

Country of Origin Report 2023

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

Data extract from the Land Register as at 31 December 2023

Published 26 March 2024

An official Statistics publication for Scotland



Contents

1.Main findings	3
2.Things you need to know about this release	4
2.1 What these statistics include	4
2.2 Main changes since last release in March 2023	5
2.3 What you can and can't conclude	5
3.Location of owner	6
4.Owner addresses outwith UK	7
4.1 Titles outwith UK by type of owner	8
4.2 Titles outwith UK by interest	10
4.3 Titles outwith UK by local authority and interest	10
4.4 Titles outwith UK by land use classification	12
4.5 Titles outwith UK by urban rural classification	12
4.6 Titles outwith UK by land area	13
5.UK owner address outwith Scotland	14
5.1 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by type of owner	14
5.2 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by Local Authority	15
5.3 Most common regions with UK owner address outwith Scotland	16
5.4 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by urban rural classifications	17
5.5 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by land area	18
6.Owner address in Scotland	19
6.1 Titles by type of owner	19
7.Background, quality and methodology	20
7.1 Background	20
7.2 Data used in this release	20
Revision policy	20
7.3 Definitions	21
7.4 Methodology	21
UK Titles outwith Scotland	22
Land use classification	22
Urban rural classification	23
Titles by area	23
Owner address in Scotland ownership type	24
7.5 Quality	24
7.6 Contact Us	25

1. Main findings

For the 1.9 million land and property titles in the Land Register of Scotland:

Location of owner address at the time of purchase:

- 93.3% Scotland, 5.1% UK outwith Scotland, 1.4% outwith UK, 0.2% Government and Crown

Owner address outwith UK:

- Type of owner: 84.6% individuals, 10.9% limited companies, 2.8% trustees, limited partnerships etc and 1.7% had a combination of owner types
- Type of ownership: 92.5% ownership, 7.4% long-term lease
- Type of land use classification: 78.8% residential, 8.4% other, 8.1% commercial, 4.0% land, 0.5% agriculture and 0.3% forestry
- Location of land and property titles in Scotland:
 - » 32% 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): 12.2% United States of America, 8.9% Hong Kong, 6.8% Australia
- Land area of titles: represented 3.5% of Scotland's land area

UK owner address outwith Scotland:

- Type of owner: 66.8% individuals, 28.5% commercial, 4.7% other
- Location of land and property titles in Scotland:
 - » 21% in City of Edinburgh or Glasgow City
 - » 66% in urban areas of Scotland and 34% 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: 90% individuals, 5.6% companies, 4.4% other

2. Things you need to 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 2023 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:

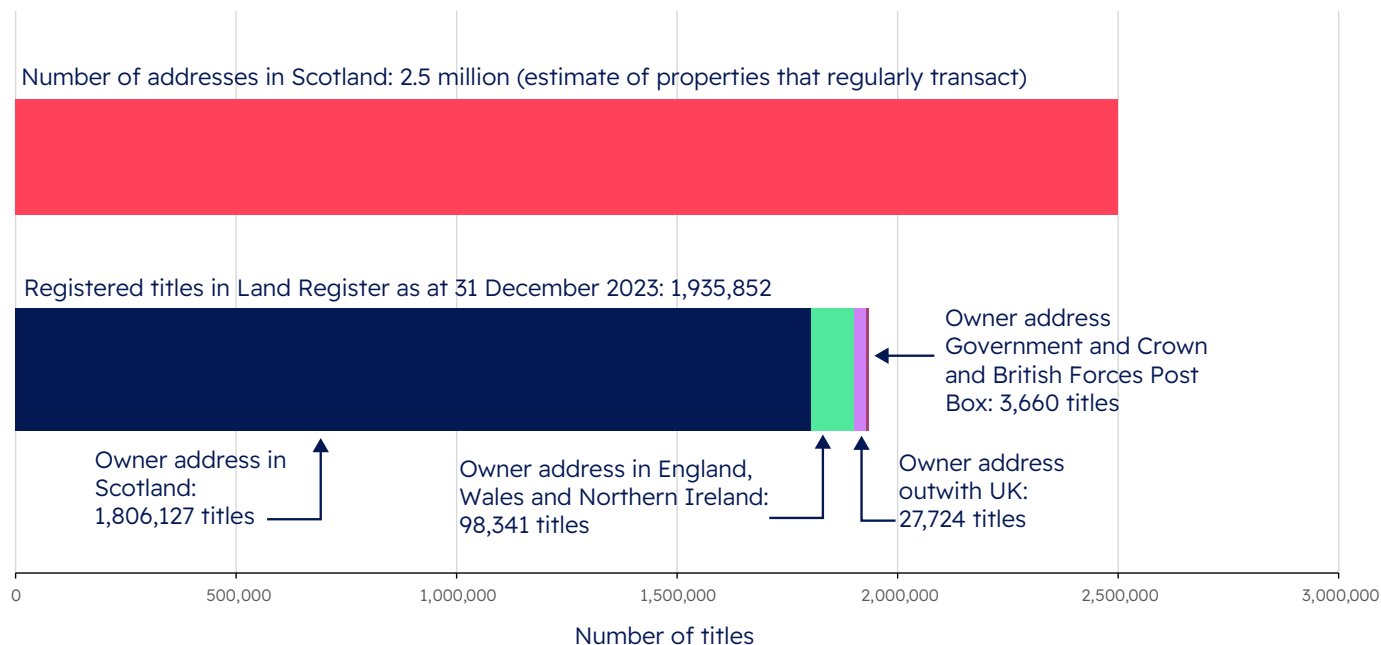
1. The land and property title needs to be registered in the Land Register

There were 1.9 million registered titles in the Land Register, as at 31 December 2023, an estimated address coverage of 87% in relation to properties that [regularly transact](#)¹. 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](#).

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 required³; 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 titles in Scotland¹



¹ The total number of addresses in Scotland (held in Ordnance Survey AddressBase) is 4 million. The estimated number of properties that [regularly transact](#) is 2.5 million. This excludes land and property that rarely sells or may never sell, for example social housing and some large land and estates. The majority of the remainder of titles are held in the Sasines Register, a deeds-based register. Please note that the volume of titles does not correlate to the volume of addresses because a title may contain more than one address.

² Or 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.

³ The 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 2023

Alongside this year's report, we have published a [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data \(QAAD\) document](#). The QAAD framework has been created by the [UK Statistics Authority](#), and is a way of assessing quality issues associated with administrative data used in the production of Official Statistics.

2.3 What you can and can't conclude

The statistics are presented as a snapshot of the Land Register as at 31 December 2023 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 titles where an owner has remained located outwith Scotland after the title has been purchased and titles where an owner has subsequently located to Scotland after completion of the transaction.

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.

For further background, quality and methodology information, see [section 7](#).

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 1.9 million registered titles in the Land Register as at 31 December 2023 were located.

