

CORE analysis

Residential mobility and RSL new tenants, 1999-2000

This report uses CORE data¹ for 1999-2000 to conduct a preliminary analysis of the migration patterns of RSL new tenants. Building on the results already published in the CORE Annual Digest (Sandeman et al, 2000), the analysis has two interrelated aims. First, it is designed as a contribution to the on-going debate on the relationship between housing tenure and migration, a notable omission from which has been the separate examination of migration trends among people moving into the tenancies of Registered Social Landlords. Secondly, the analysis addresses issues of relevance to current housing policy particularly in

relation to the programmes for neighbourhood regeneration. A central element of these programmes is the development of policies to tackle neighbourhood abandonment and the creation of conditions designed to encourage residential stability and social cohesion among neighbourhood populations (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000 and DETR, 2001). RSLs, as the providers of affordable and sustainable housing,² have a key role in this context. The monitoring of the locational outcomes of RSL letting activities, through the analysis of CORE data, permits an assessment of the contribution of RSLs to these programmes.

¹ CORE is a system for the continuous recording of the housing and household characteristics of RSL (Registered Social Landlords) new tenants. It is funded by the Housing Corporation and DETR and presently administered by the JCSHR at the Universities of St. Andrews and Dundee. For more information see the CORE web page: <http://www.core.ac.uk>. A Digest of CORE data is published each year.

² RSLs now account for 5% of all housing tenures in England and 22% of all social housing; proportions which will increase with stock transfers from local authorities to RSLs (250,000 since 1988) set to continue into the foreseeable future.

CORE analysis

KEY FINDINGS

- Between April 1999 and March 2000, 13.1% (19,375) of RSL new tenant households moved to another local authority district and 4% moved to another Housing Corporation region. By comparison on average 10% of local authority new tenants move across a local authority boundary.
- Since 1995 CORE has recorded, year on year, a small but significant increase in the number of new tenant households crossing an administrative boundary (LA districts and Housing Corporation regions), suggesting that RSL households are becoming more mobile and that RSL allocation policies are becoming less constrained by administrative boundaries.
- A comparison of deprivation scores for local authority districts with the movement patterns of RSL new tenants indicates that population turnover is highest in the more deprived areas; more RSL tenants are moving out than into these areas, reflecting issues of low demand and raising questions about long term sustainability.
- Significant differences were identified between households that moved across Housing Corporation regional boundaries and those that stayed within the same region. These differences indicate that RSLs find accommodation for those most in need generally within the area of original residence, reflecting the distribution of available accommodation and, presumably, an element of tenant choice.
- Households of 60 years and over account for 44% of all movement between Housing Corporation regions. Their main reason for moving to another region was their wish to be near family or friends.
- Movement between regions in the RSL sector was predominantly between adjacent regions. There is little evidence of a north-south drift.

INTRODUCTION

This report is a first attempt to explore the CORE database as a potential source of information for the analysis of migration trends among RSL new tenants.³ CORE records the local authority destination and origin of new tenants and from this information two levels of migration can be identified⁴: movement between local authority districts and movement between Housing Corporation regions⁵. For each of these levels we can identify those households which, when taking up their new tenancy, remain within the administrative area of their previous residence (*within area migration*) and those which move between administrative areas (*between area migration*). These migration measures are used in this report to consider three issues of contemporary research and policy as they relate to the RSL sector.

First, in the context of the on-going development of policies for neighbourhood regeneration, using data at the local authority level we look at aspects of the relationship between RSL new tenant migration and area deprivation. Secondly, in the context of research on the constraining effects of local authority boundaries on the migration of tenants of social housing, we examine the movement of RSL tenants between administrative areas, establishing the overall trends at both the regional and the local authority levels, and then investigating in more detail movement patterns at the regional scale. Thirdly, with a focus on the movement from northern to southern regions of the country and of counterurbanisation (the movement of people out of metropolitan to non-metropolitan areas) we examine the geography of regional migration in the RSL sector.

