

# Introduction

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The primary objective of this, the 13th edition of the *UK Housing Review* (initially called the Housing Finance Review), remains simply to draw together key current financial and related data about both public and private housing in the United Kingdom, and rapidly assemble them in a coherent and accessible format.

To that end the *Review* draws on a wide range of Expenditure Plans and Departmental Reports, as well as statistical volumes, survey reports, and other more occasional research reports. The *Review* also includes several tables constructed from databases that are not routinely published elsewhere.

In this web-based version of the *Review*, Section 1: Contemporary Issues articles are omitted. For those requiring the four articles you are invited to order the print copy by following the link on the home page. This 2004/2005 edition focuses on the track record of stock transfer landlords, housing needs measures in Australia, Canada, the US and England, the tax status of owner-occupied housing in the UK, and rent restructuring in England and issues arising from the proposal to extend flat rate Local Housing Allowances to the social rented sector.

The six chapters of Section 2: Commentary are available on this website and offer a brief introduction to and discussion of the key developments in policy, financial provision and output, that are reflected in the tables and figures in the main Compendium of tables. It also provides a reference to other publications and data that offer further useful insights into current policy issues.

## A longer perspective

Many of the tables in the *Review* provide data over a long time period. Wherever possible those tables start in 1970, providing data at five year intervals for the years to 1990, and with annual data for more recent years. The precise range of the years covered varies slightly from table to table, depending both on data availability, and the practicality of setting out data on a single page. Even with its landscape format there are limits to the number of years' data that the *Review* can fit on to a single page.

Readers can consult earlier print editions of the *Review* for data for the individual years between 1981 and 1989 that are no longer published in the current edition. However, readers should exercise care as in some cases data for those earlier years may have subsequently been subject to revisions,

primarily as a result of changes in definitions. A cross check of the data for those years still published in the current edition of the *Review* will generally indicate whether or not this is an issue.

## Regions

The *Review* contains several tables providing data for the regions of England. Many of those tables provide data for the long established standard statistical regions. Government statistics are, however, now being published primarily on the basis of government office regions. This presents difficulties in providing a consistent long run of regional data. In this period of transition, wherever possible current data for standard regions has been sought, in order to provide a consistent data series. This has not, however, always been possible. Equally, long back series of data for government office regions are not always available. In some cases, therefore, the *Review* includes recent data for government office regions, together with earlier data for standard regions. This is clearly indicated in the tables concerned.

There has also been a recent change in the nomenclature of government office regions. The Eastern region is now known as the East of England,

and Yorkshire and Humberside is now known as Yorkshire & The Humber. In this year's *Review* the government office regions are generally shown under their new names. However, the new names are not always used in our source documents or datasets, and we have followed the practice in the latest editions of our sources, rather than impose a uniform usage.

The North West government office region now includes Merseyside, and in many cases separate figures for Merseyside are no longer available. However, where Merseyside figures continue to be available these continue to be provided in the *Review*.

### **The UK Housing Review website**

Last year, for the first time, the whole body of tables in the *Review*, together with the commentaries, were made available linked to the University of York website. An interim update to the tables was also posted on the website in the spring of 2004.

The address for the *Review* website is [www.ukhousingreview.org.uk](http://www.ukhousingreview.org.uk).

### **Comments and suggestions**

Finally, the editor would welcome any comments or suggestions on the current and future format and contents of the *Review*, and he can be contacted by email, phone, fax or letter (see Acknowledgements for full details).