Figure 2: Location of owner address for registered Land Register titles as at 31 December 2023
(online table 1)

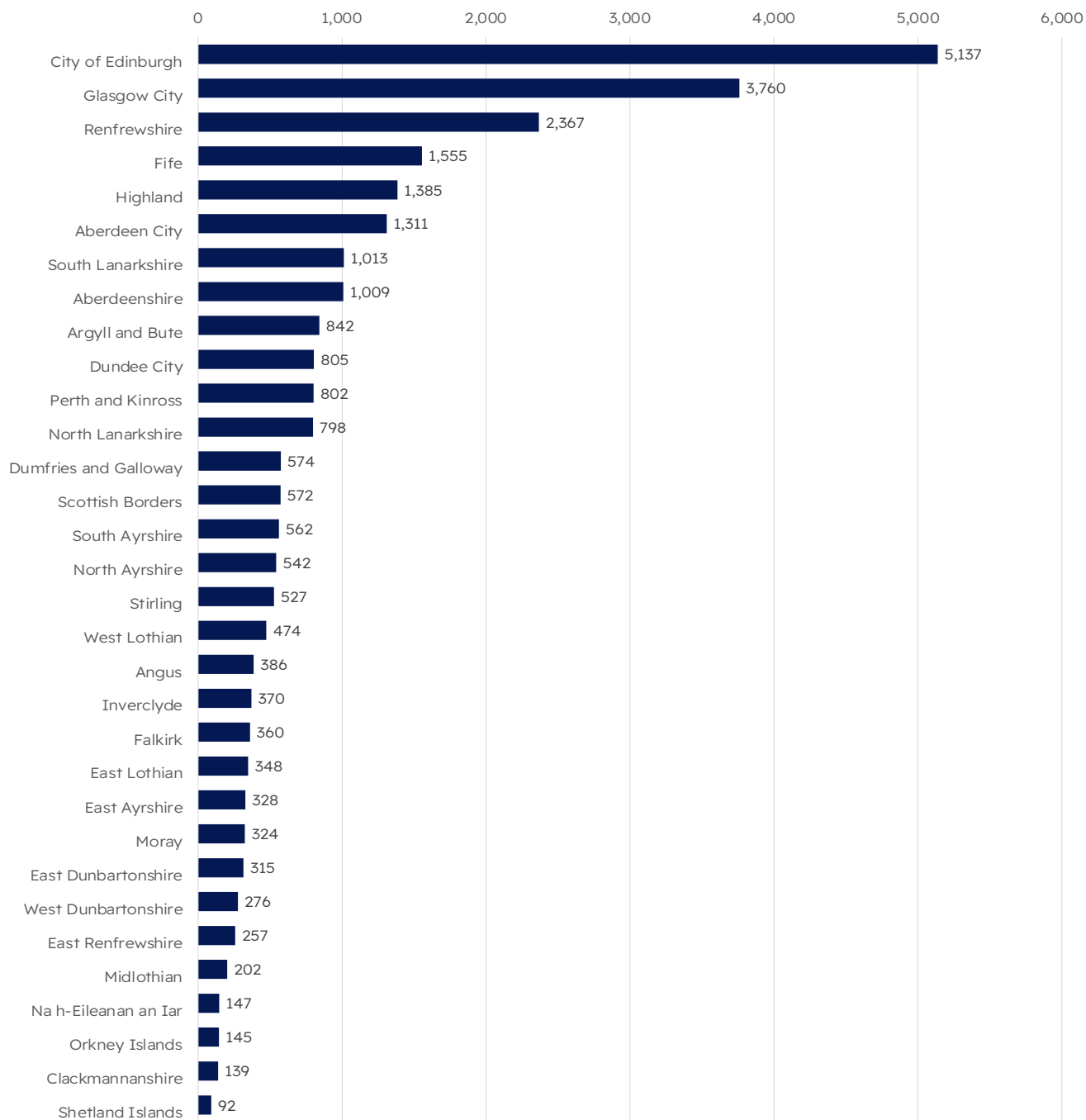
	Number & Percentage	
	Number of titles	Percentage of total registered LR titles
Scotland	1,806,127	93.3
England	93,053	4.8
Wales	1,852	0.1
Northern Ireland	3,436	0.2
UK outwith Scotland	98,341	5.1
Outwith UK	27,724	1.4
Non-Scotland	126,065	6.5
British Forces Post Office	109	0.0
Government and Crown	3,551	0.2
All classified	1,935,852	100.0
Owner address unable to be classified	0	0.0
Total registered titles in Land Register	1,935,852	100.0

4. Owner addresses outwith UK

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

This section focuses on the 27,724 registered titles with an owner address outwith the UK. Figure 3 shows where the 27,724 titles are located in Scotland.

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



4.1 Titles outwith UK by type of owner

Of the 27,724 registered titles with an owner address outwith the UK:

- the majority (84.6% or 23,457 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- limited companies accounted for 10.9% (3,014 titles)
- trustees and limited partnerships accounted for 2.8% (785 titles)
- 1.7% (468 titles) had a combination of owner types

Figure 4 highlights 15 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 locations which are not highlighted in figure 4 are:

- United States of America (3,392 titles and the top ranking country)
- Australia (1,874 titles, ranked 3rd)
- Canada (906 titles, ranked 9th)
- South Africa (423 titles, ranked 18th)
- New Zealand (405 titles, ranked 19th)