³ See also Sector Study, 3a, 'Longer Distance Movement in RSL Housing', April 2001, The Housing Corporation

⁴ CORE records the post code of the destination of new tenants, but it does not record the post code of origin. This precludes the calculation of an explicit measure of migration distance and inhibits direct comparisons with previous research on migration among people moving into council housing.

⁵ Housing Corporation regions are shown in Figure 3. They are largely equivalent to the Government Office regions used by the DETR, except in the North West where the Housing Corporation's North West and Merseyside regions both lie within DETR's North West region.

CORE analysis

RSL MIGRATION AND DEPRIVATION

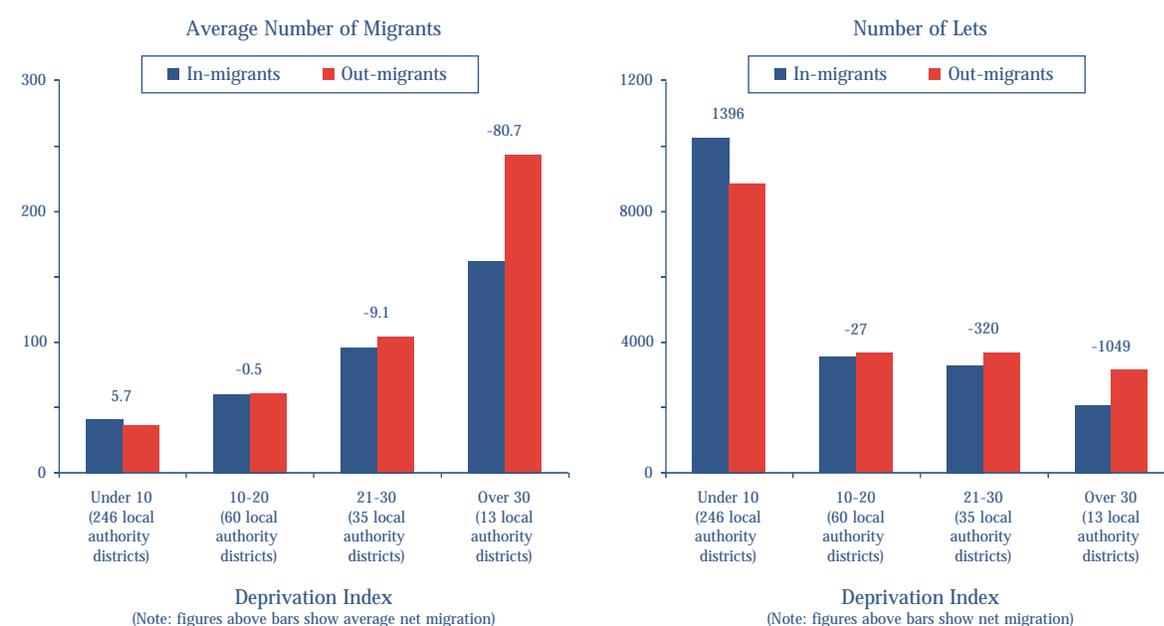
A central element of the government's neighbourhood regeneration programme is the development of policies designed to combat neighbourhood abandonment by reducing out migration and drawing in new households in an attempt to create the conditions for the spatial as well as social stability of population (DETR, 2001). As the providers of affordable and sustainable housing, RSLs have a key role to play in this process. We can examine aspects of the contribution of RSLs to this strategy of neighbourhood regeneration by matching CORE migration data with the recently published DETR Deprivation Index for English local authority districts.

The DETR Index of Local Deprivation for the 354 local authority districts in England is a composite of 12 measures of deprivation covering unemployment, income, health, education, environmental conditions, crime and housing conditions.⁶ The index varies between 1 and 40, with a low score indicating relative wealth and a high score relative deprivation. A comparison of the deprivation score for local authority districts with the movement in and out of local authorities of RSL new tenants indicates a regular pattern whereby averages of both in-migration and out-migration increase as the deprivation index increases (Figure 1).

