

User feedback survey for statistics and data published by Land and Property Data Team at Registers of Scotland

Findings, conclusions and next steps



Registers of Scotland
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Executive summary

1. The Land and Property Data Team (LPD) at Registers of Scotland (RoS) ran a user feedback survey between June and July 2019. The survey was run to make sure the statistics and data we publish continue to meet user needs and our aim of being the best source of land and property data and statistics in Scotland. The survey also asked specific questions on the continuation of the Calendar Year Residential Market Review.
2. A total of 13 responses were received and showed that overall the majority of users are very or fairly satisfied with the data and statistics we publish.
3. The responses highlighted barriers to making further use of the statistics and data published by LPD. Responses were also received on how outputs could be further improved.
4. Responses showed the user need for the most up-to-date data with outputs published on a frequent basis (at least every month) proving the most popular.
5. After analysing the responses, the Calendar Year Residential Market Review will no longer be published. However, calendar year spreadsheet tables will be included in our quarterly statistics as respondents noted the usefulness of the information. The first set of calendar year tables will appear in the quarterly statistics published on 3 February 2020 for October to December 2019 (2019-20, quarter 3).

Introduction

6. The Land and Property Data Team (LPD) at Registers of Scotland (RoS) aim to be the best source of land and property data and statistics in Scotland. LPD publish a range of official statistics on the Scottish property market, bulk-data extracts from Land Registration data held by RoS and data services including data matching and analytical reports.
7. As part of meeting this aim and the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#) framework, we conducted a user feedback survey between June and July 2019 to make sure:
 - we continue to listen and understand user needs and views
 - that the outputs we produce remain useful and relevant based on sound methods and assured quality
 - that users' use of statistics and data is supported
8. In the feedback survey, we also sought views on the continuation of one of our statistical outputs, the [Calendar Year Residential Market Review](#).
9. The online user feedback survey was launched with the publication of the [Property Market Report 2018-19](#). The LPD team emailed the survey to their user list and also publicised on the RoS Twitter page to increase awareness.
10. This document summarises the responses received, initial conclusions and sets out next steps for the statistics and data published by LPD.

Findings and conclusions

11. A total of 13 responses were received. Registers of Scotland is very grateful to those that responded to the user feedback survey.
12. The summary of responses is structured according to the questions asked in the user feedback survey with initial conclusions.

Question 1: What sector do you work in?

13. Table 1 shows that overall responses were roughly split between private and public sectors. Commercial or private sector was the most popular category (five responses) followed by central/devolved government (three responses) and local authorities (two responses).

Table 1: Responses to question 1

Question 1: What sector do you work in?	Responses
Commercial or private sector	5
Central government department/Devolved administration	3
Local authority	2
International organisation	1
Other public sector	1
Other	1
Academic or researcher	0
Charity and voluntary (third sector)	0
Media	0

