

**Scotland's Census 2021
Tenure and Landlord Topic Report**

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1. Main Points

- A question on tenure has been included in Scotland's Census since 1961. An additional question on landlord type was added in 2001.
- Strong user need was identified for information on tenure and landlord, particularly to support Housing Needs and Demands Assessments and Local Housing Strategies.
- In the [Topic Consultation Report](#) (PDF) NRS proposed to continue to collect information on tenure and landlord type (if renting) in 2021.
- The existing questions have been updated for 2021, reflecting changes in housing policy since 2011.
- Testing has demonstrated these changes gather good quality data which meets user needs.
- Research and analysis support taking a set of questions on tenure and landlord further at this stage.
- The digital first approach for 2021 requires further development and user testing to fully understand the best way to present the questions online to maximise response, minimise respondent burden and ensure good quality data which meets user needs. An on-going programme of question development, focusing on sensitive or complex questions will further inform the specific question wording.

2. Introduction

This topic review sets out the evidence gathered in developing a tenure and landlord question set for Scotland's Census 2021.

Question development for the 2021 Census began in 2015. An iterative and comprehensive process of user consultation, evaluation and prioritisation of user requirements, and qualitative and quantitative question testing has been carried out to inform decisions on the questions to be recommended for inclusion in the 2021 Census. More information about [research and preparation](#) and [question development](#) for Scotland's Census 2021 can be found online.

The 2021 Census will be digital first. The Census 2021 questionnaire must gather high quality data that meets user needs. More information about [key elements of the design](#) for 2021 can be found online.

Two frameworks have been published by National Records of Scotland (NRS) to evaluate the effectiveness of [question design for existing, alternative and new questions](#) (PDF) and to evaluate the effectiveness of [question design of tick box response options](#) (PDF).

Questions and their response options are evaluated against five main themes:

Strength of user need

- ✓ Data collected by the census must meet a user need for equality monitoring, policy development, resource allocation and/or service planning and delivery.

Suitability of alternative sources

- ✓ Data collected by the census must meet a user need that cannot be met elsewhere.

Acceptability, clarity and data quality

- ✓ Questions asked in the census must be acceptable to the majority of the public, clear and be designed with minimal respondent burden in order to obtain good data quality that meets user needs.

Comparability

- ✓ Data collected by the census should be comparable over time where possible, and harmonised across the UK where reasonable.

Operational considerations

- ✓ Census questions must be considered as part of the census as a whole, where effective digital and paper design, space and financial constraints must be considered. Additionally, some questions may be required for operational purposes in the process of conducting the census.

The final decision on the content of Scotland's Census 2021 questionnaire will ultimately be made by the Scottish Parliament.

As in previous years, there will be separate censuses conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in England and Wales, and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) in Northern Ireland. The three census offices work together to develop a set of questions that, wherever possible and necessary, will deliver harmonised outputs across the UK.

3. Background

Information about tenure and landlord (if renting) is extensively used by local authorities as input to local area profiles along with information on accommodation type and self-contained accommodation.

The data are also used in the preparation of Housing Needs and Demand Assessments and Local Housing Strategies, which are used by central government to inform resource allocation and are widely used in other sectors for equalities monitoring, targeting investment, and service planning and delivery.

3.1 Previous Scotland's Census Tenure and Landlord Questions

Figure 1: Scotland's Census 2001
Tenure and Landlord Question Set

H8 Does your household own or rent the accommodation?

✔ *one box only.*

Owns outright
▶ Go to **H11**

Owns with a mortgage or loan
▶ Go to **H11**

Pays part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)
▶ Go to **H11**

Rents
▶ Go to **H9**

Lives here rent free
▶ Go to **H9**

H9 Who is your landlord?

Council (Local Authority)
Scottish Homes

Housing Association
Housing Co-operative
Charitable Trust
Non-profit housing company

Private landlord or letting agency

Employer of a household member

Relative or friend of a household member

Other

Figure 2: Scotland's Census 2011
Tenure and Landlord Question Set

H10 Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

◆ Tick one box only.

Owns outright → Go to **H12**

Owns with a mortgage or loan → Go to **H12**

Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)

Rents (with or without housing benefit)

Lives here rent free

H11 Who is your landlord?