Over half (53%) of RSL new tenants who crossed a local authority district boundary in 1999-2000 moved to the least deprived local authority areas (DETR index less than 10). RSL tenants are moving into relatively better off local authorities and out of more deprived authorities (DETR index of 10 and over). This movement may suggest that RSL renting is not contributing as much as might be desired to area regeneration. A more detailed examination of the origins and destination of RSL tenants would be required before such a conclusion could be firmly established, but a preliminary examination of the destination of RSL new tenants moving out of the most deprived areas (DETR Index of 30 and over) tends to support this conclusion. There are 13 local authorities in the most deprived category; they are all metropolitan areas. Eight are in London: Newham, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Southwark, Islington, Greenwich, Lambeth and Haringey; the others are: Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sandwell and Knowsley. Of the 3165 out migrants from these 13 districts, 23% moved to another of the 13, 77%, however, moved to less deprived areas.

⁶ Full details of these measures and the method of calculating the index are available on the DETR web site: <http://www.detr.gov.uk/regeneration>

FIGURE 1 RSL migrants and DETR deprivation index



CORE analysis

MIGRATION OF RSL TENANTS ACROSS ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES

It is now well established that households moving into different types of housing tenure display different migration patterns. One of the main findings to emerge from research is that people moving into council housing, and to a lesser extent RSL housing, appear to be more restricted in the distance they migrate than people moving into other tenures; a pattern which seems to hold even when individual differences in occupational and social status are taken into account (see Boyle, 1995, 1998). While a full understanding of this relationship is complex, a frequently cited though contested (see Forrest and Murie, 1992) contributing explanation is that institutional constraints restrict migration between local authorities whose housing allocation programmes prioritise people from within their own jurisdictions. The implications of these findings for policies designed to facilitate labour migration and promote various tenure types have been the subject of considerable dispute (most recently in Oswald, 1999). Work on this topic has previously omitted RSL households or combined RSL and council housing. In distinguishing some of the features of between area migration in the RSL sector, this report makes a contribution towards rectifying this omission.

Between April 1999 and March 2000, 147,679 RSL new tenancies were recorded by CORE. Of these 4.1% moved to a different region and 13.1% moved to different local authority district. Comparisons with previous years show a slight overall increase in between area migration recorded year on year (Table 1). This suggests that RSL tenants are becoming more mobile, in that they are probably moving longer distances, and that RSL allocation policies are becoming less constrained by administrative boundaries.

Between region migration

There are some significant differences between those tenants who moved between regions and those who remained within the region of their previous residence when the age of head of household is assessed. In 1999-2000, households migrating between regions were dominated by both younger and by older households. Of the age groups considered (Figure 2), households with a tenant of less than 25 years comprised the largest single category (15%; 875 households) with those over 80 years comprising the next largest category (13%; 776 households). Overall, however, households of 60 years and over made up the largest single group, comprising 44% (2,618) of all between region migrants. The propensity of older people to move between regions is greater than expected when compared with their percentage of total households (Table 2). The opposite is true for all other age groups which, given their percentage of total households, made a lower-than-expected contribution to between region migration.

TABLE 1 Migration between administrative areas 1995-2000

Year	RSL new tenancies (totals)	Migrants between HC region (%)	Migrants between Local Authority districts (%)
1995-1996	135,707	3.3	11.4
1996-1997	138,812	3.8	11.9
1997-1998	145,127	3.9	11.6
1998-1999	146,055	4.0	12.3
1999-2000	147,679	4.1	13.1

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FIGURE 2 RSL migrants and DETR deprivation index