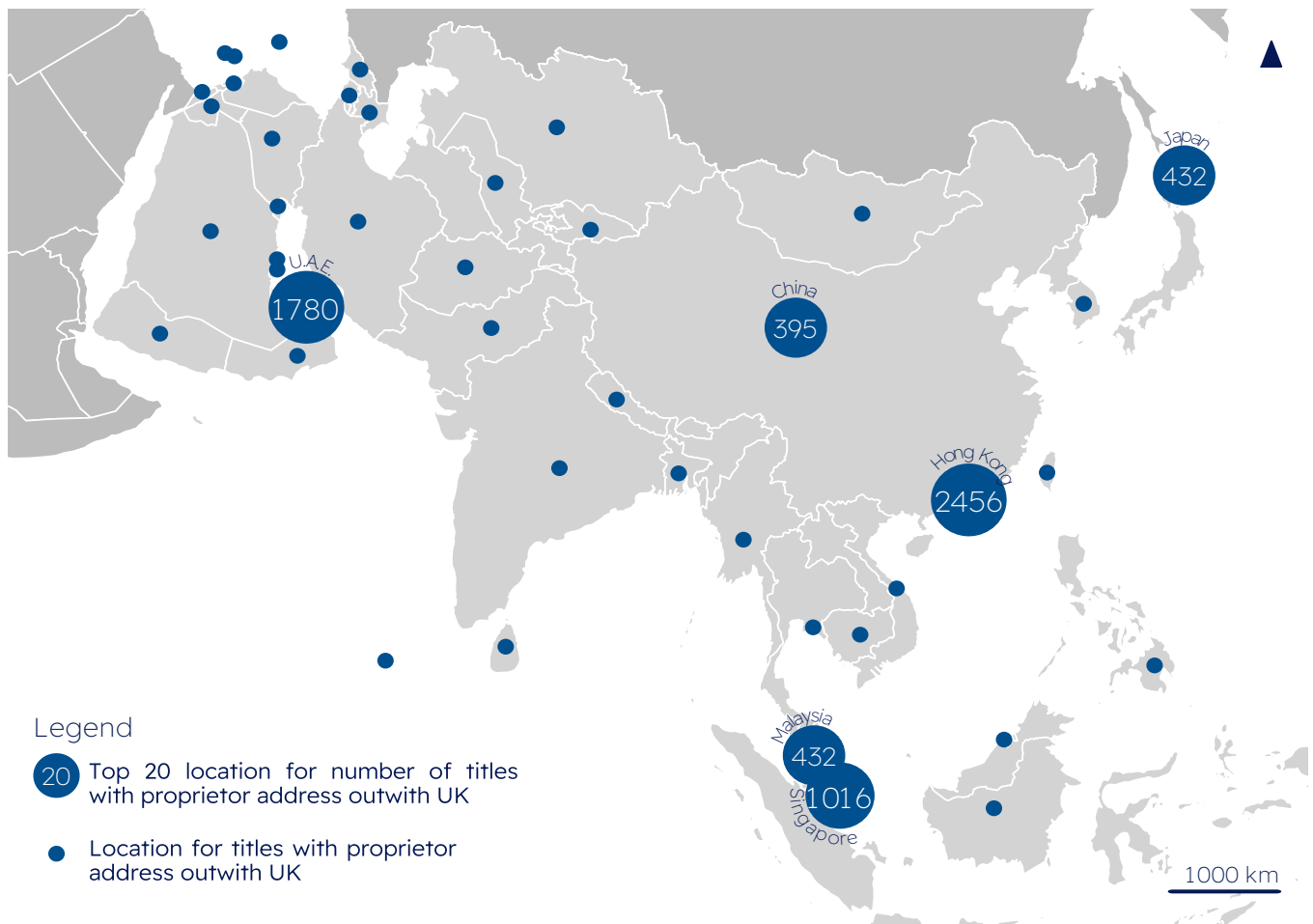
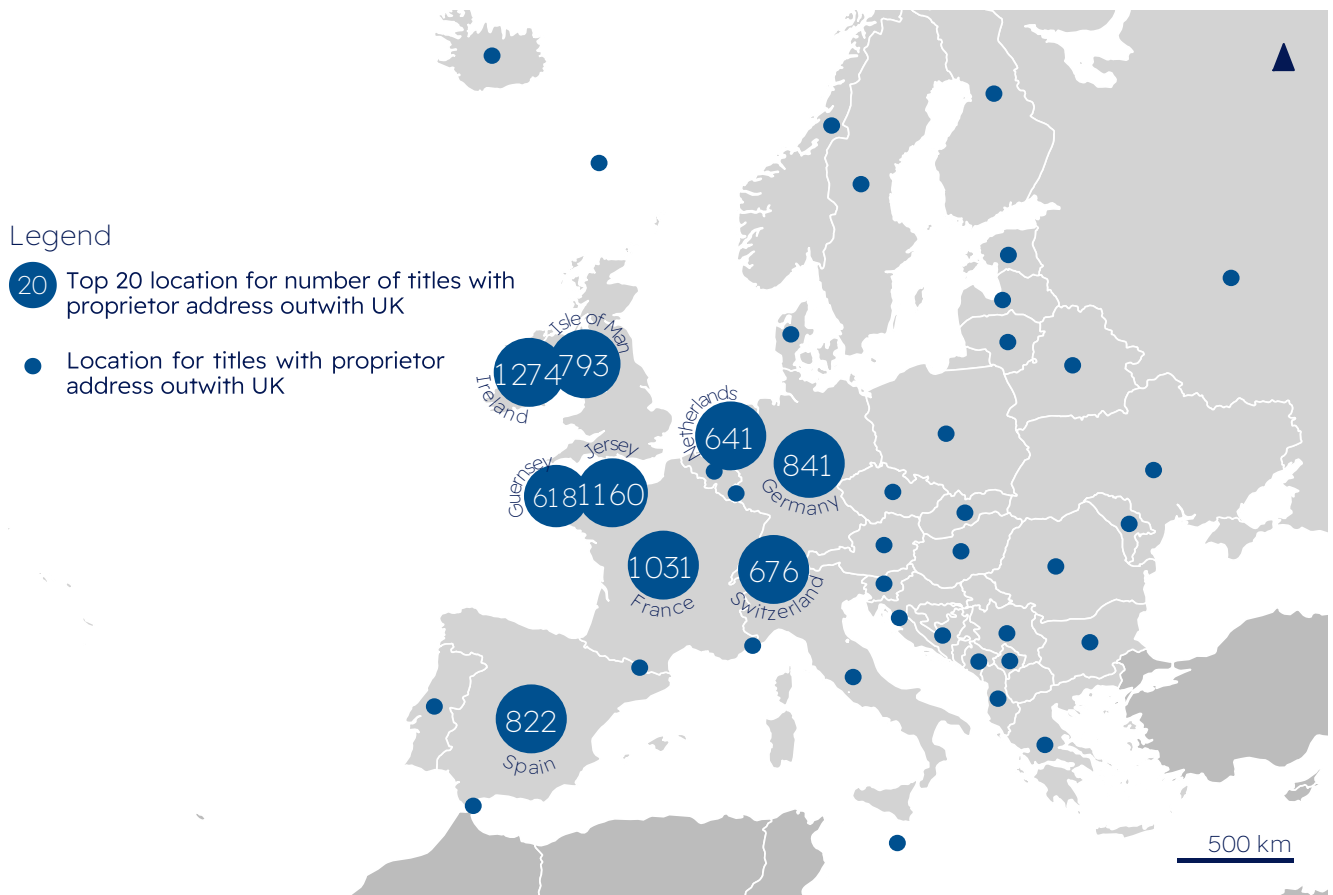
Overall, addresses were classified to 169 locations, excluding the UK (online table 2 and online table 3).

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

- Individuals accounted for 85% or more of outwith UK titles in 17 of the top 20 outwith UK locations (Country, Crown dependency or overseas territory).
- Limited companies were the majority owner type in the remaining 3 countries (Jersey, Isle of Man, and Guernsey).
- Half (51%) of all titles owned or leased by companies from outwith the UK were accounted for by these three locations.

Although not in the top 20 outwith UK locations, the following countries also had limited companies as the majority ownership type: The Bahamas (86%), the British Virgin Islands (92%), Gibraltar (61%), Luxembourg (55%), Panama (73%), Seychelles (90%) and the Turks and Caicos Islands (88%).