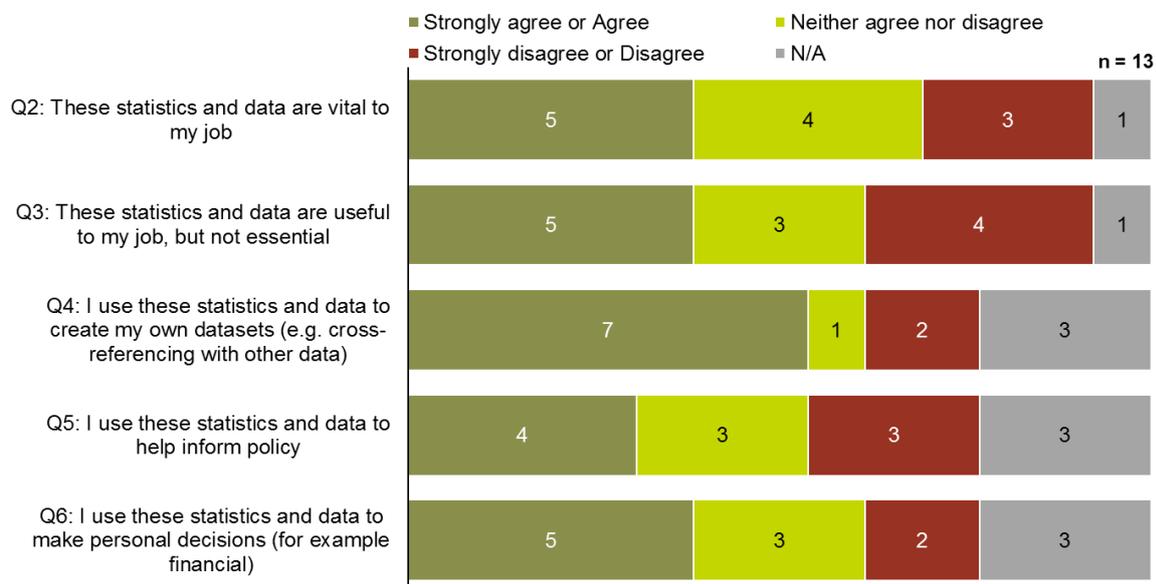
Total responses

13

Questions 2 – 6: How do you use RoS statistics and data

14. There were 13 responses to the questions on how users use the statistics and data we publish. The responses highlight the range of uses from making personal decisions to informing policy (see chart 1).
15. Two possible areas for future investigation could be where the data and statistics we publish sit between “useful” and “essential” and how users are using LPD statistics and data in conjunction with other datasets.

Chart 1: Responses to questions 2 – 6



Question 7: Outside of the data and statistics published by RoS, where do you go to get land and property data for Scotland?

16. A number of sources were listed including: Acadata, CityLets, consultants, ESPC, estate agents, Hometrack, Office for National Statistics, myhouseprice.com, Rightmove, Scottish Government, Scottish Property Federation, surveyors and Zoopla. The majority of these use data and statistics from LPD.

Question 8: What use do you make of the Calendar Year Residential Market Review?

17. The user feedback survey included three questions on the continuation of the Calendar Year Residential Market Review.

18. We currently produce two publications based on financial and calendar years. The Property Market Report provides a long-term overview of residential and non-residential property statistics for Scotland by financial year. The Calendar Year Residential Market Review provides an overview of the residential property market for Scotland for the calendar year.
19. Both reports share a lot of similarities and to continue to meet user needs we used the user feedback survey to seek views on the continuation of the calendar year review.
20. We received comments from seven respondents for question 8, which were generally split between those that make use of the report and those that don't. One respondent said they made use of the report for "*information, policy development and analysis*". Another respondent commented that "*the property market report should meet our needs*". Two respondents commented that they do not make use of the report.

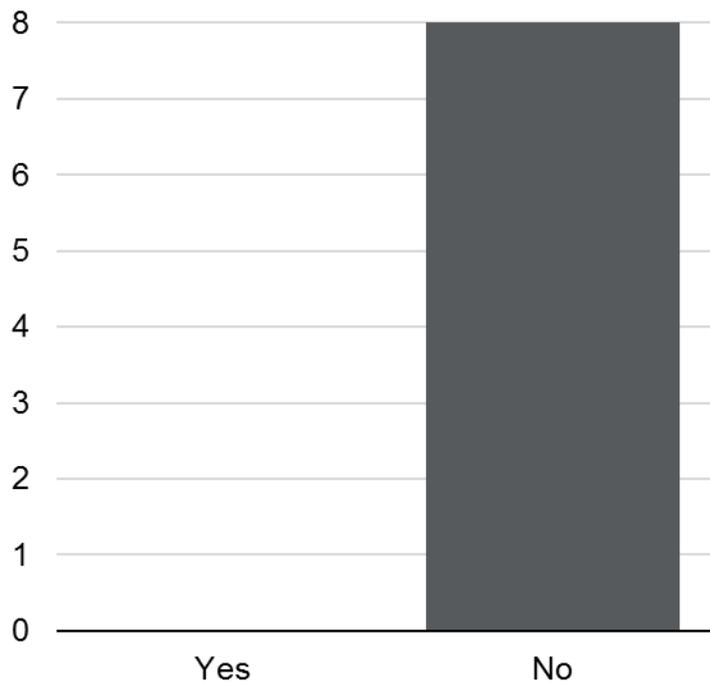
Question 9: Would the withdrawal of the Calendar Year Residential Market Review publication cause difficulties or problems for you or your organisation?

Question 10: If "yes", please tell us why this would cause difficulties or problems for you or your organisation.

21. There were eight respondents that answered question 9 and all eight responded "no" as to whether withdrawing the calendar year report would cause difficulties or problems to them or their organisation (see chart 2).
22. Although all respondents responded "no" to question 9 with question 10 a follow up for those that responded "yes", there was one additional comment saying that "*[the report] would be a loss as good information source*".
23. Overall user feedback suggests that withdrawing the calendar year report would not cause difficulties for users. **Therefore, LPD will not publish the Calendar Year Residential Market Review 2019 in 2020 and will discontinue future reports.** Respondents noted that the report was a useful information source and so we will expand the quarterly statistics spreadsheet tables to provide calendar year tables broadly equivalent to those previously supplied with the report. Further details are provided in the next steps section below.

