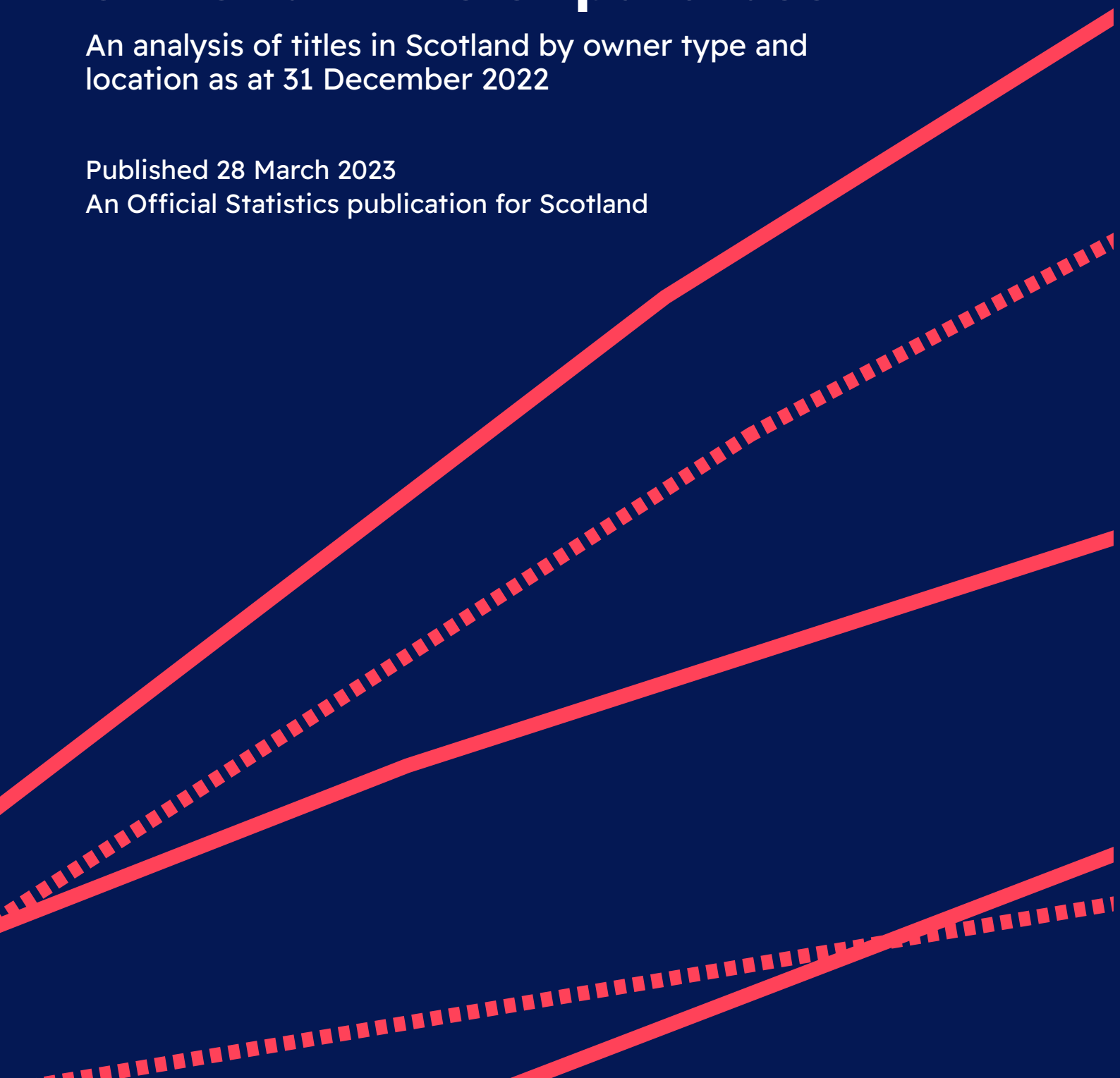


Land and property titles in Scotland by location of owner at time of purchase

An analysis of titles in Scotland by owner type and
location as at 31 December 2022

Published 28 March 2023

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland



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1. Main Findings

For land and property titles in the Land Register of Scotland, as at 31 December 2022:

Location of owner address:

- 93.4% Scotland, 5.0% UK outwith Scotland, 1.4% outwith UK, 0.2% Government and Crown

Owner address outwith UK:

- Type of owner: 84.4% individuals, 11.1% limited companies, 3.0% trustees, limited partnerships etc and 1.5% had a combination of owner types
- Type of ownership: 90.3% ownership, 9.6% long-term lease
- Type of land use classification: 76.7% residential, 10.7% other, 7.8% commercial, 4.1% land, 0.4% agriculture and 0.2% forestry
- Location of land and property titles in Scotland:
 - » 31% in City of Edinburgh or Glasgow City
 - » 80% in urban areas of Scotland; 20% in rural areas of Scotland
- Location of owner addresses (top 3): 11.4% United States of America, 8.8% Hong Kong, 6.6% Australia
- Land area of titles: represented 3.3% of Scotland's land area

UK owner address outwith Scotland:

- Type of owner: 67.2% individuals, 27.9% commercial, 4.8% other
- Location of land and property titles in Scotland:
 - » 21% in City of Edinburgh or Glasgow City
 - » 65% in urban areas of Scotland and 35% in rural areas of Scotland
- Location of owner addresses (top 2): 25% London and 16% South East of England
- Land area of titles: represented 14% of Scotland's land area

Owner address in Scotland

- Type of owner: 89.9% individuals, 5.2% companies, 4.8% other

2. Things you need know about this release

2.1 What these statistics include

This release presents statistics on the location of owners at the time of purchase as at 31 December 2022 based on the owner address supplied at the time of registration with Registers of Scotland (RoS).

A title is the statutory record of ownership or tenancy of a plot of land comprising the property, proprietorship, securities and burdens.

To be included in these statistics:

1. The land and property title needs to be registered in the Land Register.

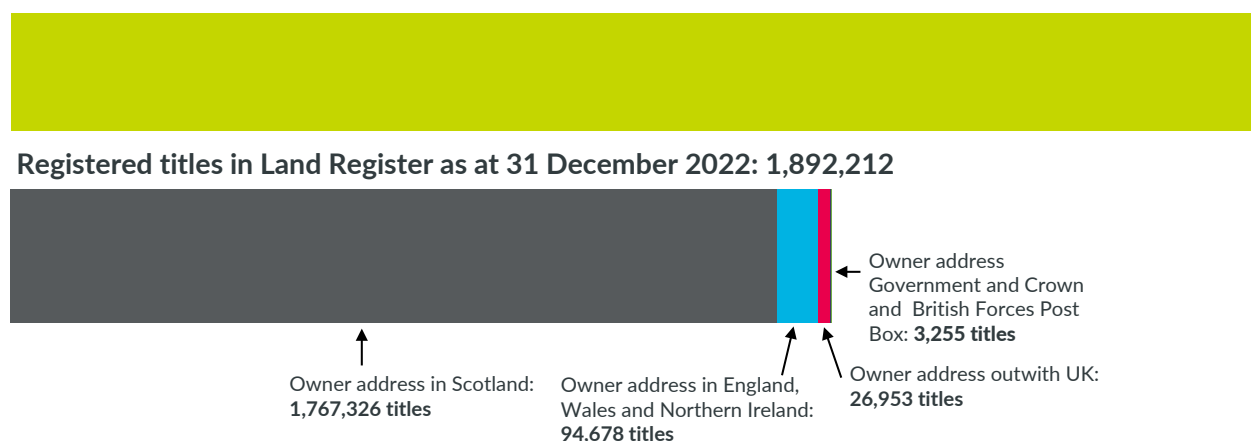
There were 1.89 million registered titles in the Land Register, as at 31 December 2022 an estimated address coverage of 87% in relation to properties that regularly transact . All titles that have been transferred for a consideration since 1 April 2003 should be in the Land Register. The majority of the remainder of titles are held in the Sasines Register, a deeds-based register. The benefits of a complete Land Register are being delivered through a combination of ensuring that properties which regularly transact are on the Land Register, and that the information on the remaining titles in the Sasines Register is easily accessed via [Unlocking Sasines](#). We are working towards including unlocking sasines data in future reports.

2. The registered legal owner² has provided an address at the time of registration that is able to be classified to a geographic location.

The two most significant reasons for not having an identifiable owner address occur when: ownership/tenancy is by a Scottish or UK public body and no designation address is required ; and when the supplied address is not complete or accurate enough to allow identification of a geographic location. Through the quality assurance processes applied to the data, all titles have been allocated to a location at the country level (outwith UK, Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland), but it is not always possible to disaggregate further.

Figure 1: Statistics in scope compared with approximate total number of addresses in Scotland¹

Number of addresses in Scotland: 2.5 million (estimate of properties that regularly transact)



¹This excludes land and property that rarely sells or may never sell, for example social housing and some large land and estates, from the total number of addresses in Scotland (held in Ordnance Survey AddressBase). The estimated number of properties that regularly transact is 2.5 million, while the total number of addresses is just short of 3 million. Please note that the volume of titles does not correlate to the volume of addresses because a title may contain more than one address.

²Or tenant under a long-term commercial lease, or at least one owner or tenant, if there is more than one. For the purposes of this report reference to "owner" also relates to tenants under a long-term commercial lease unless otherwise specified. See Definitions for more information.

³The total volumes of titles where the registered owner is a Scotland or UK-wide public body, a Crown body or where the owner's address is given as a British Forces Post Office number are included in Figure 2. Individual Scottish NHS trusts and Scottish local authorities are included in the Scotland figures.

2.2 Main changes since last release in March 2022

In the last release, the sections of the report that related to analysis of titles by land area were labelled as 'experimental' as they remained subject to quality testing to meet user needs. Following user consultation in January 2023, the experimental label has been removed.

Additional analysis by type of owner has been added into this report in relation to the titles with UK owner addresses outwith Scotland and to the titles with an owner address in Scotland.

2.3 What you can and can't conclude

The statistics are presented as a snapshot of the Land Register as at 31 December 2022 without comparisons with previous years. Annual comparisons in terms of year-on-year changes in the statistics are not advised as changes may reflect a range of factors⁴, including data quality improvements.

The address used is as given by the owner at the time of registration but it is possible that the owner has subsequently moved.

The statistics will include both titles where the owner has remained located outwith Scotland after the title has been purchased and titles where the owner has subsequently located to Scotland after completion of the transaction.

⁴ These factors include the Land Register being a live database, with changes occurring between annual snapshots, as well as the steady progression of completing the Land Register (registering titles for the first time in the Land Register) which means that titles are being added to the base data from the Sasines Register.

3. Location of owner

Figure 2 shows where the 1.89 million registered titles in the Land Register as at 31 December 2022 were located.