Figure 4: Titles with owner address outwith UK in Europe and Asia as at 31 December 2023 (online table 2)



4.2 Titles outwith UK by interest

Of the 27,724 titles with an owner address outwith the UK:

- ownership was the predominant interest for titles with an outwith UK owner address, accounting for 92.5% (25,645 titles)
- the remainder of these titles were leased (long-term commercial leases), accounting for 7.4% (2,061 titles)⁵

Figure 5: Number of titles with owner address outwith UK by interest, type of owner and proportion of split as at 31 December 2023 (online table 4)

Owner type	Ownership		Tenancy		Unclassified		All interests	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Individual/natural person	21,831	93.1	1,615	6.9	11	0.0	23,457	84.6
Limited companies	2,710	89.9	297	9.9	7	0.2	3,014	10.9
Trustees, limited partnerships, etc.	662	84.3	123	15.7	0	0.0	785	2.8
Mixed	442	94.4	26	5.6	0	0.0	468	1.7
All owner types	25,645	92.5	2,061	7.4	18	0.1	27,724	100

4.3 Titles outwith UK by local authority and interest

Figure 6 shows the number of titles with an owner address outwith the UK by local authority and interest:

- Around one in three (32%) 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 8.5% of outwith UK titles (2,367 titles), of which 72% (or 1,712 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 not 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 7.4% across the whole of Scotland

⁵ There were 18 titles which are not included in this analysis as they could not be classified to an interest type.

Figure 6: Number of titles with owner address outwith UK by local authority and interest as at 31 December 2023 (online table 5)

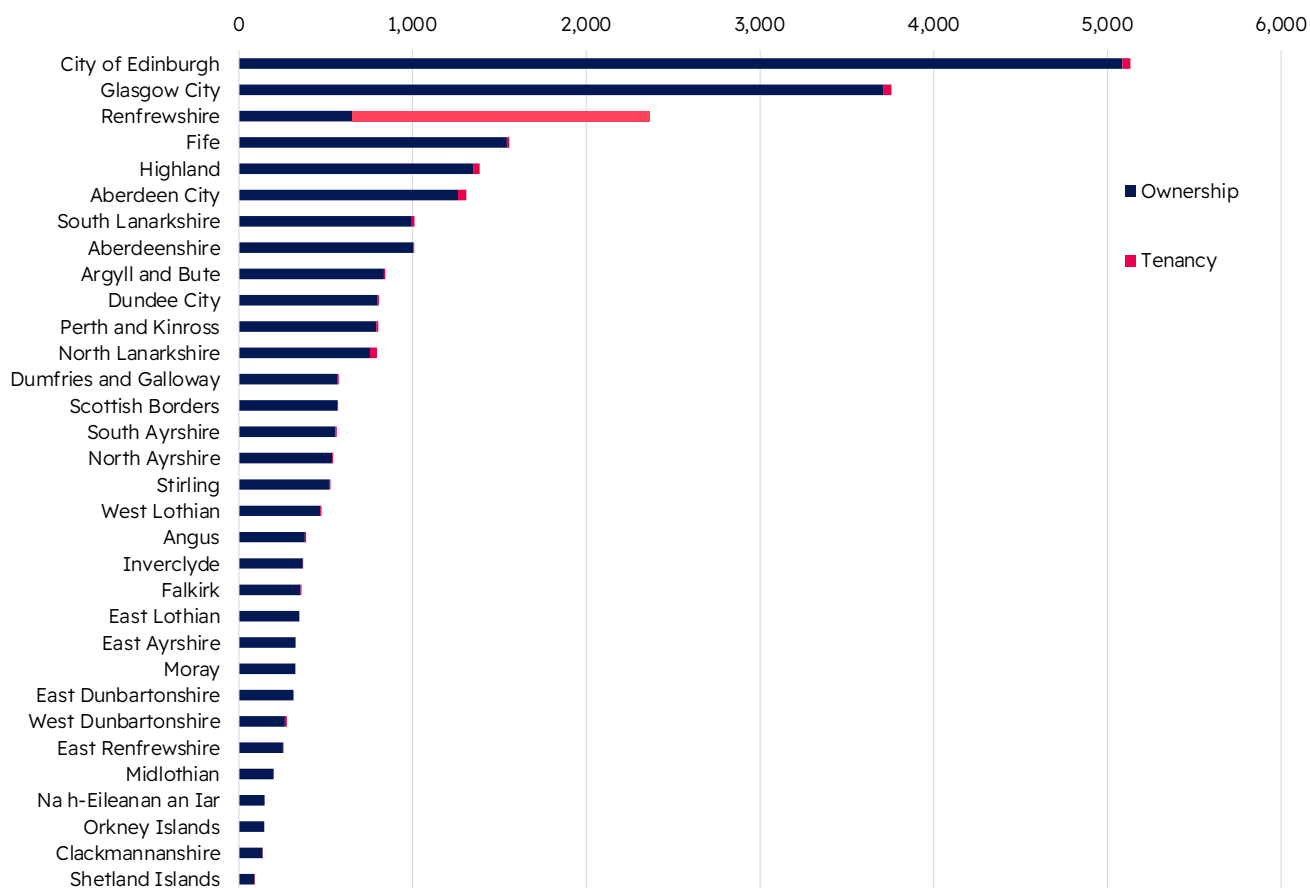


Figure 7 shows the top 10 postcode sectors across Scotland by number of outwith UK titles excluding tenancy, such as long-term leases on car parking spaces.

Out of the top 10, 9 are in the City of Edinburgh, accounting for 7.4% (2,048 titles) of all outwith UK titles.

Figure 7: Top 10 postcode sectors by number of titles with owner address outwith UK excluding tenancy as at 31 December 2023 (online table 6)