Chart 2: Responses to question 9

Number of responses



Question 11: Is there a statistic or data output from the Land and Property Data team that you are particularly interested in? (Tick all that apply)

24. There were seven respondents to this question with the option to give multiple responses.
25. The most popular output was the sales data reports (property transactions level), which are available to users for a fee (see table 2). The next most popular outputs with four responses were RoS monthly and quarterly statistics and the monthly UK House Price Index.
26. The three most popular outputs are all published on a frequent bases, at least every month, which suggest that users favour outputs that are most timely with a minimal gap between publication and the reference period of the output.
27. Our annual statistical reports each received one response, which could suggest we need to better promote these outputs to users.

Table 2: Responses to question 11

Question 11: Is there a statistic or data output from the Land and Property Data team that you are particularly interested in? (multiple response / n = 7)	Responses
Sales data reports (property transactions level)	5
RoS monthly and quarterly statistics	4
UK House Price Index	4
Bespoke reports (for example creditor/FAS number reports)	2
Calendar year residential market review	1
Land and property titles by country of origin	1
Property market report	1
Other: Annual historical data for Scotland and Scottish cities	1

Question 12: Statistics and data related to which geographical level are you most interested in? (Tick all that apply)

28. There were seven respondents to this question with the option to give multiple responses.
29. The most popular geographical levels were city or town and Scotland each with six responses. The next most popular areas were small area (post code sector/data zone) and local authority receiving five and four responses respectively.
30. Our statistics and data outputs are available in some form at the geographical levels listed in table 3 below. It is worth highlighting that small area (data zone) outputs are available at statistics.gov.scot for [house prices](#) and [house transactions](#). This information has been published by Scottish Government based on data supplied by RoS but future updates will be made by LPD.

31. Our Property Market Report includes a chapter on the city residential market but there is possibly a gap in our outputs on towns. This could be addressed in the future with a specific topic report on towns in Scotland. We would also welcome user views on future areas of analysis (contact details at the end of this report).

Table 3: Responses to question 12

Question 12: Statistics and data related to which geographical level are you most interested in? (multiple response / n = 7)	Responses
City or town	6
National (Scotland)	6
Small area (post code sector / data zone)	5
Local authority	4
Property transaction level	3
Registration county	2
Other: Intermediate data zone	1

Question 13: Are there any barriers to you making further use of the statistics and data published by the Land and Property Data team at RoS? (Tick all that apply)

Question 14: Please use the space below to expand on your answer to question 13, please provide as much detail as you can.

32. There were seven respondents to question 13 with the option to give multiple responses.
33. Commercial cost (to purchase sales data reports/bespoke data), data accessibility and data timeliness each received three responses. Data accuracy and reliability and absence of historical data prior to 2000s each received one response (see table 4).

34. One respondent noted in the follow up question 14 that “*as a professional analyst who works with clients across UK it is frustrating not being able to access price paid data openly as is car (sic) in England*”. Another respondent asked why data could not be updated daily. A different respondent commented that the current data is very valuable for policy development.
35. In LPD we are always looking for ways to remove barriers to users making further use of the statistics and data we publish. The prices we charge for our commercial products are kept under review and developments have also been made to [ScotLIS](#). An [interactive ‘search by map’ feature](#) has been introduced to ScotLIS to help locate and information on land or property without the need for a postcode or title number
36. On data timeliness there is a balance between how timely the data is and, for example, the completeness of the dataset. This can be shown by reference to the UK House Price Index, which may not be as timely as other house price measures, but is ultimately more complete. Similarly for the RoS monthly house price statistics we publish on the first working day of the second month after data reference month, which we view as a suitable gap for the most complete data with added value through quality assured data.
37. Historical data for Scotland prior to 2000s is available but we accept it is not as complete as for current years.
38. Our usual starting point for property statistics in Scotland is April 2003, following the transfer of all Scottish registration counties to the Land Register of Scotland.
39. Data for before April 2003 is available from [statistics.gov.scot](#) back to 1993. A longer back series is available back to 1968 through the [UK HPI](#). Users should note that historic data from both sources is likely to differ in quality and methodology from the statistics and data we currently publish.