Figure 2: Location of owner address for registered Land Register titles as at 31 December 2022
(online table 1)

	Number of titles	Percentage of total registered LR titles
Scotland	1,767,326	93.4
England	89,330	4.7
Wales	1,782	0.1
Northern Ireland	3,566	0.2
UK outwith Scotland	94,678	5.0
Outwith UK	26,953	1.4
Non-Scotland	121,631	6.4
British Forces Post Office	116	0.0
Government and Crown	3,139	0.2
All classified	1,892,212	100.0
Owner address unable to be classified	0	0.0
Total registered titles in Land Register	1,892,212	100.0

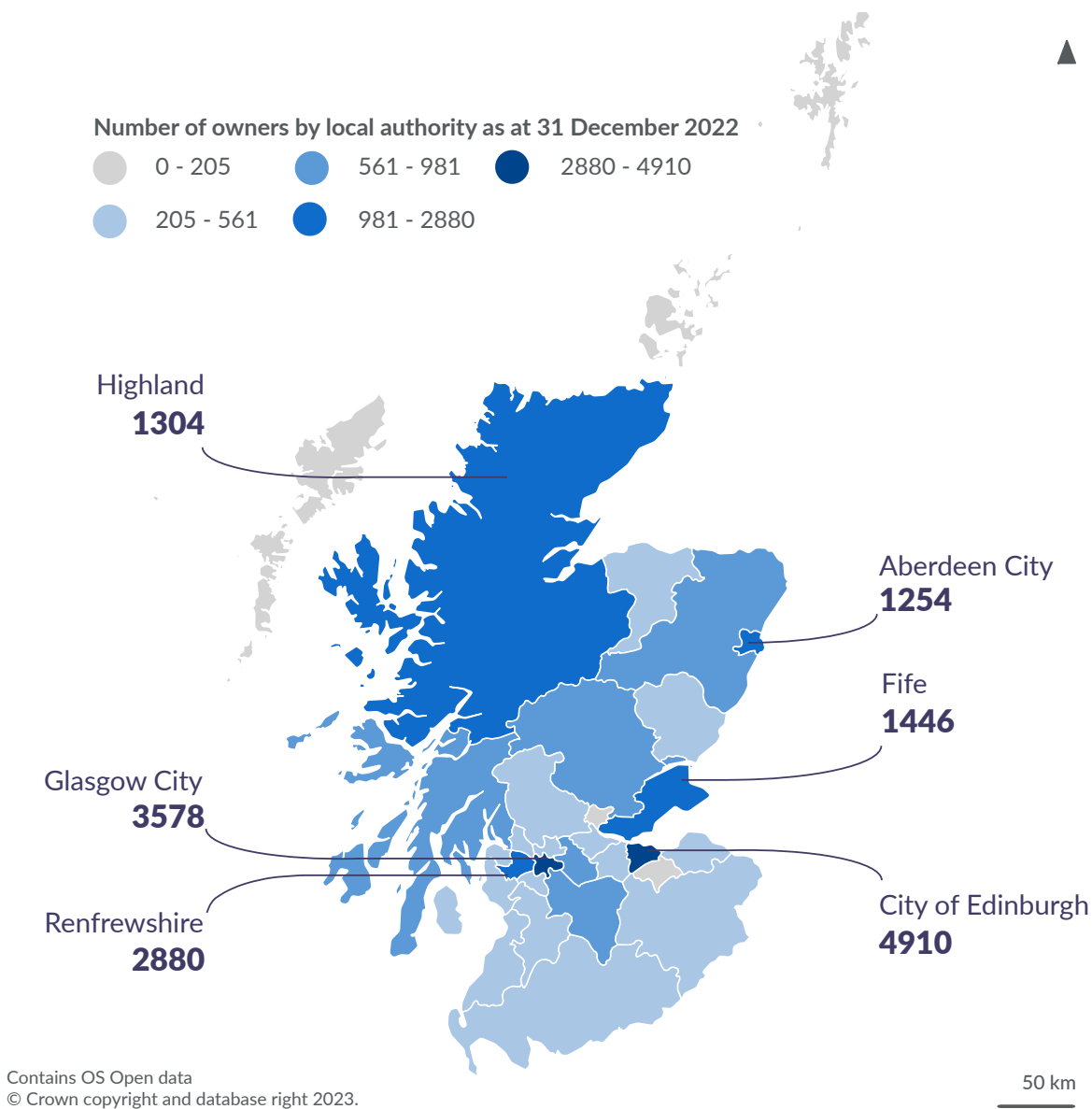
4. Owner addresses outwith UK

This section focuses on the 26,953 titles with an owner address outwith the UK.

A reference to “outwith UK” means those titles where the owner’s address, supplied at the time of registration, was not located in the UK.

Figure 3 shows where these 26,953 titles are located in Scotland.

Figure 3: Titles with an owner address outwith the UK by Local Authority (online table 5)



4.1 Titles outwith UK by type of owner

Figure 4 shows that for titles with an owner address outwith the UK:

- the majority (84.4% or 22,754 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- limited companies accounted for 11.1% (2,999 titles)
- trustees and limited partnerships accounted for 3.0% (802 titles)
- 1.5% (398 titles) had a combination of owner types

It is not possible to determine whether the reasons for owning/leasing property or land in Scotland is due to the intention to immigrate, or for other purposes such as second/holiday homes, accommodation for family members studying/working in Scotland, or as investments.

Figure 4: The owner in around four out of every five outwith UK titles was an Individual (online table 2)

Percentage of titles with owner address outwith UK by type of owner as at 31 December 2022



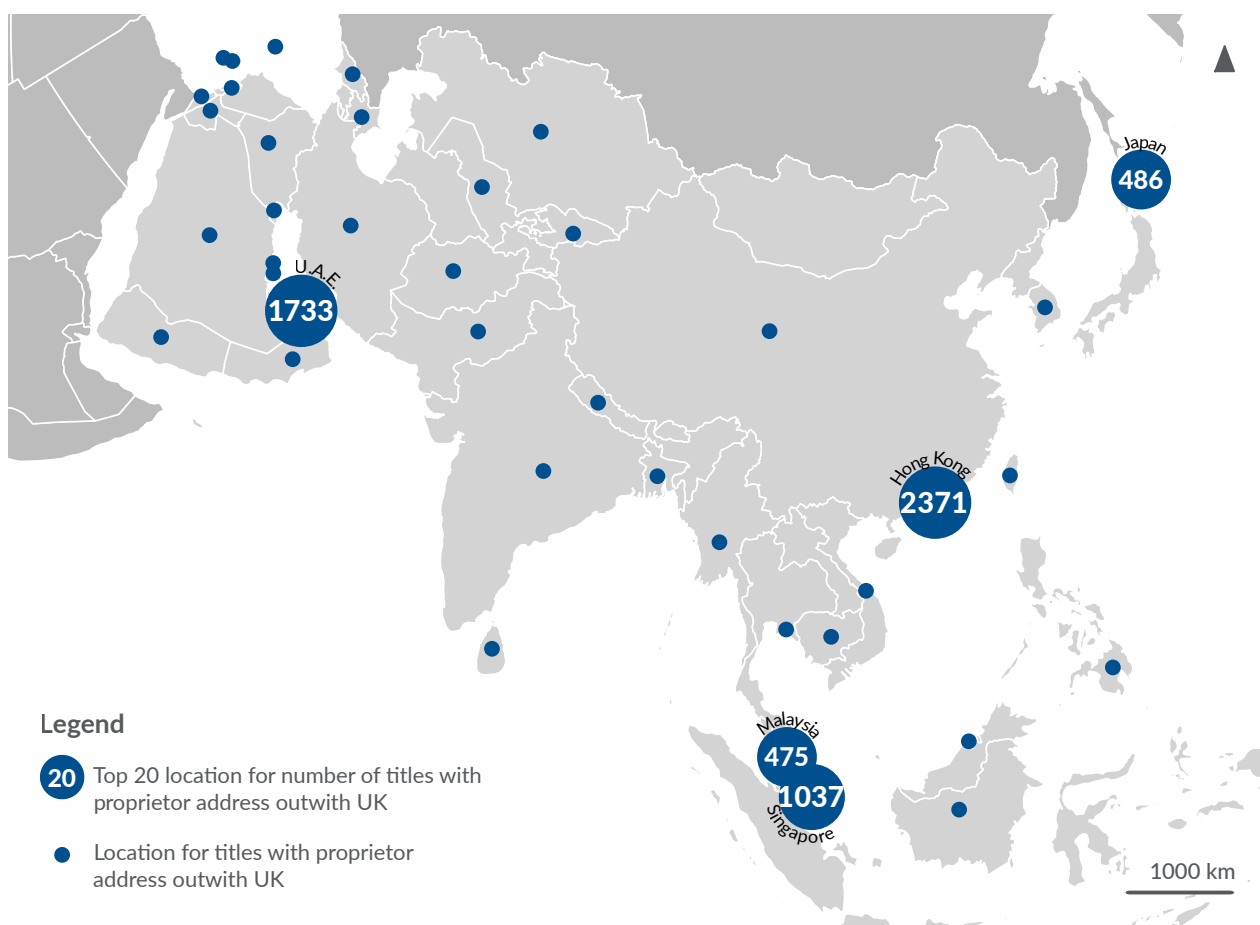
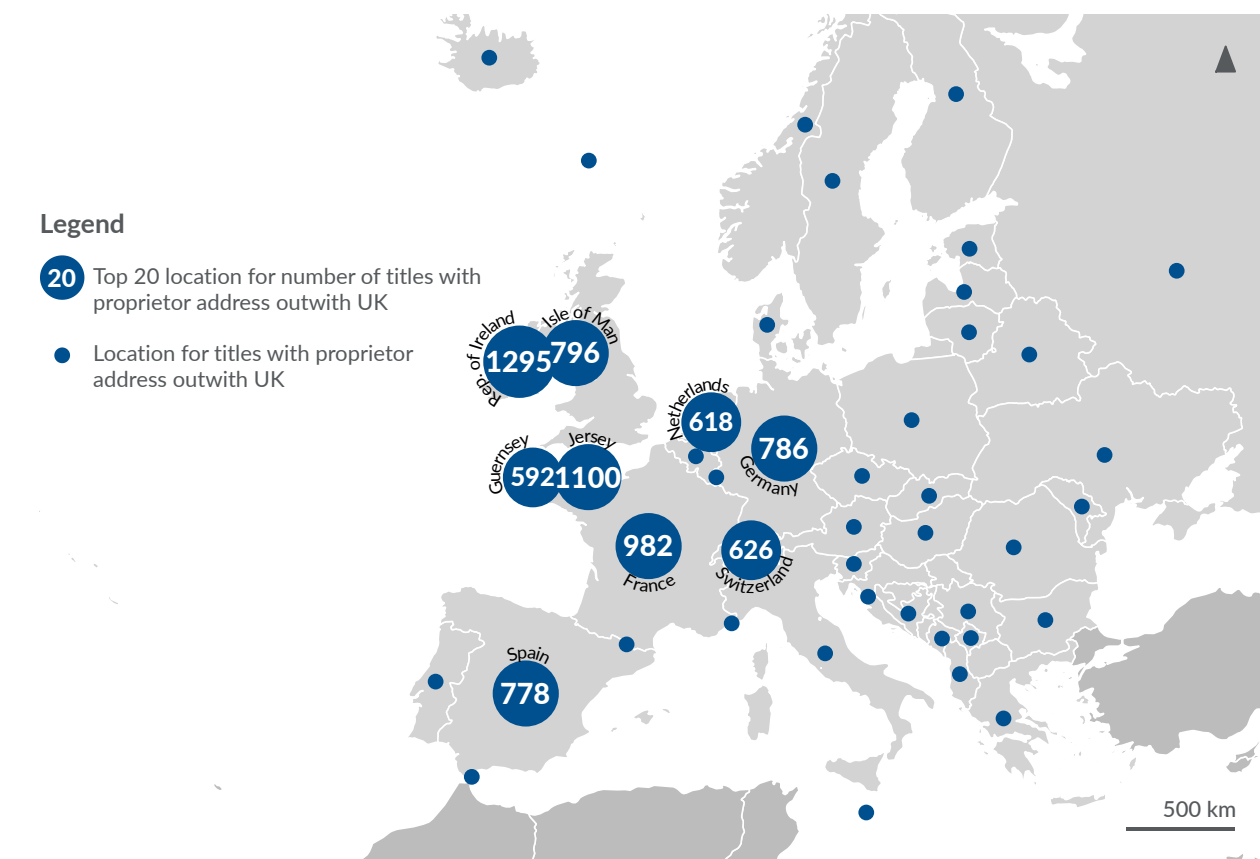
Figure 5 highlights 14 of the top 20 locations of owner addresses for outwith UK titles in Europe and Asia and the volume of titles at each of these locations.