Council (Local Authority)

Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord

Private landlord or letting agency

Employer of a household member

Relative or friend of a household member

Other

Updates to the tenure and landlord question set between 2001 and 2011 included the following changes:

1. The 'Pays part rent and part mortgage (shared ownership)' was replaced with 'Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)'.
2. 'Rents' was replaced with 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)'. This was because in 2001 it is believed that the 'Lives here rent free' response options caused confusion for those whose rent was paid by housing benefit; resulting in incorrect household classification.
3. Minor wording changes were also made to the first two response options in the Landlord question. These changes were made based on changes to the rented accommodation sector in Scotland between 2001 and 2011.

The 2011 Census question gathered good quality data. The Census Quality Survey (CQS)¹ agreement rates can be found in Chapter 9 of the [2011 General Report](#). The rate for tenure was 97.0% and for landlord was 95.1%.

3.2 Tenure and Landlord Questions in Other UK 2011 Censuses

The Tenure and Landlord question sets asked by ONS and NISRA are shown below in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: ONS Tenure and Landlord Question Set 2011

H12 Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

↻ Tick one box only

Owns outright → Go to **H14**

Owns with a mortgage or loan → Go to **H14**

Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)

Rents (with or without housing benefit)

Lives here rent free

H13 Who is your landlord?

↻ Tick one box only

Housing association, housing co-operative, charitable trust, registered social landlord

Council (local authority)

Private landlord or letting agency

Employer of a household member

Relative or friend of a household member

Other

Figure 4: NISRA Tenure and Landlord Question Set 2011

H12 Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

↻ Tick one box only.

Owns outright → Go to **H14**

Owns with a mortgage or loan → Go to **H14**

Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)

Rents (with or without housing benefit)

Lives here rent-free

H13 Who is your landlord?

↻ Tick one box only.

Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Housing association or charitable trust

Private landlord or letting agency

Employer of a household member

Relative or friend of a household member

Other

¹ The Census Quality Survey (CQS) was a voluntary survey carried out after the census to measure the accuracy of responses in the census. The survey asked a sample of the population the same questions as were asked in the census. Answers between the census and the CQS were compared and where responses differed, follow-up questions were asked of the respondents to determine why this was. Agreement rates were calculated for each question: the percentage of CQS respondents that gave the same response to the census and the CQS question. The CQS agreement rates are an indicator of quality for the Scotland's Census 2011 questions.

Differences between the above questions and the NRS question are based on country specific needs for the landlord question. The outputs from these questions are comparable across the UK.

3.3 Alternative Sources

Since 2012, a set of core questions has been used to provide information on the composition, characteristics and attitudes of Scottish households and adults across a number of topic areas through the three largest surveys in Scotland:

- the [Scottish Household Survey](#) (SHS)
- the [Scottish Health Survey](#) (SHeS)
- the [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#) (SCJS)

A set of core and harmonised questions is recommended in order to provide comparable estimates across Scotland. More information can be found on the Scottish Government website ([Core Survey Questions](#)).

Tenure and Landlord questions are included in the core questions and are therefore in the SHS, SHeS and SCJS. The Labour Force Survey ([LFS](#)) also collects information on tenure and landlords.

4. Understanding user need

4.1 Topic Consultation

NRS invited views on [Scotland's Census 2021 – Topic Consultation](#) (PDF) between 8 October 2015 and 15 January 2016. The consultation was a key step towards understanding what information users will need from the census in 2021, and helped to build strong cases to justify the inclusion of topics. The focus of the consultation was on information required at topic-level, not the detail of the questions that should be asked on the questionnaire.

Following the consultation, NRS worked closely with stakeholders through follow-up events, meetings, focus groups and online surveys to gather more detailed information about data requirements to ensure user needs were understood. Information about these events can be found on our [Get Involved pages](#) online.

There were 46 responses received through the topic consultation on Housing and Accommodation, 28 of which commented on tenure and landlord data. A summary of these responses can be found in the [Topic Consultation Report](#) (PDF).

Through the consultation, stakeholders noted that data on tenure and landlord are used in the preparation of Housing Needs and Demand Assessments and Local Housing Strategies. These are used by central government to inform resource allocation and are widely used in other sectors for equalities monitoring, targeting investment, and service planning and delivery. Local authorities also make use of the data to input into local area profiles.

Following the Topic Consultation, NRS proposed to continue to collect information on tenure and landlord in Scotland's Census 2021.