Table 4: Responses to question 13

Question 13: Are there any barriers to you making further use of the statistics and data published by the Land and Property Data team at RoS? (multiple response / n = 7)	Responses
Commercial cost (to purchase sales data reports/bespoke data)	3
Data accessibility	3

Data timeliness (time gap between publication and reference period)	3
Data accuracy and reliability	1
Other: Absence of historical data prior to 2000s	1

Question 15: Do you think there are any aspects of the statistics and data from the Land and Property Data team that could be improved? Please provide as much detail as you can.

- 40. There were seven respondents to this open ended question. Three respondents replied “no” or were not in a position to comment.
- 41. One respondent commented that “*free availability of data would enhance innovative analysis*” and suggested that property type data at smaller geographies would be useful.
- 42. Another respondent requested data for years prior to the start of the current data. A respondent also requested “*easier access and more up to date information*”.

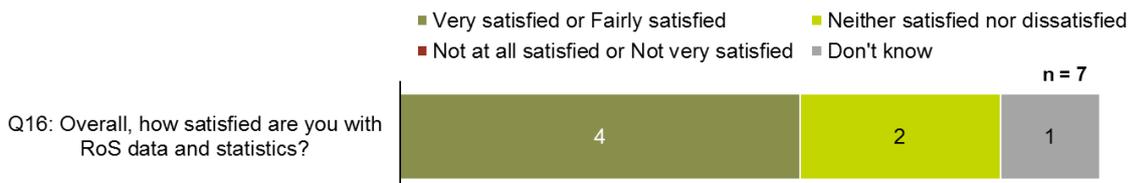
Question 16: Overall, how satisfied are you with RoS data and statistics?

Question 17: Please use the space below to expand on your answer to question 16, please provide as much detail as you can

Question 19: Do you have any comments or feedback about RoS data and statistics that has not been covered by the above questions?

- 43. There were seven respondents to question 16 on overall satisfaction with the data and statistics. The majority (four responses) responded with ‘very satisfied or fairly satisfied’ (see chart 3). No responses were received for ‘not at all satisfied or not very satisfied’.

Chart 3: Response to question 16



- 44. In the follow up question, respondents were asked to expand in an open-ended response. One respondent commented that they “*they would be delighted with service if more granular property level bulk data was published freely*”. Another

responded that it has been difficult in the past to find the data they have been after. Three respondents noted that the statistics and data were “*very helpful*”, “*very useful resource*” and “*a major input to decisions for property acquisitions*”.

45. There were no responses to question 19.

Next steps

46. Following the user feedback summarised above, the Calendar Year Residential Market Review will not be published in the future. This proposal was also outlined at a LPD statistics and user day on 26 November 2019 where no objections were raised.
47. As users have indicated that the information provided through the calendar year report is useful we will publish calendar year tables in our quarterly spreadsheet tables. The first set of calendar year tables will appear in the quarterly statistics published on 3 February 2020 for October to December 2019 (2019-20, quarter 3).
48. The majority of spreadsheet tables currently published in the calendar year report will be available in the quarterly statistics spreadsheet. Table 5 summarises this information and we will continue to review the availability of calendar year information to make sure user needs are met.

Table 5: Future availability of calendar year statistics

Calendar Year Residential Market Review Table	Future availability of calendar year statistics
Table 1: Average price, volume of sales and market value of residential property, Scotland, 2017 and 2018	Information in this summary table will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 2: Residential sales volume by price band and funding status, Scotland, 2018	Information included in this summary table available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 3: Volume of residential property sales by house type (RoS house type methodology applied), Scotland, 2017 and 2018	Information included in this summary table available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 4: Average purchase price of residential property by house type (unadjusted), Scotland, 2017 and 2018	Information included in this summary table available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 5: Average (mean) purchase price of residential property by local authority, Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 6: Volume of residential property sales by local authority, Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet

Table 7: Value of the residential property market by local authority, Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 8: Average (mean) purchase price of residential property by house type (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 9: Volume of residential property sales by house type (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 10: Value of the residential property market by local authority (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 11: Average (mean) purchase price of new build residential property by house type (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 12: Volume of new build residential property sales by house type (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 13: Value of the new build residential property market by local authority (unadjusted), Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet
Table 14: Residential sales volume by price band and funding status, Scotland, 2004-2018	Will be available in quarterly statistics spreadsheet

Contact

49. Please contact us using the details below with feedback on the data and statistics we publish.

50. Responsible statistician: Samuel Dickinson
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Land and Property Data Team
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Contact number: 0131 528 3836