The remaining locations were:

- United States of America (3,062 titles)
- Australia (1,784 titles)
- Canada (848 titles)
- South Africa (413 titles)
- British Virgin Islands (389 titles)
- New Zealand (377 titles)

Overall, addresses were classified to 165 locations, excluding the UK (online tables 3 and online table 4).

Figure 5: Titles with owner address outwith UK in Europe and Asia as at 31 December 2022



Other key findings for owners outwith the UK by type of owner:

- Individuals accounted for 80% or more of outwith UK titles in 16 of the top 20 outwith UK locations (country, Crown dependency or overseas territory).
- Limited companies were the majority owner type in the remaining 4 countries (Jersey, Isle of Man, British Virgin Islands and Guernsey).
- More than half (61%) of all titles owned or leased by companies from outwith the UK were accounted for by these four locations.
- Almost all titles with owners from the British Virgin Islands, for example, related to limited companies (92%).

4.2 Titles outwith UK by interest

Figure 6 shows that:

- ownership was the predominant interest for titles with an outwith UK owner address, accounting for 90.3% (24,341 titles)
- the remainder of these titles were leased (long-term commercial leases), accounting for 9.6% (2,594 titles)

Figure 6: Leases accounted for around one out of every ten outwith UK titles⁵ (online table 2)

Percentage of titles with owner address outwith UK by interest, excluding titles that cannot be classified to an interest, as at 31 December 2022

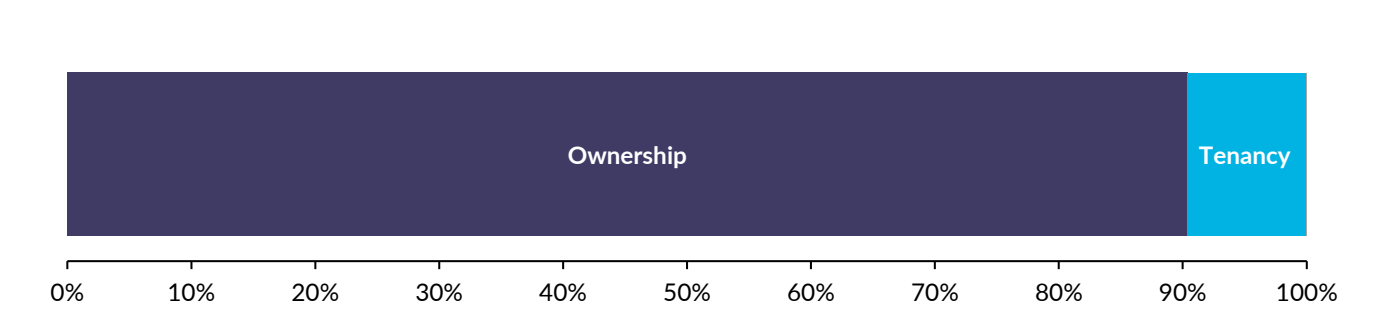


Figure 7 shows that:

- ownership accounted for a slightly lower proportion of titles related to trustees and limited partnerships (84.8%) and a slightly higher proportion of titles related to mixed owner types (93.2%).

Figure 7: Number of titles with owner address outwith UK by interest, type of owner and proportion of split as at 31 December 2022 (online table 2)

Owner type	Ownership		Tenancy		Unclassified		All interests	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Individual/natural person	20,610	90.6	2,133	9.4	11	0.0	22,754	84.4
Limited companies	2,680	89.4	312	10.4	7	0.2	2,999	11.1
Trustees, limited partnerships, etc.	680	84.8	122	15.2	0	0.0	802	3.0
Mixed	371	93.2	27	6.8	0	0.0	398	1.5
All owner types	24,341	90.3	2,594	9.6	18	0.1	26,953	100

⁵18 titles could not be classified to an interest (ownership or tenancy).

4.3 Titles outwith UK by local authority and interest

Figure 8 shows the number of titles with an owner address outwith the UK by local authority and interest:

- Around one in three (31%) outwith UK titles were in the City of Edinburgh or Glasgow city, both with 99% ownership versus 1% tenancy.
- Ownership is the majority interest across most of Scotland with the exception of Renfrewshire.
- Renfrewshire accounts for around one in ten of the outwith UK titles (10.7% or 2,880 titles), of which 78% (or 2,256 titles) related to a tenancy interest. A contributory factor to this is the number of titles of parking spaces and storage facilities near to Glasgow Airport. This is an unusual form that doesn't appear to be repeated in any other local authority.
- If Renfrewshire was excluded, the average proportion of tenancy interest across the other 31 local authority areas was 1.4% compared with 9.6% across the whole of Scotland.

Figure 8: Around one in three outwith UK titles were in the City of Edinburgh or Glasgow City (online table 5)

Number of titles with owner address outwith UK by local authority and interest as at 31 December 2022

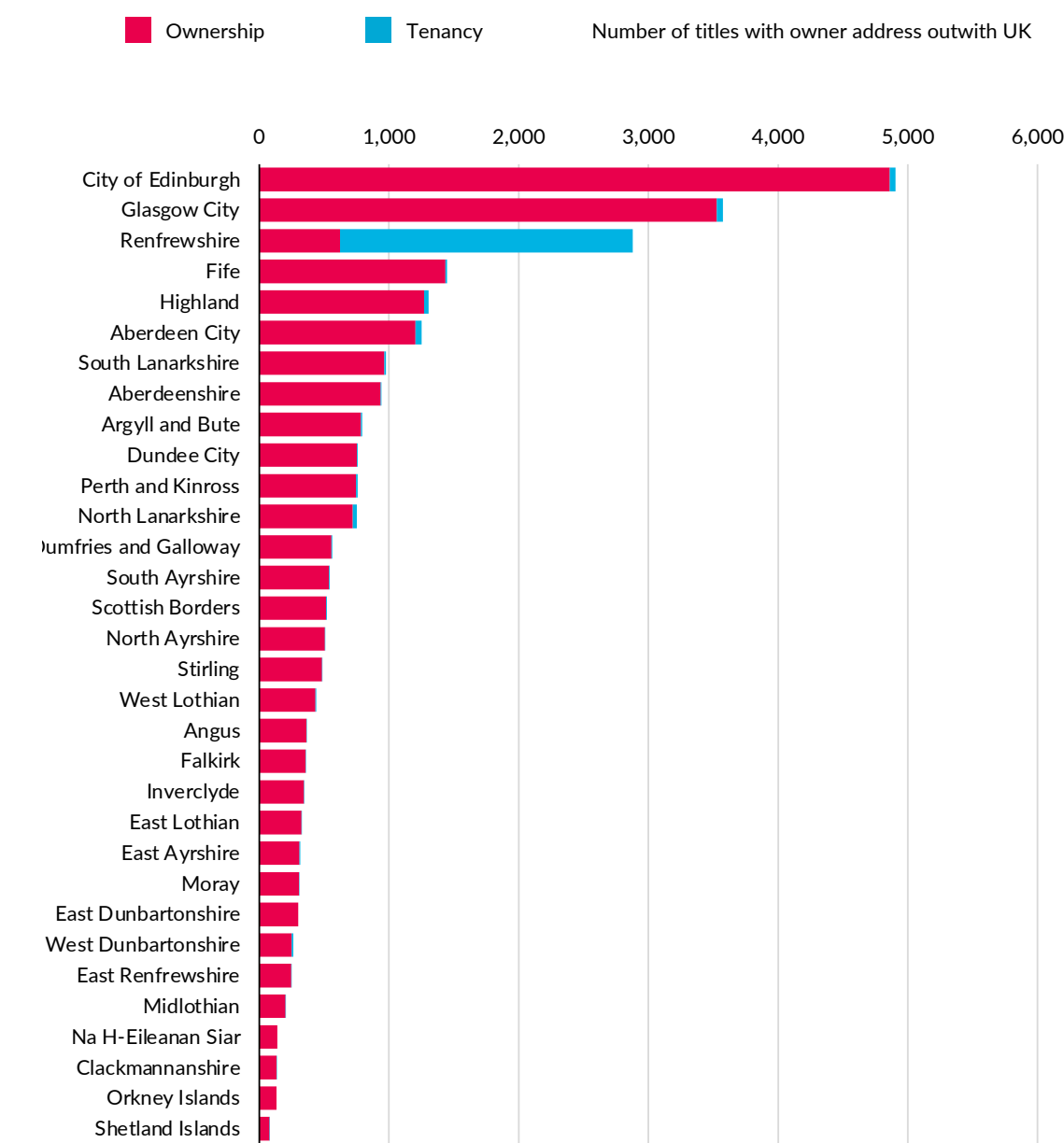


Figure 9 shows the top 10 postcode sectors across Scotland by number of outwith UK titles.

The top two postcodes sectors were within Renfrewshire and account for 62% of titles owned or leased from outwith the UK within the local authority⁶.

Figure 9: Top 10 postcode sectors by numbers of titles with owner address outwith UK as at 31 December 2022 (online table 6)

Rank	Postcode sector	Post Town	Local Authority	Number Of Titles
1	PA3 3	Paisley	Renfrewshire	908
2	PA3 1	Paisley	Renfrewshire	874
3	EH3 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	428
4	PA1 2	Paisley	Renfrewshire	345
5	PA3 2	Paisley	Renfrewshire	274
6	KY16 9	St Andrews	Fife	245
7	EH3 6	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	240
8	EH9 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	225
9	EH7 5	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	214
10	EH8 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	188

Figure 10 shows the top 10 postcode sectors across Scotland by number of outwith UK titles excluding tenancy, such as long-term leases on car parking spaces.

Out of the top 10, 8 are in the City of Edinburgh, accounting for 6.7% (1,813 titles) of all outwith UK titles.

Figure 10: Top 10 postcode sectors by number of titles with owner address outwith UK excluding tenancy as at 31 December 2022 (online table 7)

Rank	Postcode sector	Post Town	Local Authority	Number Of Titles
1	EH3 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	425
2	KY16 9	St Andrews	Fife	242
3	EH3 6	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	240
4	EH9 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	225
5	EH7 5	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	213
6	EH8 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	184
7	EH10 4	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	182
8	EH11 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	175
9	EH4 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	169
10	G1 1	Glasgow	Glasgow City	168

⁶Total number of titles in Renfrewshire with owner address outwith the UK was 2,880.

4.4 Titles outwith UK by land use classification

See [background information](#) on land use classification.