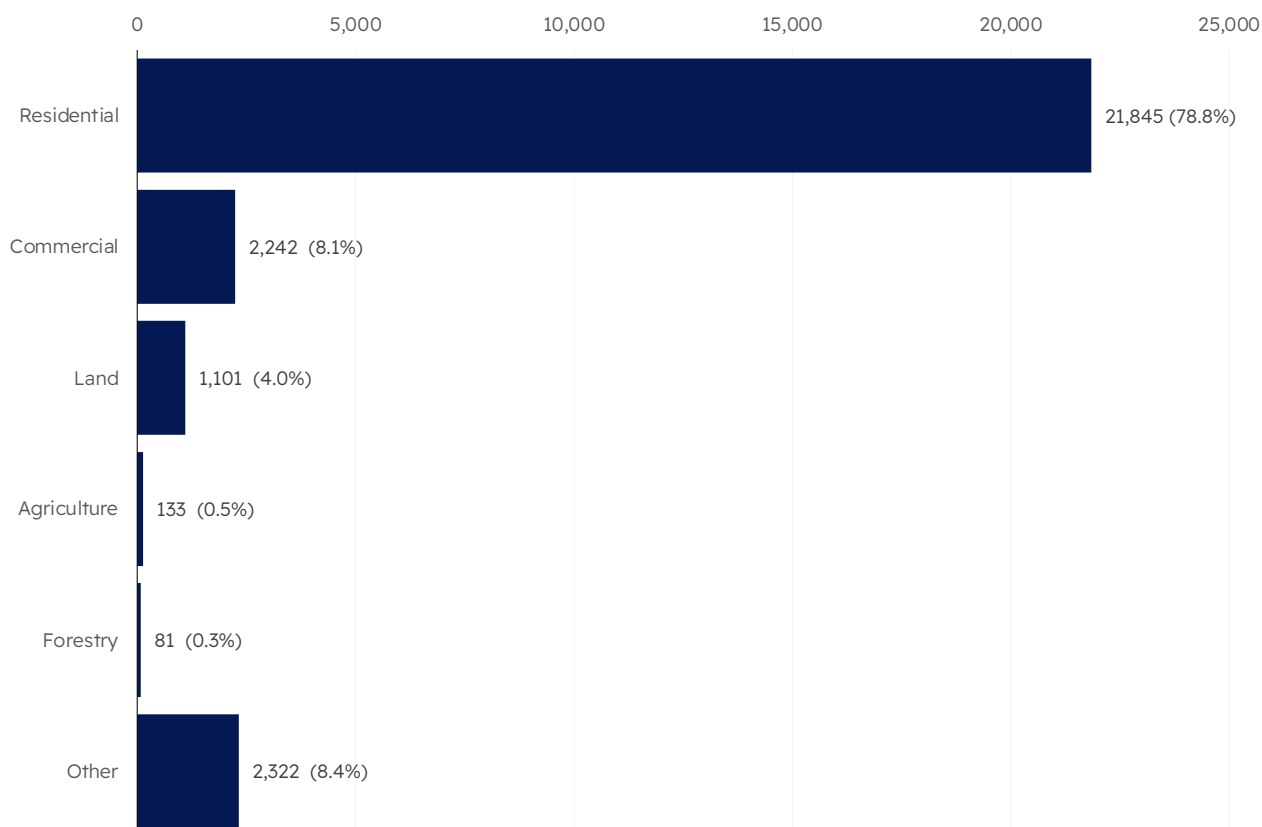
Rank	Postcode sector	Post Town	Local Authority	Number Of Titles
1	EH3 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	426
2	KY16 9	St Andrews	Fife	263
3	EH3 6	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	251
4	EH9 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	233
5	EH7 5	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	224
6	EH10 4	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	194
7	EH8 9	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	188
8	EH7 4	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	184
9	EH4 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	175
10	EH11 1	Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh	173

4.4 Titles outwith UK by land use classification

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

Figure 8 shows the split of the 27,724 outwith UK titles by land use classification.

Figure 8: Number of titles with owner address outwith the UK by land use classification as at 31 December 2023 (online table 7)



This information is available in online table 7 for each local authority in Scotland.

4.5 Titles outwith UK by urban rural classification⁶

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

Of the 27,724 titles with an owner address outwith UK:

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

For context:

- In terms of land area, urban areas account for 2.3% of Scotland and rural areas account for 97.7%⁷.
- In terms of population, urban areas account for 83% and rural areas account for 17%⁸.
- The urban rural split for all residential sales in Scotland in 2022-23 was 81% urban and 19% rural⁹.

This information is available in online table 8 for each local authority in Scotland.

⁶ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020](#)

⁷ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020 land area tables](#)

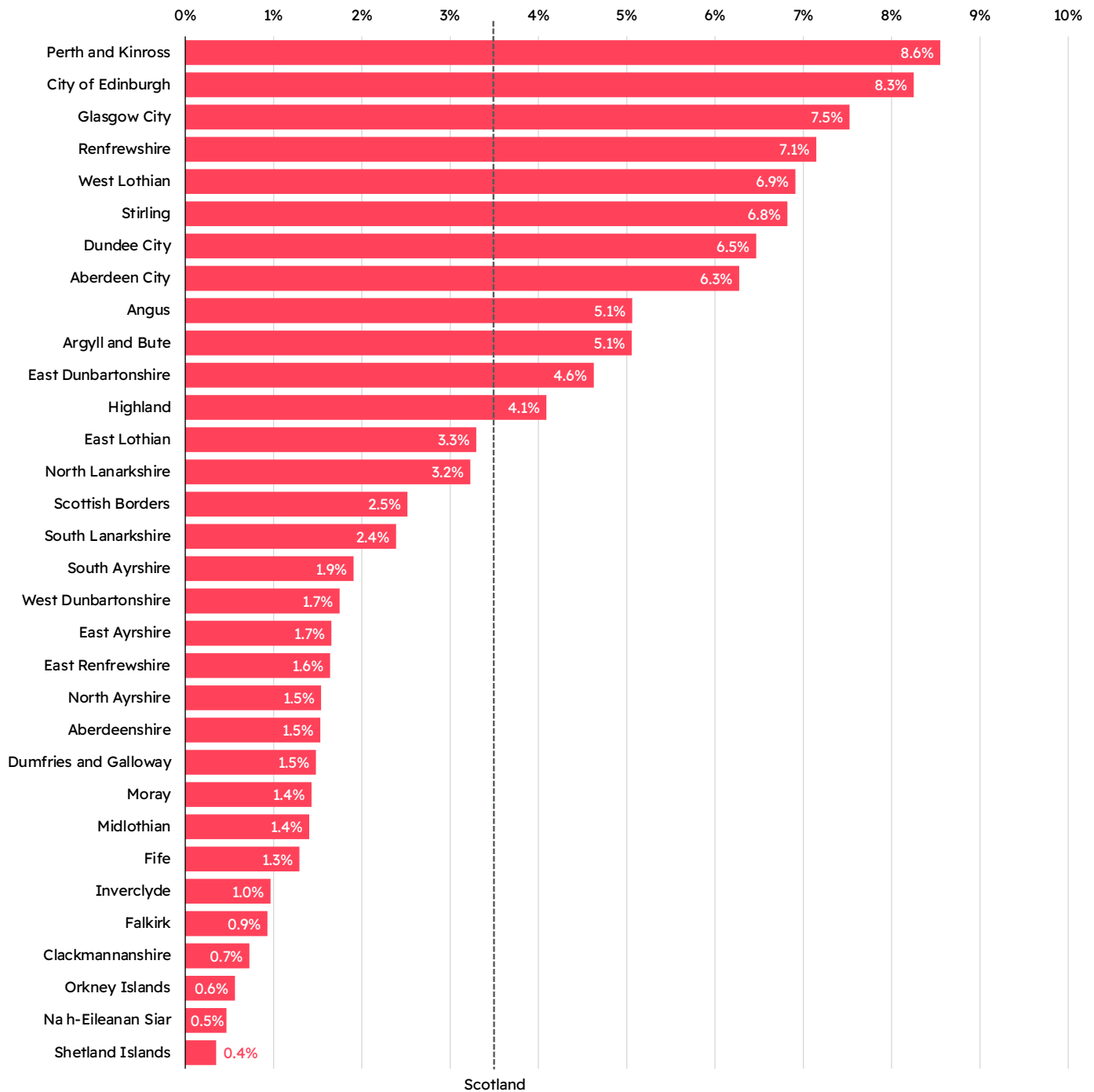
⁸ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020 population table](#)

⁹ See our [Calendar Year Statistics 2024 to 2023](#) for further information

4.6 Titles outwith UK by land area

Overall, outwith UK titles¹⁰ represented 3.5% of Scotland's land area.