Due to the increase in prevalence of shared equity schemes such as The Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT) and Help-to-Buy schemes, NRS tested a tenure question with an additional response option: 'Owns with shared equity e.g. LIFT, Help-to-Buy'. The aim of adding this response option was to provide local government with the necessary data to monitor such schemes and to help respondents answer the question more easily.

Between 2003 and 2007, six local authority areas transferred dwellings from local authority control to housing associations. As mentioned in the [Scottish Government's 2011 Census Housing Tenure Data: Quality Assurance paper](#), quality assurance of the 2011 Census results by NRS revealed that some responses to the housing tenure question appear to have been chosen in error. Some respondents said they rented from local authorities even though those authorities had transferred all of their housing stock to housing associations, Registered Social Landlords, or co-operatives before the census.

Through the topic consultation and engagement with colleagues in the Scottish Government there has been no data need identified to have 'Council (Local Authority)' as a separate category to 'Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord'. Therefore a version of the landlord question which grouped the first two response options from 2011 into one was tested, to reduce respondent confusion.

Similarly, no user need was identified in the Topic Consultation for 'Employer of a household member' or 'Relative or friend of a household member' so a landlord question which grouped these categories in to the 'Other' response option was tested.

4.2 Tenure and Landlord User Need Survey

As part of follow up work to the Topic Consultation, NRS investigated whether a proposed question set on tenure and landlord would meet user needs. Part of this analysis was a survey which was available from 2 August 2017 to 31 August 2017.

There were 16 responses to the survey: Five from individuals and 11 on behalf of organisations or groups including the Scottish Government and six local authorities.

The majority of respondents indicated that the proposed question set would meet their needs sufficiently. The majority of those who indicated otherwise cited data needs which cannot be met by these questions, or which would be best met through sources other than the census.

Through this survey, Scottish Borders Council expressed a need for 'Employer of a household member' or 'Relative or friend of a household member' to be collected separately. However, follow up work after the survey showed that there was no evidence of strong user need.

More information about this survey and the results can be found in the [Survey Summary](#) on the Scotland's Census website.

5. Question testing

This section provides evidence from the question testing process carried out by NRS in the question development process for Scotland's Census 2021.

Both cognitive testing and quantitative testing processes were used in developing the questions for potential inclusion in Scotland's Census 2021.

1. Cognitive testing is a form of in depth interviewing with a small number of respondents. It aims to provide an insight into the mental processes respondents use when answering questions. This helps us to identify if there are any problems with a question or question design, and gain an insight into the source of any difficulty respondents are having.
2. Quantitative testing is undertaken primarily to identify data quality concerns. NRS conducted a quantitative test in 2017 which included feedback questions in order to gather further information on public acceptability and to identify specific difficulties respondents faced if they were unable to answer a question easily.

In 2017 NRS commissioned ScotCen Social Research to conduct cognitive and quantitative testing of selected questions for potential inclusion in Scotland's Census 2021. Information about this testing can be found in the [2017 Cognitive and Quantitative Testing Report](#) (PDF).

5.1 Cognitive testing

One version of the Tenure and Landlord question set was tested as part of the 2017 Cognitive Testing. A number of changes were made to the 2011 question set to create the version used in testing. These include reordering of response options, new response options and grouping of response options as described below.

Reordering of response options

A common error was for a household who owned their accommodation with a mortgage or loan to state that they owned it outright - an option that should only have been selected if they had paid off the mortgage, or had never had one.

To resolve this issue a question was tested with the order of the first two response options reversed. Other response options were also reordered due to the size of the population falling into each category.

New response option

Due to the increase in prevalence of shared equity schemes such as The Low-cost Initiative for First Time Buyers (LIFT) and Help-to-Buy schemes (as discussed in Section 4.1), the question set tested included the addition of a new response option with the following wording: 'Owns with shared equity e.g. LIFT, Help-to-Buy'.

The aim of this addition was to provide local government with the necessary data to monitor such schemes and to help respondents answer the question more easily.

Grouping of response options

In the version of the landlord question tested, the six categories from 2011 have been grouped to three. These groupings are based both on the user need identified in the topic consultation (as discussed in Section 4.1) and to aid respondent understanding and ease of completion.