Figure 11 shows that:

- over three quarters (77%) of outwith UK titles had a residential land use classification
- 7.8% outwith UK titles were classed as commercial
- 11% outwith UK titles were classed as other

Figure 11: Three quarters of outwith UK titles had a residential land use classification (online table 8)

Number of titles with owner address outwith the UK by land use classification as at 31 December 2022

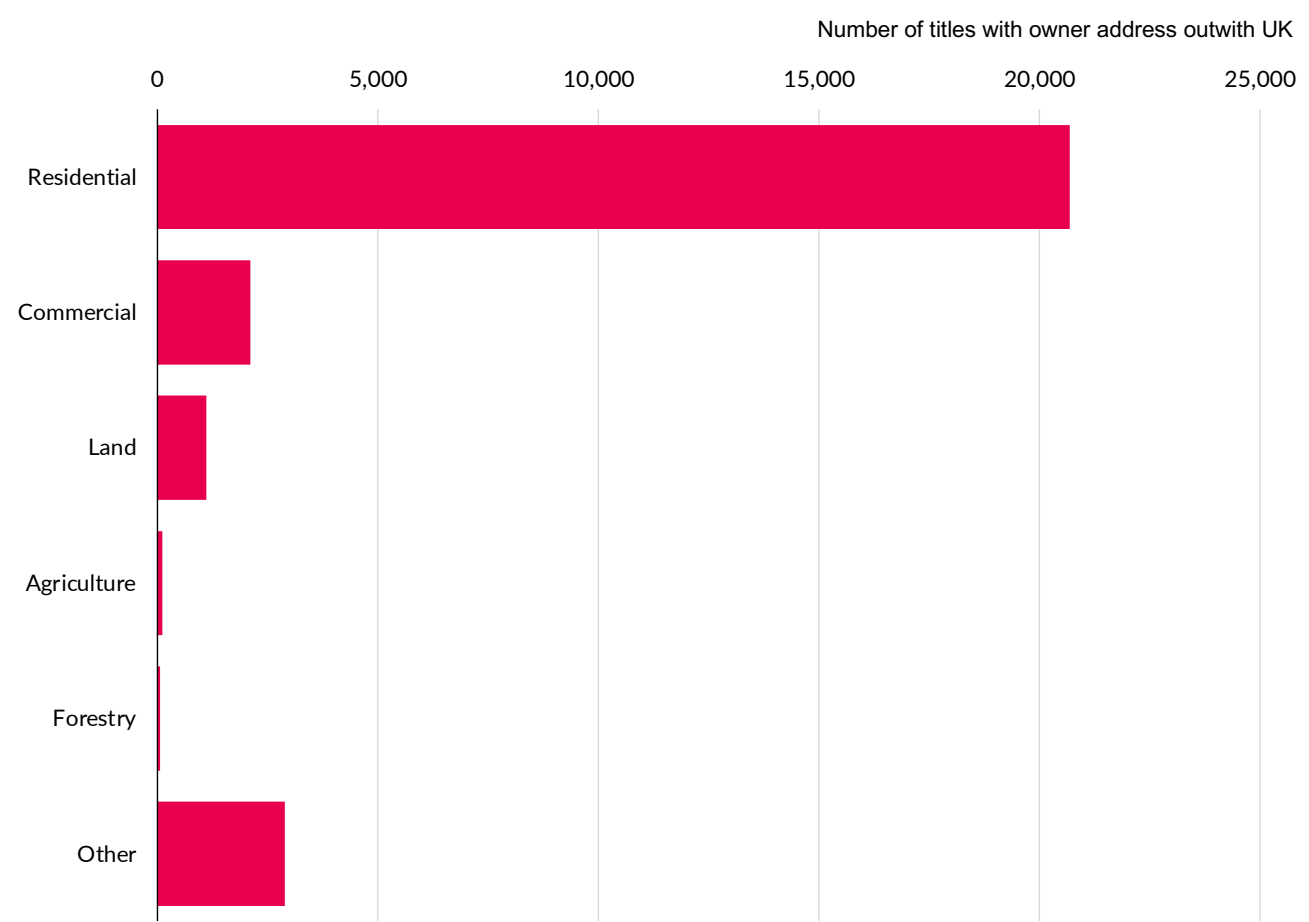
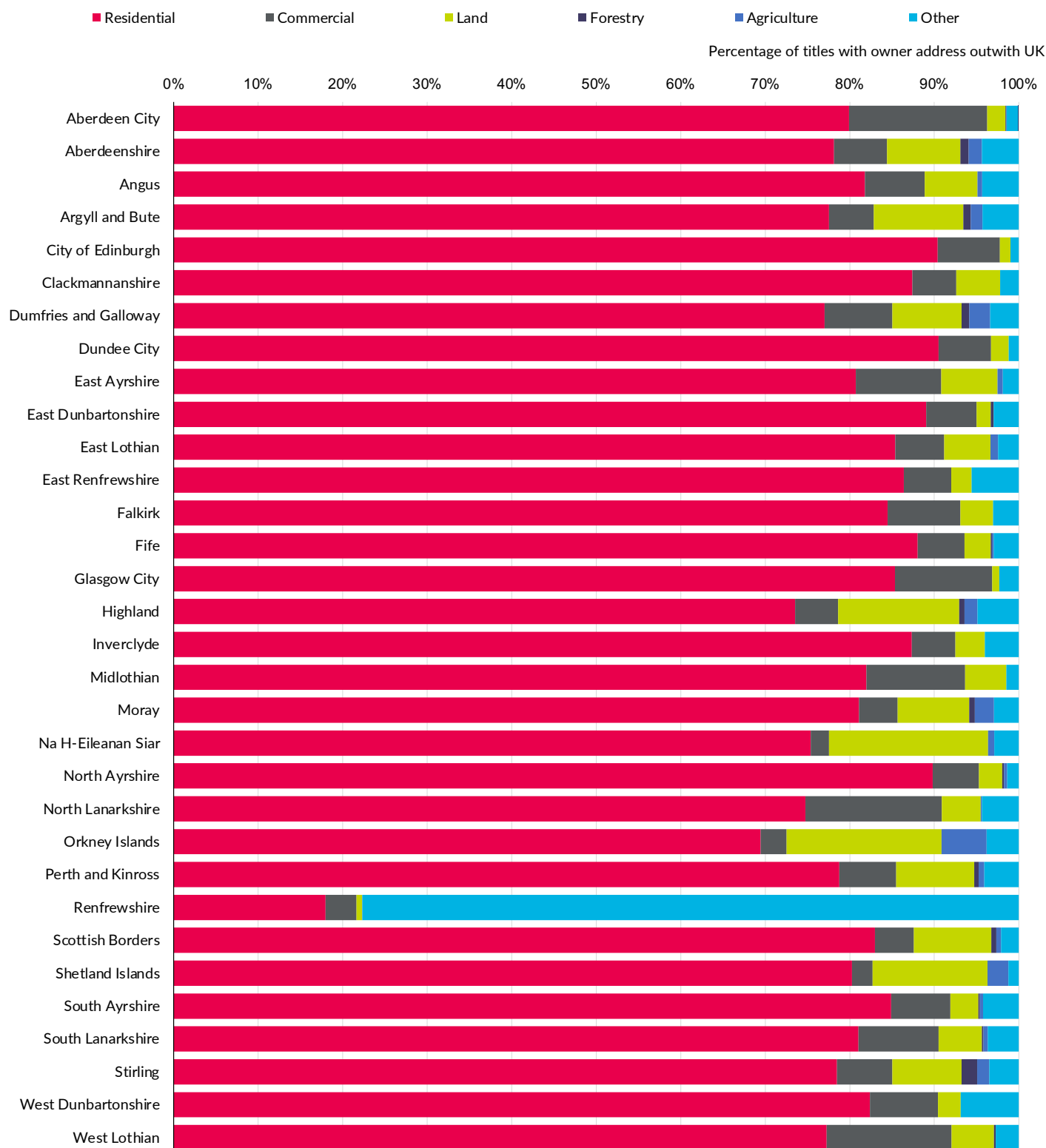


Figure 12 shows residential land use accounted for at least 69% of outwith UK titles in 31 of 32 local authorities. Renfrewshire is the exception, where 18% of titles were classed as residential and the majority of titles (78%) were classed as other, the classification used for car parking and storage spaces.

Figure 12: Residential land use accounted for at least two thirds of the land use classification of titles outwith the UK in 31 out of 32 local authorities (online table 8)

Percentage of titles with owner address outwith UK by local authority and land use classification as at 31 December 2022



4.5 Titles outwith UK by urban rural classification

See [background information](#) on Urban rural classification for details on how this analysis is conducted.

Figure 13 shows for titles with an owner address outwith the UK:

- 80% were in urban areas of Scotland
- 20% were in rural areas

For context:

- In terms of land area, urban areas account for 2.2% of Scotland and rural areas account for 97.8%.
- In terms of population, urban areas account for 83% and rural areas account for 17%⁷.
- The urban rural split for all property sales in Scotland in 2021-22 was 84% urban and 16% rural⁸.

Figure 13: Around four out of five titles with an owner address outwith UK were in urban areas of Scotland (online table 9)

Percentage of titles with owner address outwith UK by 2-fold urban rural classification as at 31 December 2022

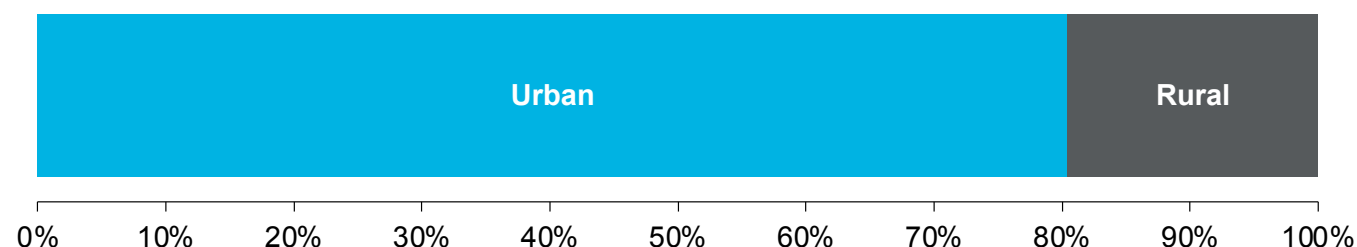


Figure 14 shows, for each local authority, the percentage of outwith UK titles and the percentage of land area that are urban and rural based on the 2-fold urban rural classification.

The figure shows that:

- Glasgow City and Dundee City have a high land area percentage that is urban (87% and 83% urban respectively)
- the focus of outwith UK titles in Glasgow City and Dundee City is in urban areas (99% of titles in urban areas in both local authorities)
- the percentage of land area that is urban is relatively lower in City of Edinburgh and Aberdeen City (51% and 46% urban respectively)
- the focus of outwith UK titles in City of Edinburgh and Aberdeen City remain nearly all in urban areas (99% and 97%)
- for local authorities with a lower percentage of urban land area (between 15% and 30%) the percentage of outwith UK titles in urban areas remains high (between 83% and 99%).
- Clackmannanshire can be seen to be an outlier given the percentage of its land area that is urban and the low number of outwith UK titles involved⁹.