Figure 9: Percentage of local authority land area in Scotland represented by owner with address outwith UK as at 31 December 2023 (online table 9)



¹⁰ There were 27,724 outwith UK titles, of which 3 were excluded from this analysis because they could not be mapped.

5. UK owner address outwith Scotland

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.

This section of the release will focus on the 98,341 titles with an owner address in:

- England
- Wales
- Northern Ireland

5.1 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by type of owner

Of the 98,341 titles with an owner address outwith Scotland:

- the majority (66.8% or 65,702 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- limited companies accounted for 28.5% (28,007 titles)
- 4.7% (4,632 titles) were categorised as other, which relates to non-commercial bodies, trusts or a mix of ownership types

This information is available in online table 10.

In the following sections, 98,227¹¹ titles out of 98,341 were included in this analysis.

¹¹ Since 31 December 2023, 114 titles have been amalgamated or closed and so it was not possible to include them in the location analysis.

5.2 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by Local Authority

Figure 10 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. Around one fifth (21%) were in the City of Edinburgh or Glasgow city.

Figure 10: Number of titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland by local authority as at 31 December 2023 (online table 11)

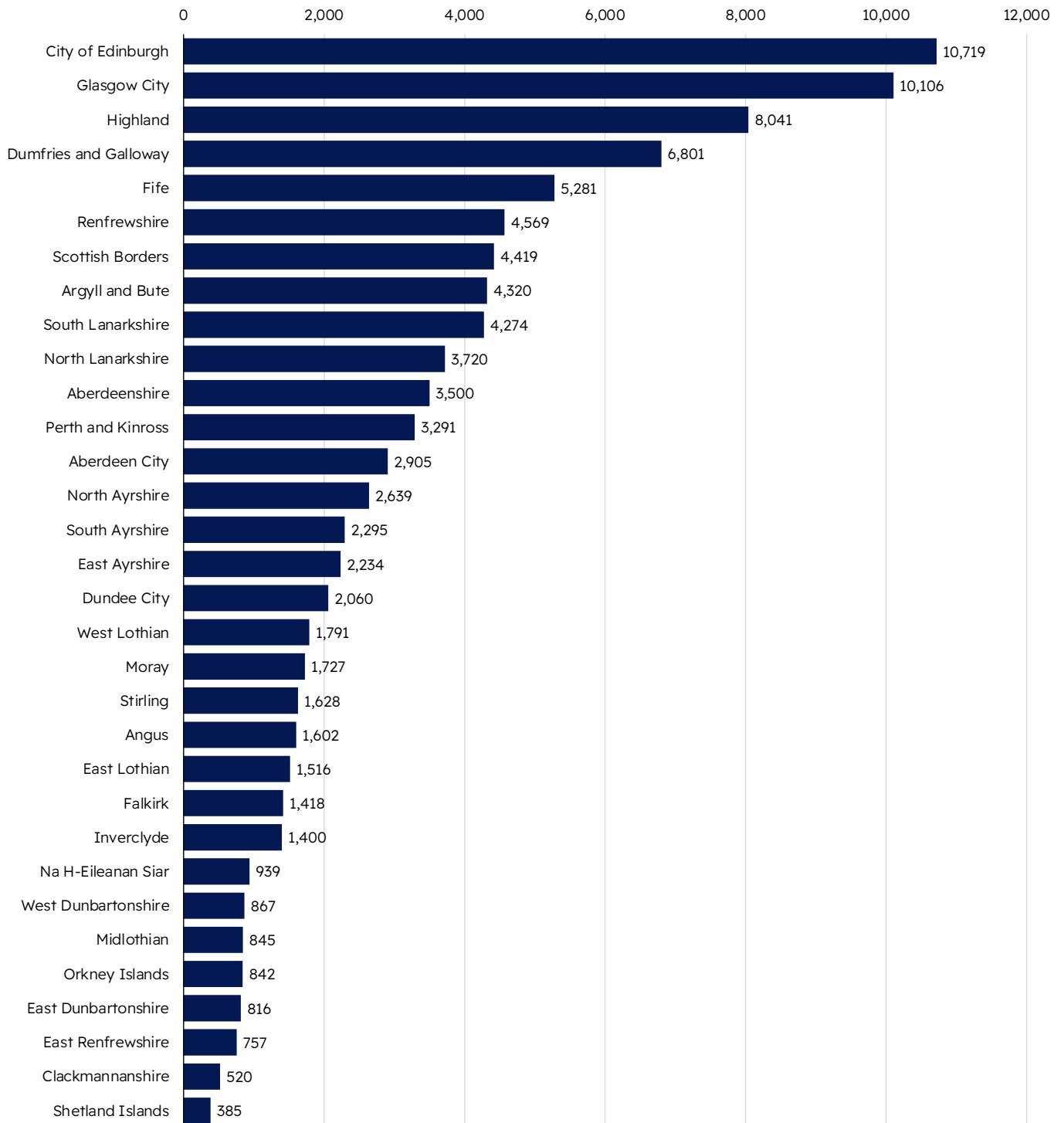
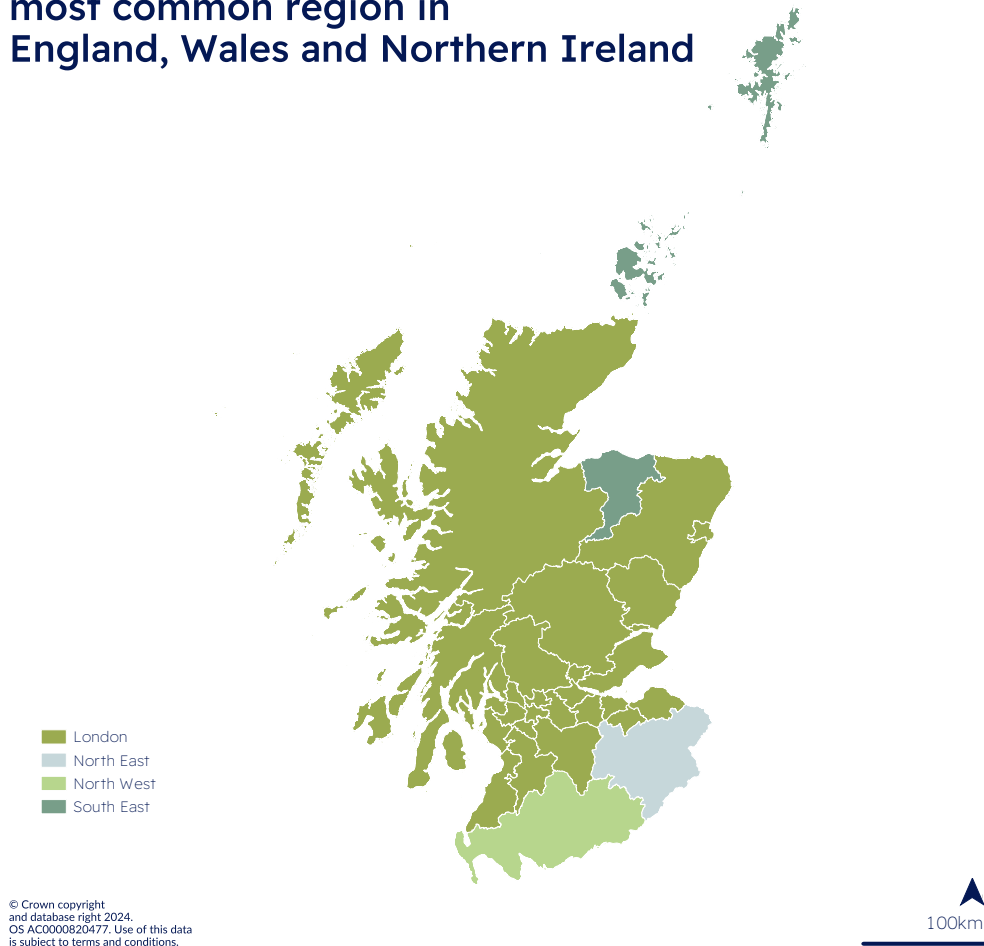