A final difference was that in the question set in testing, only those who selected 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' were shown the Landlord question. In 2011 those who selected 'Part owns and part rents...' or 'Lives here rent free' were also routed to the Landlord question, but landlord data was not output for these groups.

Online version one

Q3. Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

Select **one** only.

- Owns with a mortgage or loan
- Owns outright
- Owns with shared equity e.g. LIFT, Help-to-Buy
- Rents (with or without housing benefit)
- Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)
- Lives here rent free

Q4. Who is your landlord?

- Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord
- Private landlord or letting agency
- Other

Aims of cognitive testing:

- Establish whether the response options were understood as intended; and
- Establish whether respondents were easily able to answer the question correctly (including whether any missing categories would be suggested).

Key results:

- No issues were identified with either the tenure or the landlord question.
- One participant who rented from friends found it difficult to decide how to answer the question. This was due to misunderstanding of the question, which asked about the household. However, this participant did answer correctly for their situation.
- One participant did not feel that the term 'household' applied to them as they lived alone and understood the term household to mean that there was more than one person resident.

5.2 Quantitative testing

The tenure and landlord question set discussed in section 5.1 was carried forward from the cognitive testing to the 2017 Quantitative Testing. The paper and online version are shown below.

Quantitative Test – Paper Version

7 Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

◆ Tick **one** box only

Owns with a mortgage or loan → Go to **9**

Owns outright → Go to **9**

Owns with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy) → Go to **9**

Rents (with or without housing benefit)

Part owns and part rents (shared ownership) → Go to **9**

Lives here rent free → Go to **9**

8 Who is your landlord?

Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord

Private landlord or letting agency

Other

Quantitative Test – Online Version

Q7. Does your household own or rent this accommodation?

▪ Select **one** only

Owns with a mortgage or loan

Owns outright

Owns with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy)

Rents (with or without housing benefit)

Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)

Lives here rent free

Q8. Who is your landlord?

Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord

Private landlord or letting agency

Other

Aims of quantitative testing:

- Look at the distribution of responses, including similarities and differences in distribution by mode in comparison with 2011 census data;
- Analyse item non-response rates and invalid responses as measures of data quality; and
- Analyse instances of routing error between the tenure and landlord questions.

Key results:

- In total, 97% of respondents gave a valid response to the tenure question. Of those who were routed to the tenure question, 99% provided a valid response.
- There were 13 cases of routing error, that is where respondents, who had not selected that they were renting at the tenure question, still answered the landlord question. Of these, eight had selected 'Lives here rent free' for tenure.
- Most of the invalid responses to tenure (3% of all respondents) were non-responses and over half of these were from respondents who had dropped out of the survey before this question.
- There was one case of multi-ticking at the tenure question. This respondent ticked 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' and 'Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)'.
- For tenure, the distribution of response options differed to the 2011 distribution with a higher proportion of owners in the testing than in the census, and a lower proportion of renters. The sample was not aimed to be representative of tenure and so there may be sample bias.
- Similarly, for landlord, the distribution was slightly different with a higher proportion of respondents reporting private renting than in the census, and a lower proportion in the other two categories. Again, the sample was not aimed to be representative of tenure and so there may be sample bias.
- A feedback question asked "Did you find any of the following questions difficult to answer?" Of respondents that responded to this question, 14 indicated that they found the Tenure question difficult to answer and seven indicated this for the Landlord question. The majority of both groups gave valid responses to the respective questions.

6. Next Steps

Research and analysis support taking a set of questions on tenure and landlord further at this stage.

NRS is continuing question development of a full question set for the 2021 Census and will be considering questionnaire design and respondent burden. The final decision on the content of Scotland's Census 2021 questionnaire will ultimately be made by the Scottish Parliament.

The digital first approach for 2021 requires further development and user testing to fully understand the best way to present the questions online to maximise response, minimise respondent burden and ensure good quality data which meets user needs. An on-going programme of question development, focusing on sensitive or complex questions will further inform the specific question wording.

More information about preparation for Scotland's Census 2021 and details about upcoming events can be found on the [Scotland's Census website](#), by subscribing to the [Scotland's Census newsletter](#) and following us on Twitter [@NatRecordsScot](#).

Annex A – Cognitive Testing – Tenure and Landlord Questions

In 2017 NRS commissioned ScotCen Social Research to conduct cognitive and quantitative testing of selected questions for potential inclusion in Scotland's Census 2021. Information about this testing can be found in the [2017 Cognitive and Quantitative Testing Report](#) (PDF).

