

England

Country Profile

Public housing in England is provided primarily by Housing Authorities (non-profit independent landlords) and to a lesser extent by local authorities (council housing), with a focus on housing those in priority need. Almost 1.8 million public housing units were sold to existing tenants through Right to Buy programs starting in the 1980s. Rent supplements through income assistance are an important part of the public housing picture with tenants receiving up to 100% subsidy of their rents in both the public and private housing markets. Currently, rents in public housing are set according to a formula across the sector. There are a very small amount of tenant-owned housing cooperatives in England.

HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

Public housing in England is provided by Housing Authorities (non-profit independent landlords) and to a lesser extent by local authorities

TENURE

Primarily rental; small amount of tenant-owned housing cooperatives

TENANTS

Targeted to socially disadvantaged groups

PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS

3,983,000(2005)

PUBLIC HOUSING POPULATION COVERAGE

18%(2005)

AVERAGE RENTS (£ per unit per month)

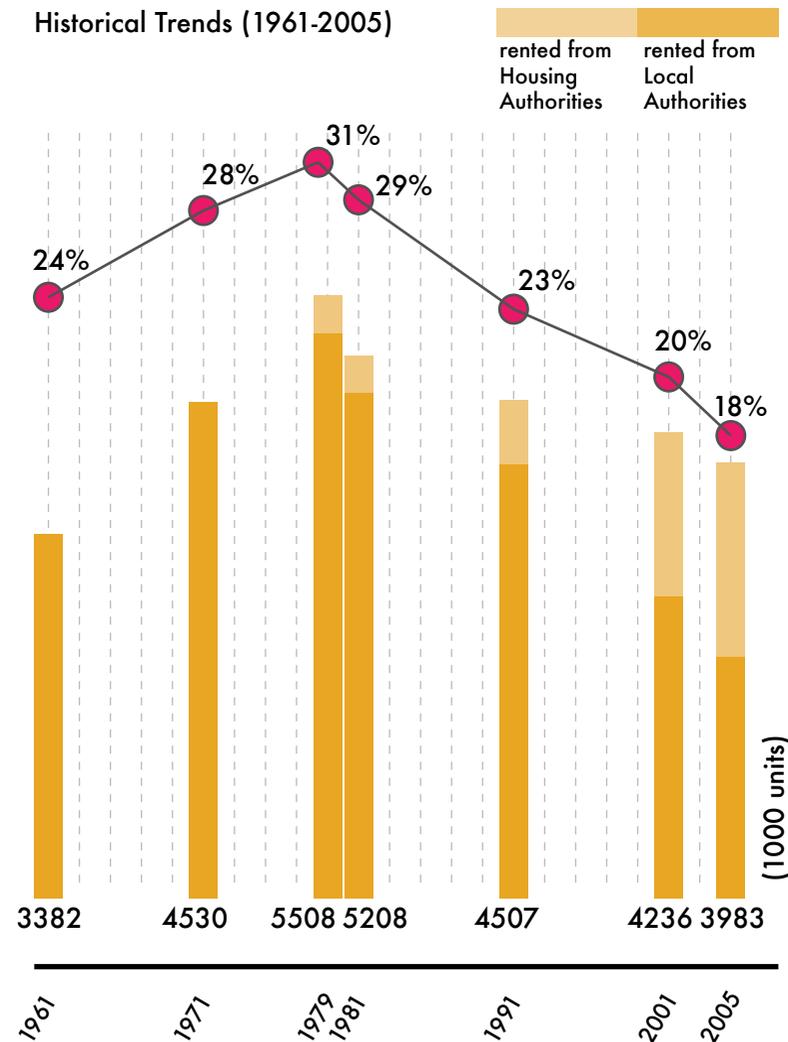
public rental housing: 250

market housing: 430

NOTES

Numbers and percentages of public housing units includes those managed by Housing Authorities as well as local authorities

Historical Trends (1961-2005)



SOURCES

Scanlon, K and Whitehead, C. Social Housing in Europe (2007). London, England: London School of Economics.

KEY MILESTONES AND TRENDS

1896: construction of first council housing estate in London's East End

1919: government provides subsidies and requires councils to provide 'Homes for Heroes' at the end of World War I

Post-World War II: A strong focus on public housing, primarily for the working class, in response to enormous housing shortages following the war

1970's: An active time for public housing – income-related rental assistance introduced, local authorities required to house all homeless people in their area; the size of the sector reaches it's height at 31% of the stock in 1979.

1980's – 1990's: Right to Buy legislation introduced in 1980, requiring local authorities to sell to sitting tenants at a discount. Production of new stock decreases dramatically into the mid-1990's. Public housing increasingly becomes the tenure of lower-income and socially disadvantaged groups.

1990's: large-scale voluntary transfers of housing stock from local authorities to Housing Authorities; increasing focus on incentives and subsidies to leverage private financing.

2000: rent restructuring to make rents consistent across the social sector as well as the Decent Homes programme by which funding has been provided to bring rented housing up to acceptable modern standards.