Figure 11 shows that London was the dominant region in 27 out of 32 Scottish local authorities in relation to the source location of the UK addresses outwith Scotland. However, in the local authorities which border onto England, the corresponding bordered region of England was most dominant.

Figure 11: Scottish local authorities by most common region in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

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 12 shows the number of Scottish titles with a UK owner address outwith Scotland by the region of England, Wales and Northern Ireland in which the owner address is located.

For the whole of Scotland:

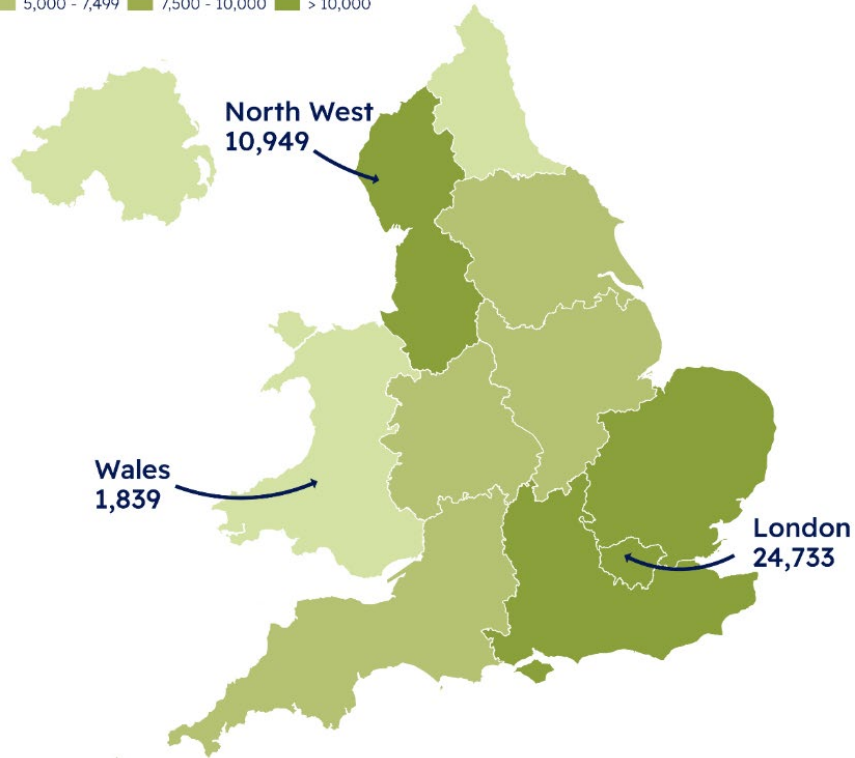
- 25% (24,733 titles) of UK owner addresses outwith Scotland were in the London region and 16% (15,377 titles) were in the South East region.

Figure 12: Most common regions with UK owner address outwith Scotland as at 31 December 2023 (online table 12)¹²

Most common regions with UK owner address outwith Scotland



Legend: < 5,000 (lightest green), 5,000 - 7,499 (light green), 7,500 - 10,000 (medium green), > 10,000 (darkest green)



© Crown copyright and database right 2024. OS AC0000820477. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions.



5.4 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by urban rural classifications¹³

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:

- 66% were in urban areas of Scotland
- 34% were in rural areas of Scotland

For context:

- In terms of land area, urban areas account for 2.3% of Scotland and rural areas account for 97.7%¹⁴
- In terms of population, urban areas account for 83% and rural areas account for 17%¹⁵
- The urban rural split for all property sales in Scotland in 2022-23 as 81% urban and 19% rural¹⁶

This information is available in online table 13 for each local authority in Scotland.

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

¹³ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020](#)

¹⁴ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020 land area tables](#)