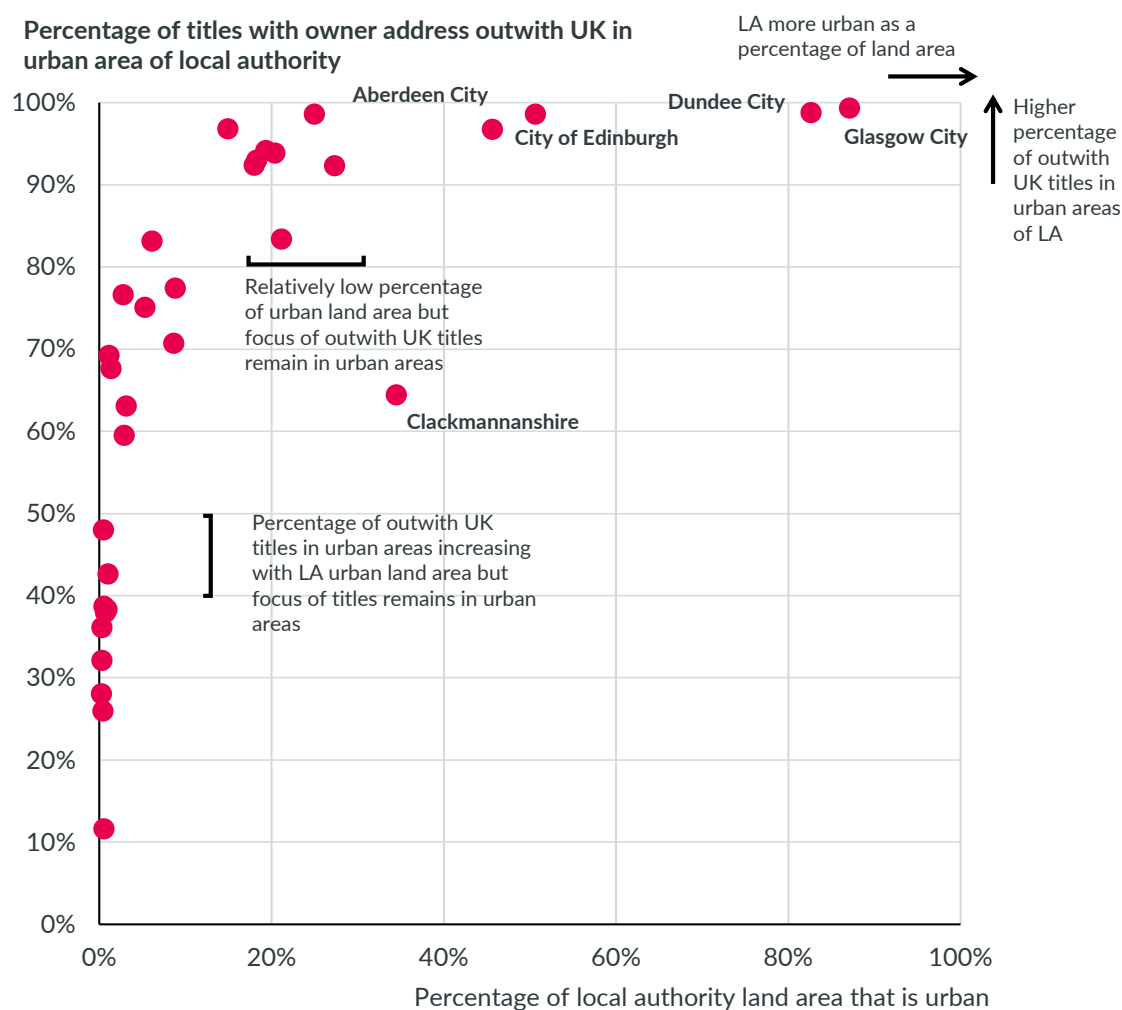
⁷Scottish Government 2016 urban rural classification <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016/>

⁸See our [property market report 2021-22](#) for further information

⁹There are 135 titles in Clackmannanshire with an owner address outwith the UK. 87 of these titles are in urban areas and 48 in rural areas

Figure 14: The focus of outwith UK titles is in urban areas¹⁰

Percentage of titles with owner address outwith UK by local authority and urban rural classification (Scottish Government urban rural 2-fold classification) as at 31 December 2022



¹⁰ Online table 17 gives a breakdown of land area by 2-fold urban rural classification and local authority

4.6 Titles outwith UK by land area

See [background information](#) on Titles by area for details on the methodology used to estimate these figures.

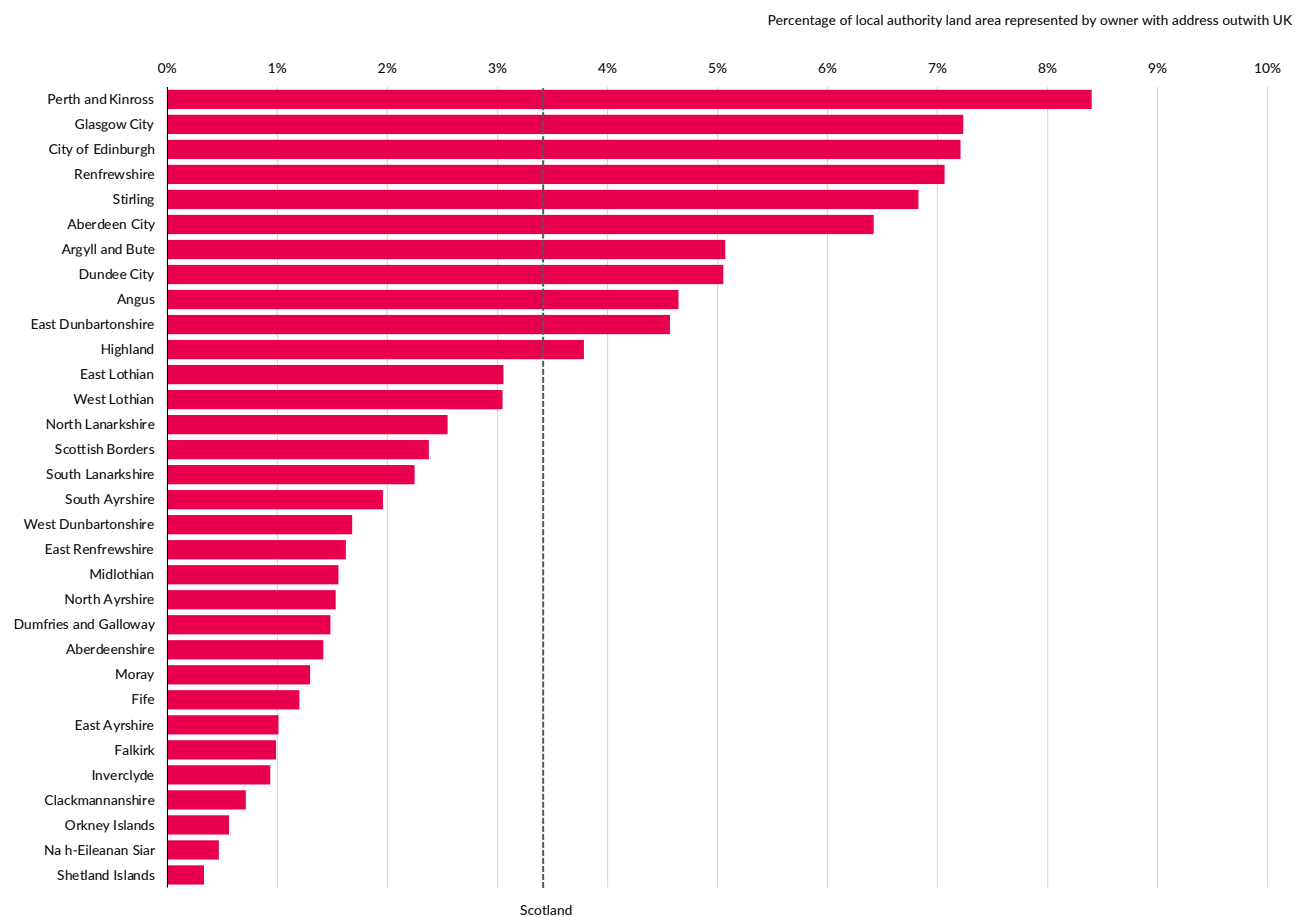
Overall, outwith UK titles¹¹ represented 3.3% of Scotland's land area.

Figure 15 shows the percentage of local authority land area represented by outwith UK titles.

- The top three local authorities with the highest percentage of its land area represented by outwith UK titles were Perth and Kinross, Glasgow City and City of Edinburgh.
- The bottom three local authorities were Shetland Islands, Na h-Eileanan Siar and Orkney Islands, all local authorities with very low number of titles overall (see online table 5 background data).

Figure 15: Titles outwith UK represented 3.3% of Scotland's land area (online table 10)

Percentage of local authority land area in Scotland represented by owner with address outwith UK as at 31 December 2022



¹¹ There were 26,953 outwith UK titles, of which 3 were excluded from this analysis because they could not be mapped

5. UK owner addresses outwith Scotland

This section of the release will focus on the 94,678 titles with an owner address in:

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

Out of 94,678 titles, 94,628¹² titles were included in this analysis.

A reference to “UK ownership outwith Scotland” means those titles **where the owner address supplied at time of registration** is in England, Wales or Northern Ireland.

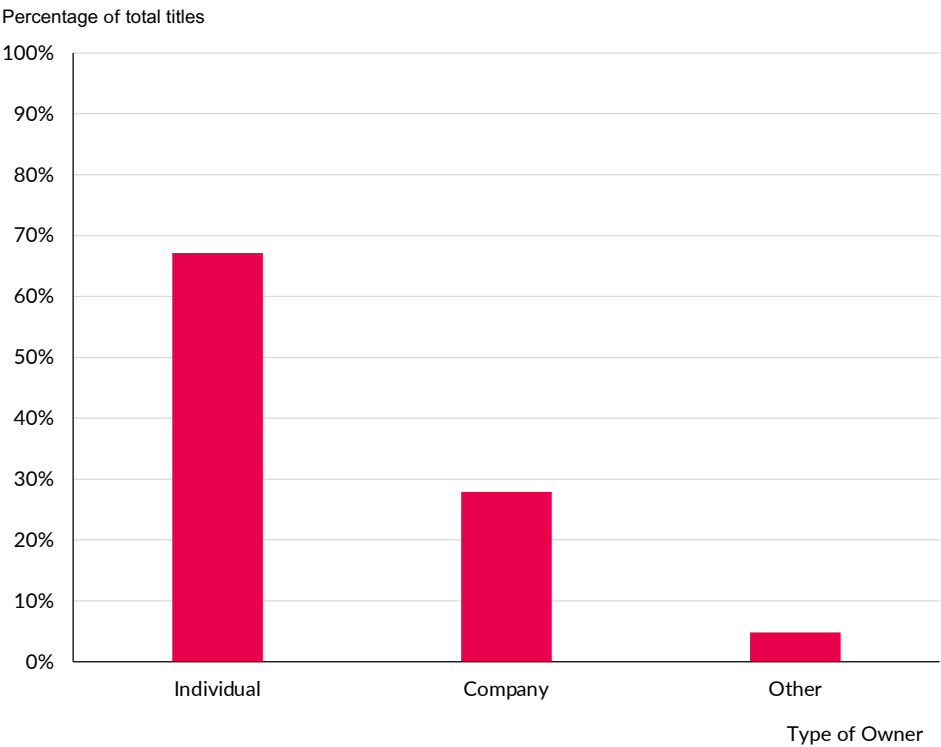
5.1 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by type of owner¹³

Figure 16 shows that for titles with an owner address outwith Scotland:

- the majority (67.2% or 63,598 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- companies accounted for 27.9% (26,422 titles)
- 4.8% (4,586 titles) were categorised as other, which relates to non-commercial bodies, trusts or a mix of ownership types
- 72 titles could not be classified to an ownership type

Figure 16: The owner in around seven out of every ten titles with an UK owner address outwith Scotland was one or more individuals (online table 11)¹⁴

Percentage of titles with UK owner address outwith Scotland by type of owner as at 31 December 2022



¹²Since 31 December 2022, 50 titles have been amalgamated or closed and so it was not possible to include them in the location analysis.

¹³This analysis covers all 94,678 titles as at 31 December 2022, including the 50 titles that were amalgamated or closed after this date.

¹⁴Does not include the 72 titles that could not be classified to an ownership type.

5.2 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by Local Authority

Figure 17 shows the number of titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) that fall within each local authority area in Scotland.