1. Questions tested and measurement aims

One version of the Tenure and Landlord question set was tested as part of the 2017 Cognitive Testing.

Cognitive Testing – Tenure and Landlord Questions
<p>Q3. Does your household own or rent this accommodation?</p> <p>Select one only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Owns with a mortgage or loan <input type="radio"/> Owns outright <input type="radio"/> Owns with shared equity e.g. LIFT, Help-to-Buy <input type="radio"/> Rents (with or without housing benefit) <input type="radio"/> Part owns and part rents (shared ownership) <input type="radio"/> Lives here rent free
<p>Q4. Who is your landlord?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord <input type="radio"/> Private landlord or letting agency <input type="radio"/> Other

The aims of testing these question were to:

- Establish whether the response options were understood as intended.
- Establish whether respondents were easily able to answer the question correctly (including whether any missing categories would be suggested).

2. Notes on sample composition

Cognitive interviews were conducted with respondents living in households with the following range of tenures:

- Accommodation owned with a mortgage or loan;
- Accommodation owned outright;
- Accommodation rented from the council (local authority) or a housing association;

- Accommodation rented from a private landlord or letting agency;
- Accommodation rented from a friend;
- Accommodation part owned and part rented;
- Lives in accommodation rent free;

It should be noted that questions on both tenure and landlord are typically included in the household section of the census. The cognitive testing focused on individuals, therefore there may have been some confusion in responding to questions which ask about the household as a whole.

3. Findings on Tenure

Respondents commonly reported finding the tenure question easy, straightforward and clear.

All respondents were able to select an answer from the options provided. Some respondents, however, describe being confused by the term 'household' in relation to their tenure.

One participant explained that they rented from friends, who own the house, making it difficult to decide whether they should answer based on their personal tenure situation, or the fact that the house is owned by someone else. After some contemplation, the participant selected 'Rents' and 'Other' in response to the landlord question.

Another participant explained that they thought 'household' implied an accommodation with more than one person resident, and made it feel removed from their situation, as they lived alone.

4. Findings on Landlord type

All respondents who selected option four 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' at the tenure question were routed on to the landlord question, asking about their landlord type. In total, 12 respondents were routed to the landlord question.

All respondents who were routed to this question reported finding the question clear, and were able to select an answer. No suggestions for improving the question were made by these respondents.

5. Summary

In summary, cognitive interviewing showed both question wording and routing design to be clear to respondents, leading to no issues with data collection or quality. Additionally, no missing answer categories in either the tenure or the landlord questions were highlighted by respondents.

Annex B – Quantitative Testing – Tenure and Landlord Questions

In 2017 NRS commissioned ScotCen Social Research to conduct cognitive and quantitative testing of selected questions for potential inclusion in Scotland's Census 2021. Information about this testing can be found in the [2017 Cognitive and Quantitative Testing Report](#) (PDF).

1. Tenure

1.1. Questions tested and measurement aims

A question on tenure was included in Scotland's Census 2011, however, the question and its guidance are being reviewed with a view to improving usability and data quality, including the reversed order of the first two response options.

One question on tenure was included in the household section of the quantitative questionnaire for testing.

Quantitative Test – Paper Version

- 7 Does your household own or rent this accommodation?**
- ◆ Tick **one** box only
- Owns with a mortgage or loan → Go to **9**
 - Owns outright → Go to **9**
 - Owns with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy) → Go to **9**
 - Rents (with or without housing benefit)
 - Part owns and part rents (shared ownership) → Go to **9**
 - Lives here rent free → Go to **9**

Quantitative Test – Online Version

- Q7. Does your household own or rent this accommodation?**
- Select **one** only
 - Owns with a mortgage or loan
 - Owns outright
 - Owns with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy)
 - Rents (with or without housing benefit)
 - Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)
 - Lives here rent free

As shown above, the question being tested for Scotland's Census 2021 introduced an additional type of tenure; 'Owns with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy)'.

The aims of testing this question were to:

- Look at the distribution of responses, including similarities and differences in distribution in comparison with 2011 census data;
- analyse item non-response rates and invalid responses as measures of data quality; and
- analyse instances of routing error between the tenure and landlord questions.

1.2. Tenure distribution

In total, 97% of respondents provided a valid answer to the tenure question.

