Information about the process for releasing new results is available from the Welsh Government's [statistics web pages](#).

Availability of datasets

The data behind the charts and tables in this release are published in spreadsheets on [StatsWales](#).

An anonymised version of the annual dataset (from which some information is removed to ensure confidentiality is preserved), together with supporting documentation, has been deposited with the [UK Data Archive](#). For more information, please contact us (see below).

Further uses of the results

The results will be used extensively by Welsh Government policy teams, but they are also relevant to a wide range of other external organisations and individuals.

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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 Official 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 Official 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.

Terms and definitions

Household

A household is defined as one person living alone or a group of people (not necessarily related) living at the same address with common housekeeping – that is, sharing a living room or sitting room or at least one meal a day.

People

Within this bulletin, 'people' refers only to adults aged 16 and over.

Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is used as the official measure of deprivation in Wales. Deprivation is a wider concept than poverty. Deprivation refers to wider problems caused by a lack of resources and opportunities. The WIMD is constructed from eight different types of deprivation. These are: income, housing, employment, access to services, education, health, community safety and physical environment. Wales is divided into, 1,909 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) each having about 1,600 people. Deprivation ranks have been worked out for each of these areas: the most deprived LSOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived 1,909. For this bulletin, we have grouped the people living in the 20 % of LSOAs that are most deprived based on WIMD score and compared them against the 20% of the LSOAs that are least deprived. – see also Material Deprivation below.

Material deprivation

The material deprivation score is calculated so that a person who can afford everything listed in chart 28 of the [headline results](#), have a score of 0 and a person who wants but doesn't have these items has a score of 100. A higher score is given to households lacking those items that most households already have. Those with a score of 25 or more are classed as 'materially deprived'. The series of questions are taken from the [Family Resources Survey](#) on the material deprivation of households and of children.