Figure 17: Around 1 in 5 UK outwith Scotland titles were in the City of Edinburgh or Glasgow City (online table 12)

Number of titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland by local authority as at 31 December 2022

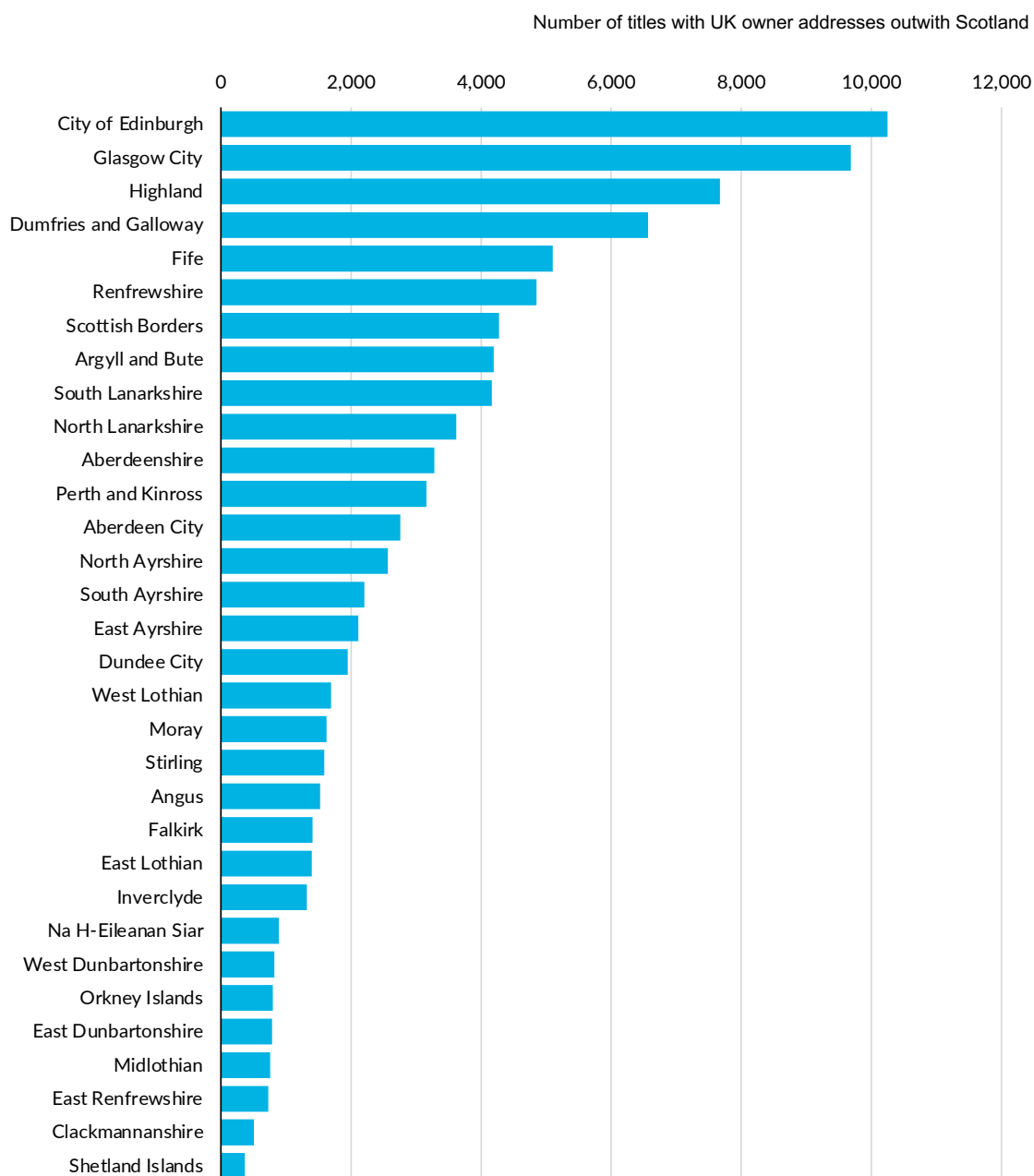
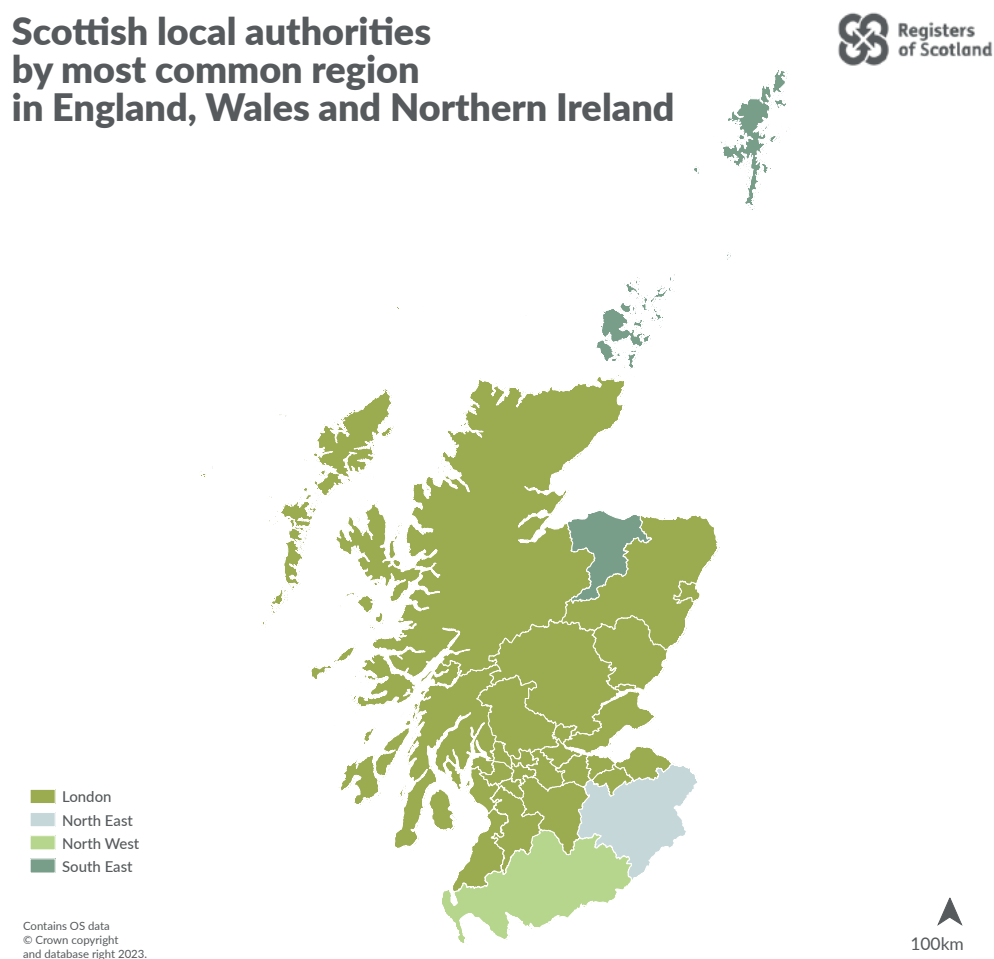


Figure 18 shows that London was the dominant region in 27 out of 32 Scottish local authorities. However, in the local authorities which border onto England, the corresponding bordered region of England was most dominant.

Figure 18: Scottish local authorities by most common region in England, Wales and Northern Ireland



5.3 Most common regions with UK owner address outwith Scotland

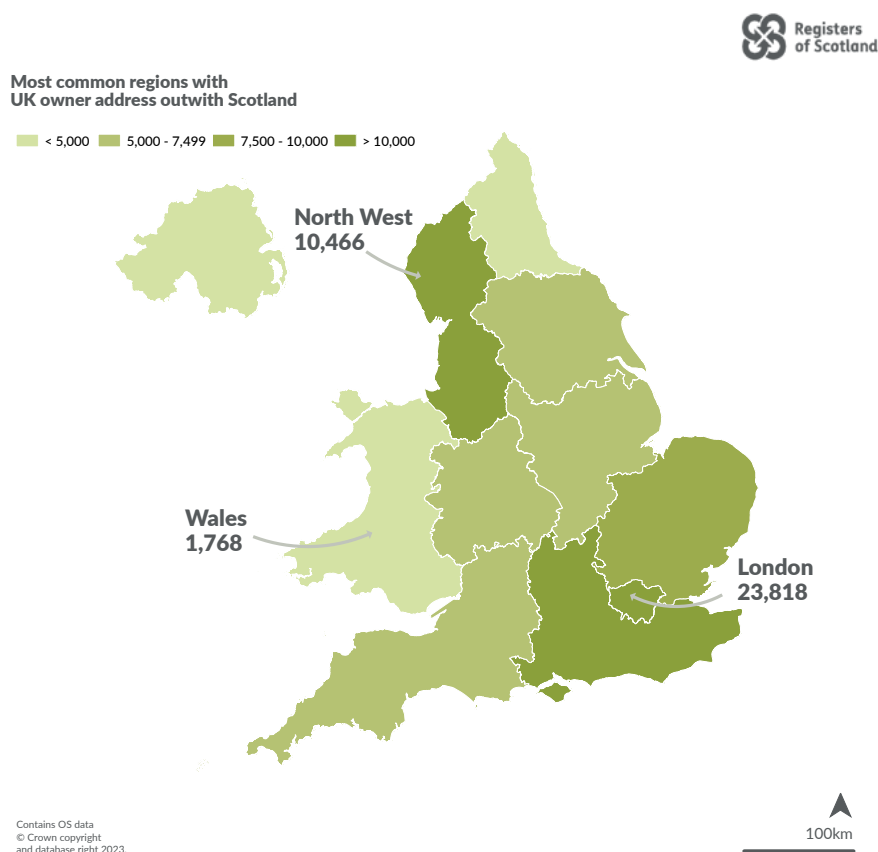
We are limited in what outputs we can produce with English, Welsh and Northern Irish data due to the quality of the underlying owner address data. [See background information on UK Titles outwith Scotland](#)

Figure 19 shows the number of Scottish titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland by the regions of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

For the whole of Scotland:

- 25% (23,818 titles) of UK owner addresses outwith Scotland were in the London region and 16% (14,732 titles) were in the South East region

Figure 19: Most common regions with UK owner address outwith Scotland as at 31 December 2022¹⁵
(online table 13)



5.4 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by urban rural classification

See [background information](#) on urban rural classification for details on how this analysis is conducted.

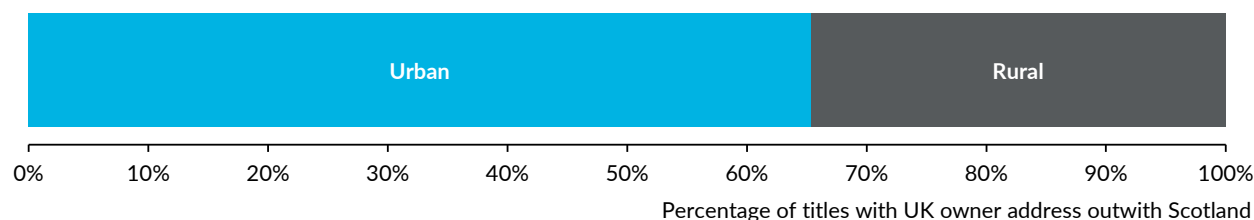
Figure 20 shows that for titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland:

- 65% were in urban areas of Scotland
- 35% were in rural areas of Scotland

For context:

- In terms of land area, urban areas account for 2.2% of Scotland and rural areas account for 97.8%¹⁶
- In terms of population, urban areas account for 83% and rural areas account for 17%¹⁷
- The urban rural split for all property sales in Scotland in 2021-22 as 84% urban and 16% rural¹⁸

Figure 20: Around two thirds of titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland were in urban areas of Scotland (online table 14)



¹⁵776 titles are not included in this analysis as no region could be identified from the address information provided.