An invalid response was given by 3% of respondents. Almost all invalid responses were attributable to item non-response (16 cases, out of a total of 17 cases of invalid response from full completions). There was only one occurrence of multi-ticking.

As shown in Table B1, the distribution of responses varied slightly from the 2011 Census results. The proportion of respondents who said their accommodation was owned outright, or with a mortgage or loan, is higher in our testing sample than in the 2011 Census (34% and 37% compared with 28% and 34% respectively). However, the proportion of people renting is lower in our testing sample than in the 2011 Census.

The sample was not aimed to be representative of tenure and so there may be sample bias.

Table B1: Tenure, total responses from 2017 testing and Scottish Census 2011 (weighted)

		2017 test (%)	2011 Census (%)
Tenure	Owens with a mortgage or loan	37	34
	Owens outright	34	28
	Owens with shared equity (for example LIFT, Help-to-Buy)	<1	
	Rents	28	37
	Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)	<1	0
	Lives here rent free	2	1
	Total valid responses	100	100

1.3. Invalid responses to the tenure question

All types of invalid response

An invalid response was given by 3% of respondents. Almost all invalid responses were attributable to item non-response (16 cases, out of a total of 17 cases of invalid response from full completions).

There was only one occurrence of multi-ticking, where a participant selected more than one type of tenure. This respondent ticked 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' and 'Part owns and part rents (shared ownership)'.

Invalid responses to tenure by mode

Invalid rates to the tenure question were almost exclusively attributable to item non-response, and were higher online than on paper (25 cases, compared with 15 cases, respectively). However, as shown in Table B2, the majority of item non-response from the online mode was attributable to partial completions (23 cases) where respondents had dropped out of completing the questionnaire prior to this question.

When looking just at item non-response from respondents who fully completed the questionnaire, we can see this is higher amongst those who completed the survey on paper (14 cases, compared with two cases online).

Invalid cases due to multi-ticks are attributable only to paper responses, since it was not technically possible for those completing the survey online to select more than one type of tenure.

Table B2: Invalid tenure by mode (unweighted counts)

	Mode		
	Number of responses - Online	Number of responses - Paper	Total
Item non response – full completions	2	14	16
Item non-response – partial completions	23	0	23
Invalid multi-tick – paper only, single tick questions	0	1	1
Invalid combination			
Routing error	0	0	0
Total invalid responses	25	15	40
Not applicable	0	0	0
Total valid responses	620	794	1,414
Total responses	645	809	1,454

Non-response only²

As mentioned above, non-response accounted for 3% of total responses to the tenure question. This is slightly higher than the level of non-response at the 2011 Scottish Census, which was 2%.

² Note item non-response to the 2017 test and item non-response to the 2011 census are not directly comparable; there was no questionnaire drop-out or partial completion rate estimated for the 2011 census, which was primarily a paper questionnaire.

1.4. Routing

This question featured routing so that only people who selected 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' would answer the next question on landlords. Online this routing was automatic and any respondent who had not answered the tenure question was also shown the next question on landlords.

- 290 respondents ticked 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' at the tenure question. Of these, 286 gave a valid response to the landlord question. The remaining four did not respond to the landlord question.
- 39 respondents did not respond to the tenure question. This included 22 respondents who had dropped out of the online questionnaire before the tenure question. Of the remaining 17 respondents, two gave a valid response to the landlord question while 15 did not respond to the landlord question.
- 13 respondents who selected a tenure category other than 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' answered the landlord question when they should not have. All 13 of these responded on paper as this type of invalid response was not possible online. Of these, eight had ticked 'Lives here rent free' for tenure.

1.5. Feedback

The questionnaire was split into four sections online. At the end of each of the four sections respondents were asked to state if they found any questions within the section difficult to answer, and to provide feedback on why this was the case in an open text box. For the paper questionnaire, feedback questions were all included at the end of the full questionnaire.

When asked "Did you find any of the following questions difficult to answer?" 14 respondents selected that they found the tenure question difficult to answer.

When looking at response to the feedback question by validity of respondents response to the tenure question, we can see that of the 14 respondents who answered 'yes', they found the question difficult, around 10 provided a valid answer, compared with four who provided an invalid response.

2. Landlord

2.1. Questions tested and measurement aims

A question on landlord type was included in Scotland's Census 2011, however, the question and its guidance are being reviewed with a view to improving usability and data quality.