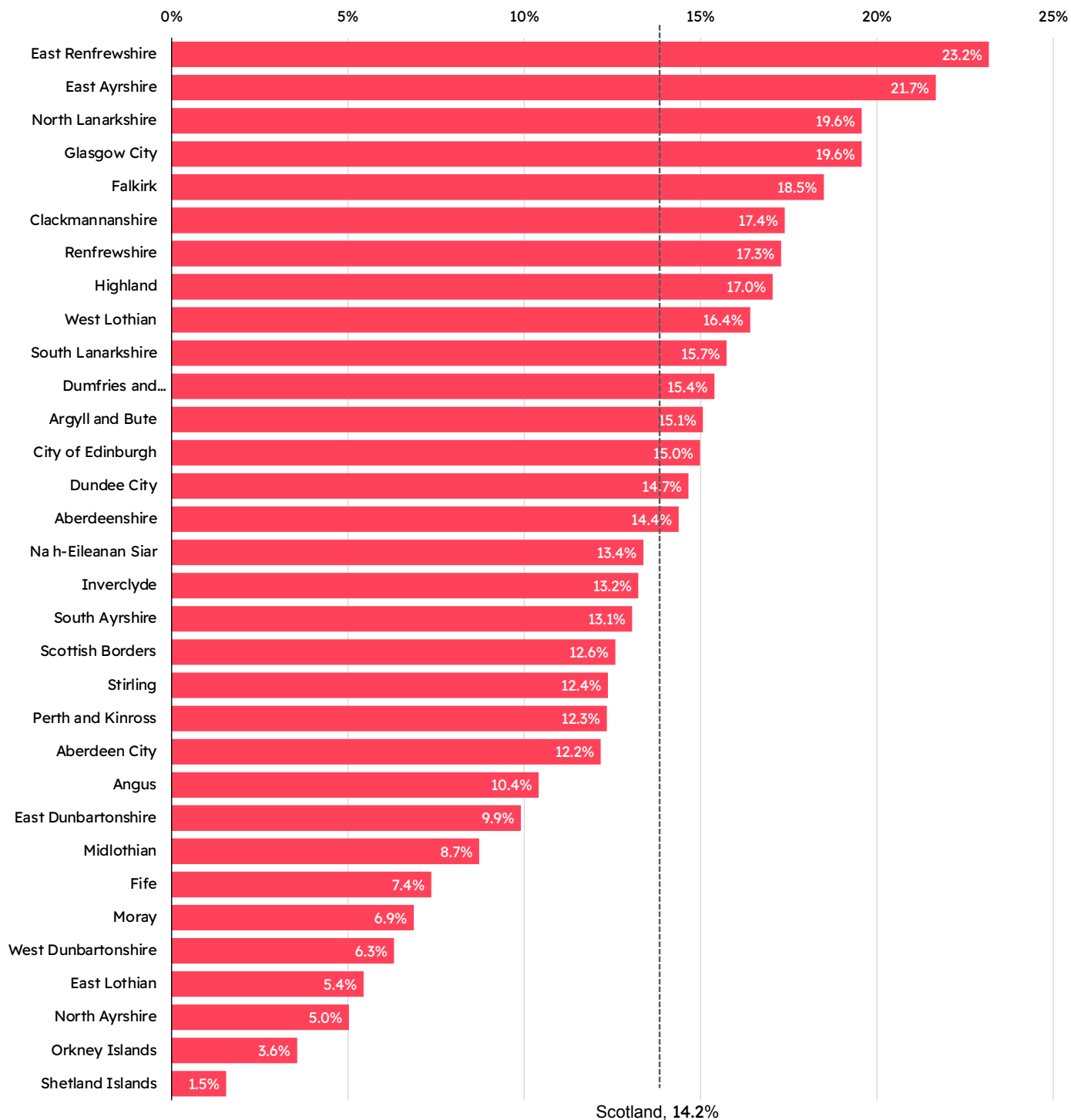
¹⁵ [Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020 population table](#)

¹⁶ See our [Calendar Year Statistics 2024 to 2023](#) for further information

5.5 UK owner addresses outwith Scotland by land area

Overall, UK owner address outwith Scotland titles represented 14.2% of Scotland's land area¹⁷.

Figure 13: Percentage of local authority land area in Scotland represented by owner with UK address outwith Scotland as at 31 December 2023 (online table 14)



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

6. 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.

This section of the release will focus on the 1,806,127 titles with an owner address in Scotland.

6.1 Titles by type of owner

Out of the 1,806,127 titles with an owner address in Scotland:

- the majority (90% or 1,626,827 titles) were individuals (i.e. one or more natural persons)
- limited companies accounted for 5.6% (100,717 titles)
- 4.4% (78,583 titles) were categorised as other, which relates to non-commercial bodies, trusts or a mix of ownership types

This information is available in online table 15.

7. Background, quality and methodology

7.1 Background

Registers of Scotland (RoS) is the non-ministerial office responsible for maintaining 21 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 2023) accounts for 1.9 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 of registered titles in the Land Register as at 31 December 2023 (1,935,852 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 2023 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 the 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 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
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

Methodology Term	Definition
Polygon	A closed geometric shape with at least three sides, which represent the mapped extent (shape) and location of a title, or part of a title, in the digital Land Register. 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.
Dissolved LR polygons	New polygons that are created by aggregating/merging the title polygons in the Land Register into a single area according to a common attribute, e.g., the title number of local authority.
Land Mass Coverage	The land mass area of Scotland covered when all title polygons in the Land Register are aggregated/dissolved.
Title seed point	The geographic point or location against which title information about a title is associated.

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 2023, 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 title seed point for the associated title is then spatially intersected with other spatial datasets to obtain further attributes, e.g. local authority, urban rural classification and area. The outwith UK titles are then further classified by type of proprietor, interest and land classification. Further information on the additional classifications is provided below.

The maps shown in figure 4 were made with [Natural Earth](#) (free vector and raster map data).

UK Titles outwith Scotland

Titles with an English, Welsh or Northern Irish owner address are identified from textual Land Register information. 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 98,341 titles, 98,227 titles were included in this analysis.

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 region is also assigned by spatially intersecting the title seed point for the associated title with other spatial datasets, however this was only possible for those which were registered to England or Wales.

The Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) assigned to each of the addresses were grouped by England and Wales 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.

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.

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 classification¹⁸

The Scottish Government urban rural classification 2020 was attached to all titles with an owner address outwith the UK and each title with a UK owner address outwith Scotland using the 2-fold classification. 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 authority¹⁹.

Titles by area

The area of each outwith UK title and each title with a UK owner address outwith Scotland is calculated using Land Register polygon data instead of the textual area information submitted during the registration process. The title polygons are retrieved by title number.

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 subject's description in the title sheet.

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 proprietors with an address outwith the UK.

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.

Title polygons are retrieved for each title and the area extent dissolved/aggregated by local authority to calculate area totals for each local authority as at 31 December of each year. The polygons are also dissolved/aggregated by urban rural classification to calculate the area totals for each classification and dissolved/aggregated by country to calculate the area totals for each country of origin.

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.

Similarly, some title polygons extend beyond the boundaries of the Scottish Government's Urban Rural 2020 dataset and these areas were not assigned an urban/rural classification. The total land mass covered by outwith UK titles (and covered by each title with a UK owner address outwith Scotland) is therefore more than the sum of the title 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 interest (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.

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 of origin.

¹⁸ [Scottish Government 2020 urban rural classification](#)

¹⁹ [Scottish Government 2020 urban rural classification land area tables](#)

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

The Land Registration etc. (Scotland) Act 2012²⁰ – which superseded the Land Registration Act (Scotland) 1979²¹ on 8 December 2014 – along with other legislation as defined in the RoS [Framework Document](#) 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. In previous years, 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 added 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.

²⁰ [Land Registration etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2012](#)

²¹ [Land Registration \(Scotland\) Act 1979](#)

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 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 2023) 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 18).

Further information on the general quality assurance processes in place for RoS data is available in the [Quality Assurance of Administrative Data document](#).

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.

7.6 Contact Us

The next edition of this statistical report is planned for March 2025, based on the data as at 31 December 2024.

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.