¹⁶Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016 - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016>

¹⁷Scottish Government Urban Rural Classification 2016 - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016>

¹⁸See our [property market report 2021-22](#) for further information.

Figure 21 shows the urban and rural split of titles with UK owner address outwith Scotland in each local authority and the urban rural split of the land mass of these titles in each Local authority.

Figure 21: The focus of titles with UK owner address outwith Scotland is in urban areas¹⁹

Percentage of titles with UK owner address outwith Scotland and percentage of land area by local authority and urban rural classification (Scottish Government urban rural 2-fold 2016 classification) as at 31 December 2022



¹⁹Online table 17 gives a breakdown of land area by 2-fold urban rural classification and local authority

5.5 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by land area

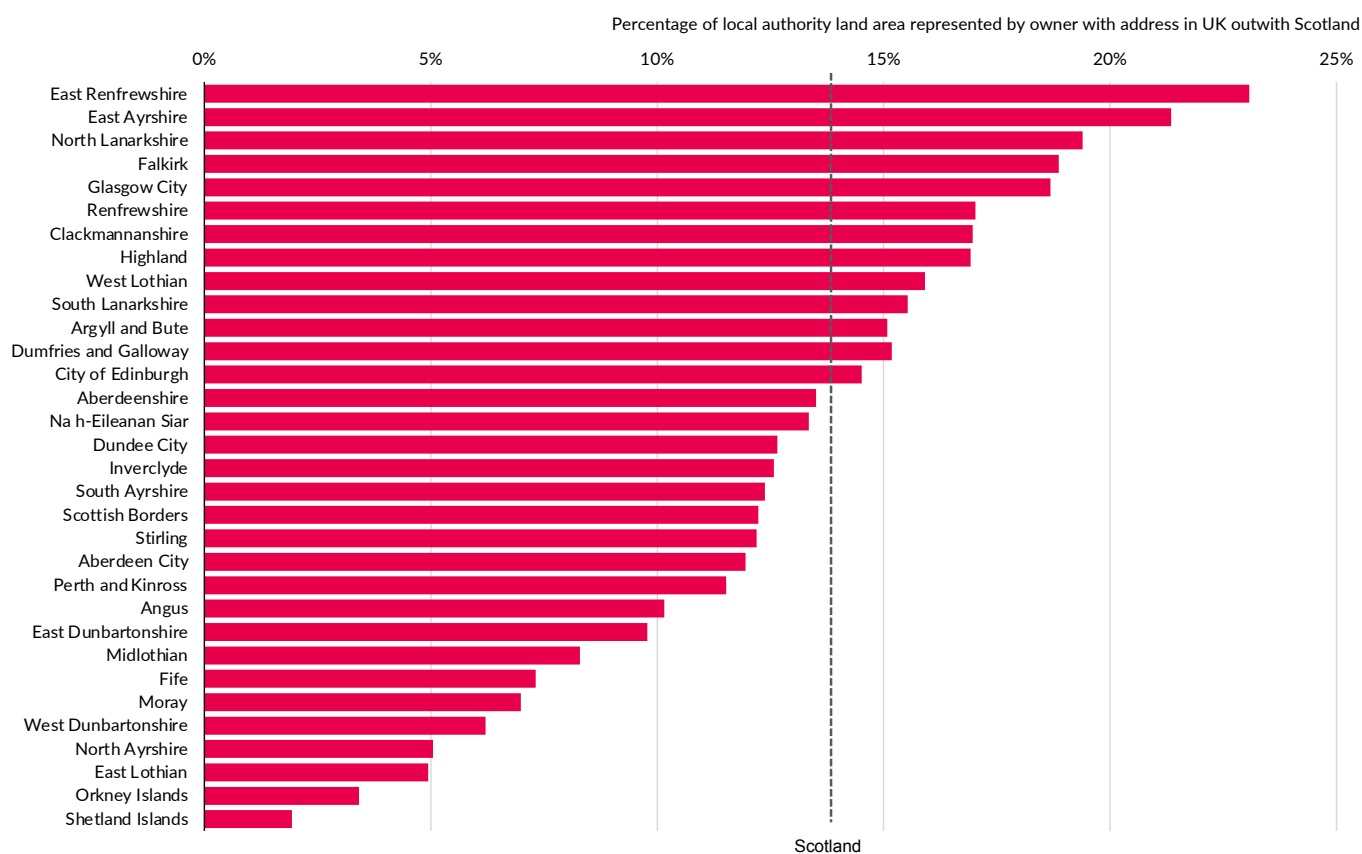
See [background information](#) on Titles by area for details on the methodology used to estimate these figures.

Figure 22 shows the percentage of local authority land area represented by titles with an owner address in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Overall, UK owner address outwith Scotland titles represented 14% of Scotland's land area²⁰.

Figure 22: UK titles with owner address outwith Scotland represented 14% of Scotland's land area (online table 15)

Percentage of local authority land area in Scotland represented by owner with UK address outwith Scotland as at 31 December 2022



²⁰37 titles were not included in this analysis because the extent could not be mapped.

6. Owner address in Scotland

This section of the release will focus on the 1,767,326 titles with an owner address in Scotland.

A reference to “owner address in Scotland” means those titles where the owner address supplied at time of registration is in Scotland.

6.1 Titles by type of owner

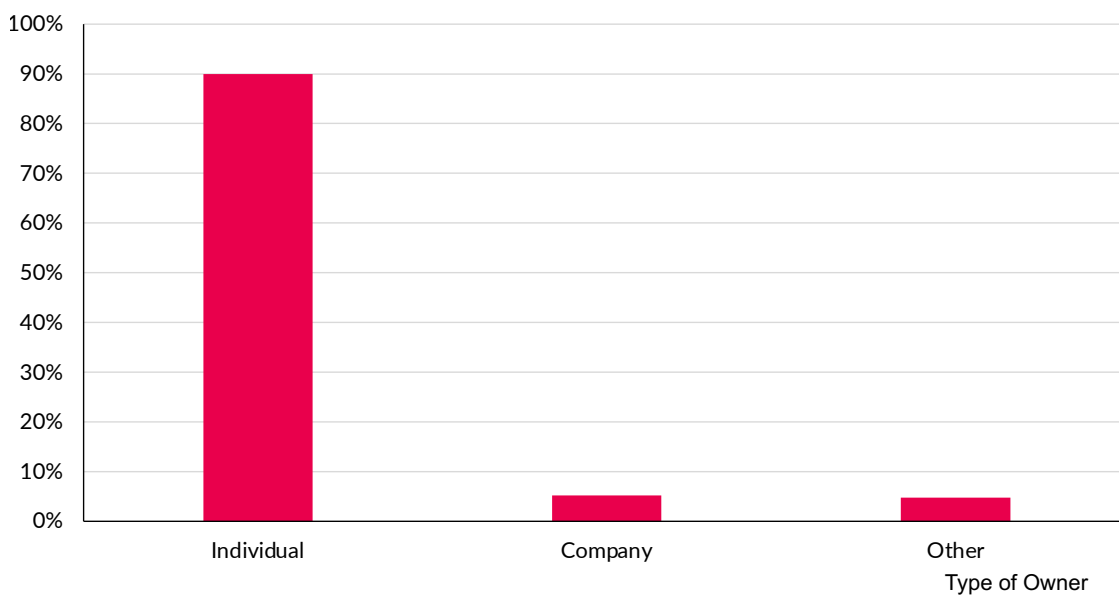
Figure 23 shows that for titles with an owner address in Scotland:

- the majority (89.9% or 1,589,365 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- companies accounted for 5.2% (92,174 titles)
- 4.8% (84,151 titles) were categorised as other, which relates to non-commercial bodies, trusts or a mix of ownership types
- 1,636 titles could not be classified to an ownership type

Figure 23: The owner in around nine out of every ten titles with an owner address in Scotland was one or more individuals (online table 16)²¹

Percentage of titles with owner address in Scotland by type of owner as at 31 December 2022

Percentage of total titles



²¹Does not include the 1,636 titles that could not be classified to an ownership type.

7. Background, quality and methodology

7.1 Background

Registers of Scotland (RoS) is the non-ministerial office responsible for maintaining 20 public registers. These relate to land, property and other legal documents.

RoS collects administrative data in the process of fulfilling the Keeper of the Registers of Scotland's (the Keeper) statutory duties to manage, control and maintain the various public registers under RoS' remit.

Two of RoS' most active registers are the General Register of Sasines and the Land Register of Scotland, which both record ownership and other interests related to land and property in Scotland.

The contents of the Sasines Register, which comprises a chronological list of deeds, are steadily being moved across to the Land Register. The Land Register was introduced in 1981 and currently (as at 31 December 2022) accounts for 1.89 million registered titles in Scotland. The Land Register is based on the Ordnance Survey map and contains plans of registered properties, providing property owners with a state-backed guarantee of title.

RoS records the legal owner of all land and property types in Scotland, including residential and commercial properties, whether held by an individual, a company or any other legal entity, and regardless of whether that company has been registered in the UK or not.

Since December 2014, where the legal owner is a company outwith UK, the register has recorded the country or territory where the company was incorporated. This information may also have been recorded prior to that date if it was included in the application for registration, but this was on a voluntary basis.

The data is submitted to RoS via standard land register application forms, deeds and accompanying plans (if required). It is used to maintain an open and public property register showing textual details for each title and its corresponding spatial extent on the cadastral map.

Information about individual registered titles can be accessed by the public. Scotland's Land Information Service, ScotLIS, allows easy access for everyone to a wide range of land and property information. Customer Services are available for any other needs, such as searching the Land Register and Sasines Register, or getting copies of deeds.

7.2 Data used in this release

The statistics in this release are based on a snapshot (a stock picture) of registered titles in the Land Register as at 31 December 2022 (1,892,212 titles). Titles include owners and tenants under long-term commercial leases. Titles that were pending registration on the date of extraction and titles from the Sasines Register are not included.

The figures accompanying this release are available [here](#). The Country of Origin Company Report – a dataset containing information about all properties owned or leased in Scotland by companies outwith UK – has also been updated and is available to purchase [here](#). This dataset includes details of companies with an address that was outwith the UK; it does not include details of individuals, trustees, limited partnerships, other incorporated bodies, mixed ownership/tenancy, or unclassified titles (if any).

Revision policy

The statistics presented here are a snapshot of the Land Register as at 31 December 2022 and are not revised between each annual publication. Annual snapshots are subject to changes made in the live Land Register database. Further information on our general revision policy and how we compile statistics at RoS can be found [here](#).

7.3 Definitions

Term used in report	Definition	
Title	an ownership or tenancy interest over a property that is registered in the Land Register of Scotland	
Owner	in this report, reference to the owner of a property also includes tenants under a long-term lease, unless otherwise specified	
UK ownership outwith Scotland	where the owner address supplied at time of registration is in England, Wales or Northern Ireland	
Ownership outwith Scotland	where the owner address supplied at time of registration is not in the UK	
Owner address in Scotland	where the owner address supplied at time of registration is in Scotland.	
Interest	Ownership	the state or fact of exclusive rights and control over property
	Tenancy	under long-term commercial leases
Type of Owner (owner address outwith the UK)	Individual	A person or persons
	Limited companies	a type of business structure whereby a company is considered a legally distinct body
	Trustees, limited partnership etc	a person or firm that holds and administers property or assets for the benefit of a third party, when two or more partners go into business together
	Mixed / other entities	A mix of the above 3

Term used in report	Definition	
Type of Owner (UK ownership outwith Scotland and owner address in Scotland)	Individual	a person or persons
	Company	a type of business structure whereby a company is considered a legally distinct body
	Other	a mix of the two above or other entities

7.4 Methodology

From the data extracted as part of the snapshot taken at 31 December of each year, each unique title is allocated to one location category only based on the supplied address of the proprietor at the time of registration with RoS. There are five possible location categories that a title could be allocated to based on the town/county/country field of the supplied address: Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland and outwith UK. Where a title is shared by more than one owner/tenant, those with a non-UK element are allocated to the outwith UK category.