One question on landlord was included in the household section of the quantitative questionnaire for testing.

Quantitative Test – Paper Version

- 8 Who is your landlord?**
- Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord
 - Private landlord or letting agency
 - Other

Quantitative Test – Online Version

- Q8. Who is your landlord?**
- Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association/Registered Social Landlord
 - Private landlord or letting agency
 - Other

The question being tested for Scotland's Census 2021 reduced categories of landlords to just three.

The aims of testing this question were to:

- Look at the distribution of responses, including similarities and differences in distribution in comparison with 2011 census data;
- analyse item non-response rates and invalid responses as measures of data quality; and
- analyse instances of routing error between the tenure and landlord questions.

2.2. Landlord distribution

In total, of those who rented their accommodation, around 96% provided a valid response to the question on landlords, whilst around 4% provided an invalid response, all of which were attributable to item non-response.

As shown in Table B3³, the answers provided by respondents were slightly different to the distributions of landlord types from Scotland's Census 2011.

The question on type of landlord was only applicable to those who selected 'rents' at the tenure question. Of those who reported living in rented accommodation, 52% reported renting from the Council, a Housing Association or other registered social landlord and 45% reported renting from a private landlord or letting agency. Just 2% of those who rent reported renting from another type of landlord.

Table B3: Landlord, valid responses from 2021 testing and Scottish Census 2011 (weighted percentages)

		2017 test (%)	2011 Census (%)
Landlord	Council (Local Authority) or Housing Association / Registered Social Landlord	53	66
	Private landlord or letting agency	45	30
	Other	2	4
	Total	100	100

2.3. Invalid responses to the landlord question

All types of invalid response

When looking just at respondents who answered 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' in the tenure question, invalid responses accounted for 1%. All instances of invalid responses were the result of item non-response.

There were 13 instances of invalid by routing error where respondents who did not select 'Rents (with or without housing benefit)' at the question on tenure provided a valid response to the landlord question. There were no instances of multi-ticking at this question.

Invalid responses to landlord by mode

When looking at item non-response from full completions to the landlord question, we can see there appears to be a mode effect with 15 out of 17 cases of item non-response attributable to the paper questionnaire. This could signal an issue with the question, potentially relating to respondents ability to correctly follow the routing.

All cases of invalid by routing error were attributable to the paper version of the questionnaire, as this type of invalid was not technically possible on the online mode.

³ Figures based on weighted estimates

Table B4: Invalid landlord by mode (unweighted counts)

	Mode		
	Number of responses - Online	Number of responses - Paper	Total
Item non response – full completions	2	15	17
Item non-response – partial completions	24	0	24
Invalid multi-tick – paper only, single tick questions	0	0	0
Invalid combination			
Routing error	0	13	13
Total invalid responses	26	28	54
Not applicable	516	595	1,111
Total valid responses*	103	183	286
Total Renting	104	186	290
Total responses	645	809	1,454

*Total valid responses are from those who answered 'Rents (with or without housing benefit' at the tenure question.

Invalid responses to landlord by tenure

In total, thirteen respondents⁴ who did not select 'Rents (with or without housing benefit' in the tenure question provided a valid answer to the question on landlords.

Of those who incorrectly answered the landlord question, the majority of respondents (eight cases) reported their tenure as 'lives here rent free'.

A further two respondents stated their tenure was 'owns outright', whilst two owned with a mortgage or loan and one reported part owning and part renting their accommodation.

Whilst these numbers are relatively small in relation to the total size of the sample, this does indicate that some respondents did not correctly follow the routing instructions on the paper version of the questionnaire.

2.4. Feedback

The questionnaire was split into four sections online. At the end of each of the four sections respondents were asked to state if they found any questions within the section difficult to answer, and to provide feedback on why this was the case in an open text box. For the paper questionnaire, feedback questions were all included at the end of the full questionnaire.

When asked "Did you find any of the following questions difficult to answer?" Less than 1% of respondents selected that they found the landlord question difficult to answer.

When looking at response to the feedback question by validity of respondents response to the landlord question, we can see that of seven respondents who answered 'yes', three found the question difficult, also provided a valid answer, compared with three who provided invalid answer and one for whom the question was not applicable.

⁴ Figures from unweighted counts