Where there is no outwith UK element, the title is allocated to Scotland, England, Wales or Northern Ireland in that order according to the countries represented in the owners'/tenants' addresses, e.g. if Scotland is not represented, but both England and Wales are then it will be allocated to England.

Any title within the outwith UK category that includes more than one proprietor with an outwith UK address has been classified to the first outwith UK address listed on the title, e.g. if there were two proprietors, the first from France and the other from Italy, the title would be classified to France. New registrations and certain changes to existing registrations over the previous 12 months are reviewed and incorporated to present the latest snapshot. If, as part of this review, a title cannot be classified to a geographic location then it is placed in the pot of titles where the proprietor address is unable to be classified. This pot will also include those titles that cannot be classified to a geographic location when the data is initially extracted from the Land Register for the snapshot as at 31 December of each year. For the snapshot extracted at 31 December 2022, any title which could not be classified to a geographic location has been manually searched and a geographic location (Scotland, England, Wales, Northern Ireland and outwith UK) has been attached, although an address cannot be identified in all cases.

The outwith UK titles were then further classified by type of proprietor, interest, local authority, land classification, urban rural classification and area (further information provided below). The maps shown in figure 10 were made with [Natural Earth](#) (free vector and raster map data).

UK Titles outwith Scotland

While it has been possible to allocate all addresses at the country level, some are incomplete and so cannot be easily allocated to a specific local authority or included within the region analysis. In addition, we do not currently hold address data for Northern Ireland in our mapping systems and so Northern Ireland addresses cannot be allocated at the region level. Out of 94,678 titles, 94,628 titles were included in this analysis.

Titles with an English or Welsh (E&W) owner address are identified from textual Land Register information.

Address details of these owners based in England and Wales are matched to OS AddressBase Core, and geocoded information assigned. Pattern matching and textual language tools are then used to update and edit any non-matching addresses to obtain the missing spatial information. When matching on full address is still not possible, matches are made on postcode, street, locality and then town level. Any non-matching addresses at this stage are discarded.

The title seed point for the associated title is then spatially intersected with other spatial datasets to obtain further attributes (e.g. which local authority the title is located in, what the sg_2015_16 2fold urban/rural classification is). The region is also assigned in this way however this was only possible for those which were registered to England or Wales. Addresses registered as Northern Ireland were not assigned a region in the same manner. Following a QA process, these addresses, when possible, were confirmed as being in Northern Ireland and subsequently allocated this region.

Classification of UK titles outwith Scotland by region / local authority

The title polygons are retrieved by title number.

Area analysis is conducted on titles with Registered status (Draft, Cancelled, Closed or Amalgamated titles are therefore excluded from the analysis). Previously registered titles with a pending application are treated as registered. This means that the spatial/area analysis reflects the interests which still existed on the snapshot date. Interests which were present at the start of the reporting year, but ceased to exist in the course of the year, are not included in the area calculations from this point onwards.

The Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) assigned to each of the addresses were grouped by E&W Regions to identify the most common region in which the owners of titles in each Local Authority came from.

Using the UPRNs once more, it was possible to derive the number of titles involved in transactions in each local authority from an England and Wales owner address.

Land use classification

RoS records six land use classes: residential, commercial, land, agriculture, forestry and other. The land use classification is provided by the submitting agent on the RoS application form when an application for registration is submitted. Classification is made on the primary land use of the plot of land. Further information on the six land use classes can be found [here](#).

Urban rural classification²²

The Scottish Government urban rural classification 2016¹⁶ was attached to all titles with an owner address outwith the UK using the 2-fold classification as shown in Figure 24.

Figure 24: Scottish Government urban rural 2-fold classification 2016

Classification	Class name	Description
2-fold	Urban areas	Settlements of 3,000 or more people
	Rural areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people

The urban rural classification given to each title was calculated by overlaying the title seed point (a point marker used to identify the position of a Land Register title on the Ordnance Survey base map) with the Scottish Government's urban rural classification 2016. Each seed point was classified with the values of the 2-fold classification extracted from the underlying urban rural classification polygon. Further information on the Scottish Government's urban rural classification is available [here](#). Scottish Government figures were used for the urban land area of each local authority²⁴.

Titles by area

The area of each UK title outwith Scotland and each outwith UK title is calculated using Land Register polygon data contained in the RoS Geographic Information System (GIS) instead of the textual area information submitted during the registration process.

A polygon is a closed geometric shape, which represents the mapped extent and location of a title, or part of a title, in the Land Register.

A title could include a bundle of rights, not just ownership rights but also other rights such as access rights. All polygons associated with each title is used in the area analysis, not just ownership polygons. This is because the right associated with each title polygon can only be determined with absolute certainty by manually referring to the description of the property in the title information held on the Land Register.

²²The 2016 Scottish Government urban rural classification has been used in this analysis as RoS GIS systems have not yet been updated to reflect the new 2020 Scottish Government urban rural classifications.

²³Scottish Government urban rural classification 2016: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016/pages/2/>

²⁴Scottish Government: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-urban-rural-classification-2016/documents/>

In addition, due to the way some types of properties are mapped in two dimensions, it is not always possible to calculate the exact area of ownership even where the polygons which delineates ownership is identified. For example, for flatted properties the entire building footprint is mapped for each title contained within the building.

Area calculations may therefore be an overestimate of areas that are owned by owners with an address outwith the UK or owners with a UK address outwith Scotland.

Title polygons are retrieved for each UK title outwith Scotland and each outwith UK title and the area extent dissolved/aggregated by local authority to calculate area totals for each local authority as at 31 December 2022. The total land area for each local authority was calculated using the OS Open Data BoundaryLine Product. Some coastal title polygons extend beyond the boundaries of the BoundaryLine product and these areas are not assigned to any Local Authority. The total land mass covered by outwith UK titles is therefore more than the sum of the outwith UK title land mass assigned to each of the Scottish local authorities, and the total land mass covered by UK titles outwith Scotland is therefore more than the sum of the UK titles outwith Scotland land mass assigned to each of the Scottish local authorities.

Similarly, some title polygons extend beyond the boundaries of the Scottish Government's Urban Rural (2015-2016) dataset and these areas were not assigned an urban/rural classification. The total land mass covered by outwith UK titles is therefore more than the sum of the outwith UK title land mass classified as urban or rural, and the total land mass covered by UK titles outwith Scotland is therefore more than the sum of the UK titles outwith Scotland land mass classified as urban or rural.

In the Land Register, the polygons which make up a title can overlap with each other or with the polygons which make up other titles. The outwith UK titles contain overlapping areas with different interests (e.g. tenancy vs ownership). The total land mass covered by the outwith UK titles is therefore less than the sum of the outwith UK titles land mass classified as different interest categories, and the total land mass covered by UK titles outwith Scotland is therefore less than the sum of the UK titles outwith Scotland land mass classified as different interest categories.

Similarly, the total land mass covered by the outwith UK titles is less than the sum of the outwith UK titles land mass classified by country, and the total land mass covered by UK titles outwith Scotland is less than the sum of the UK titles outwith Scotland land mass classified by country/region.

Owner address in Scotland ownership type

Any title that has an owner address in Scotland has been given an ownership type classification. This has been achieved in two ways:

- Since the introduction of the Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012 in December 2012, all applicants and granters in Land Register applications have been allocated to a category of "Person", "Commercial" or "Other". Person relates to natural persons, Commercial to commercial companies and other to non-commercial bodies, government bodies and trusts.
- For titles registered prior to December 2014, RoS has applied a methodology to achieve the allocation of owners to the "Person", "Commercial" or "Other" categories. The party designation recorded at the time of registration is searched for a range of unambiguous key words and phrases. These include registration numbers which can be matched to entity types registered with Companies House and other bodies, references to the various laws under which entities can be incorporated, indicators of persons acting in special capacity, general keywords and a list of previously classified person forenames, surnames and company names. Overall, the current accuracy rate of the automatic classifications compared to the existing Land Register applications classifications is 98.5%.

For the purposes of this report, any mix of ownership types in relation to owners or applicants has also been allocated to other.

7.5 Quality

The data used to produce this report is extracted from the Land Register, which is created from the information provided within applications for registration. The risk of inaccurate data being submitted, and of inaccuracies being created by errors in the land registration process, is inherent but is mitigated by:

- checks done by solicitors
- pre-application checks and reports provided by RoS prior to solicitors submitting applications
- RoS registration officers conducting registration checks
- RoS Quality Team undertaking quality checks
- RoS Land & Property Data Team undertaking quality assurance on the data

Both the Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012 – which superseded the Land Registration Act (Scotland) 1979 on 8 December 2014 – and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016²⁵ impose statutory duties on the Keeper which govern the role RoS holds within the Scottish legal and economic framework.

One of the most significant changes in the approach to land registration made following the implementation of the Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012 was to put the main responsibility of the accuracy of data submitted to RoS within the remit of the submitting agent (usually the solicitor acting on behalf of the purchaser) rather than the Keeper. This provides increased reliability on the quality of data we can extract from the documents submitted for registration in the Land Register since these agents have a greater responsibility to ensure the integrity of the register.

Rules were applied to standardise the naming conventions within the outwith UK data. This was required primarily because of the different versions of country names provided by submitting agents within their applications for registration and because of spelling errors. In order to rectify this, country names were standardised to UN naming conventions, and rules were created around other common variations. For example, references to 'Dubai' or 'Abu Dhabi' in the country field were changed to United Arab Emirates, and references to the 'Channel Islands' were changed to the individual island name.

Before this year's release, the focus of this publication has been on outwith UK titles and as such this category has the higher level of quality assurance, which still stands. However, additional analysis has been conducted in this year's report to cover UK ownership outwith Scotland, therefore the UK based titles received additional quality checks after being extracted from the Land Register. Placement in a UK-based pot is dependent on the information received by RoS at the time of registration, in particular the entries in the relevant address fields. This information, as outlined above, is subject to various checks before extraction and extra quality checks but still has a lower level of quality assurance than that attached to the outwith UK title information.

Due to technical and legal issues, some titles within the Scotland category may have an owner whose address at the time of registration was outwith the UK but have not been identified as such (for example, titles registered in favour of companies before December 2014 when the country of incorporation was only provided on a voluntary basis).

The Land and Property Titles in Scotland by Country of Origin statistical release was first published in March 2018 (data as at 31 December 2017). In that release there were around 230,000 unclassified titles, accounting for 13% of all titles registered with an owner address. For the current snapshot (data as at 31 December 2022) the quality checks being made on the data mean that there are no unclassified titles in the data although, for titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland, not all titles are able to be assigned to a geographic region (online table 1).

Further information on the general quality assurance processes in place for RoS data is available in the [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data document](#), as published for the UK House Price Index.

We would be grateful to users to continue to provide us with feedback on the quality and presentation of the data so we can continue to provide a product of the highest quality possible.

²⁵[Land Registration etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#)

²⁶Land Registration (Scotland) Act 1979

²⁷Land reform act

7.6 Contact Us

Responsible Statistician: Rachael Fairley

The next edition of this statistical report is planned for March 2024, based on the data as at 31 December 2023.

RoS provides a wide range of land and property data services, including statistical reports and publications. Further information about these services is available [here](#).

You can contact our Land & Property Data team on 0131 659 6111 or by email at data@ros.gov.uk.