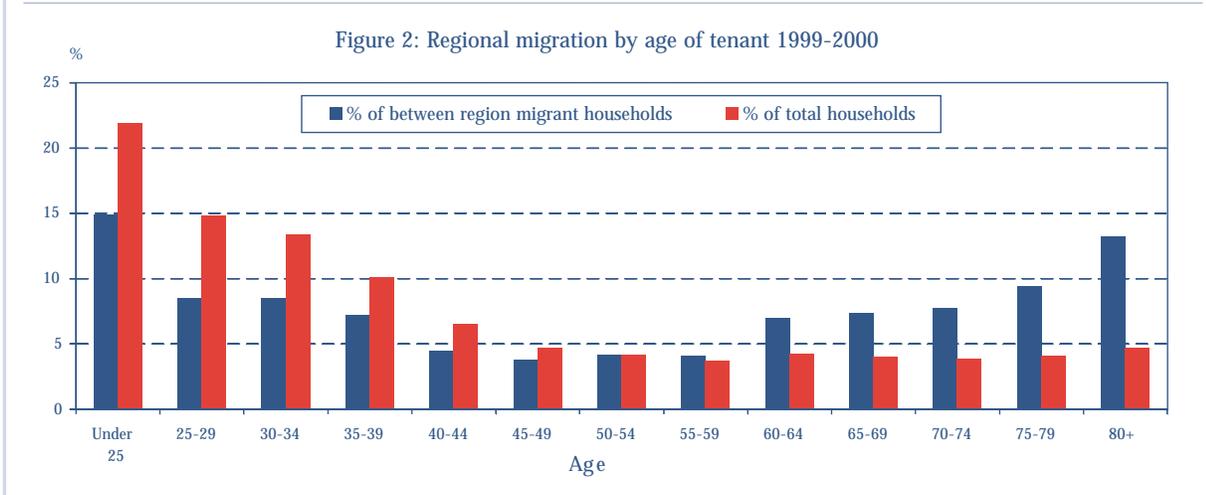


TABLE 2 Between area migration as a proportion of total households within each age group
 (A ratio of greater than 1 for an age group indicates a larger contribution to between region migration than would be expected given that age group’s proportion of total households)

Age	< 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+
Ratio	0.68	0.57	0.63	0.71	0.68	0.80	1.00	1.11	1.64	1.85	2.00	2.30	2.80

Between region and within region compared
 There are significant differences between those RSL households who moved between regions and those that stayed within the same region (Table 3).

These differences suggest that RSLs in implementing needs-based allocation policies were finding accommodation for those most in need within the region of original residence. In making such allocations, RSLs were also responding to the fact that over 42% of within region migrants were nominated by local authorities, nearly double the figure for migrants moving between regions. In contrast, 46% of between region migrants applied

directly for their new tenancy (11% more than for within region migrants). As would be expected, the take up of the HOMES mobility scheme was considerably higher among between region migrants (13%) than among within region migrants (1%).

When compared by age group, households aged between 25 and 59 years, regardless of migrant status, were very similar in terms of social and economic characteristics. However, striking contrasts emerged between within region and between region migrants in the younger (under 25) and older (60 and over) age groups (see Table 4).

TABLE 3 Key household characteristics of between region and within region migrants

Characteristic	Between HC region	Within HC region
Age	Older (average age 52)	Younger (average age 40)
Wealth	Better-off (savings £1,749)	Worse-off (savings £656)
Economic status	Retired (43%)	Working full-time (20%) and at home not seeking work (20%)
Household type	Older person/couple (44%)	Single adults (32%) and single parents (24%)
Main reasons for moving	To be near friends, relatives, school or work (36%) and in need of warden/sheltered accommodation (13%)	Overcrowding (17%) and need for independent accommodation (10%)
Source of referral	Direct application to RSL (46%)	Nominated by LA (42%)

CORE analysis

TABLE 4 Key household characteristics of between region and within region migrants by age

a) Tenants aged 25 or less		
Characteristic of tenants	Between HC region (3% of migrants)	Within HC region (97% of migrants)
Economic status	Students (50%)	Unemployed (29%) or at home not seeking work (31%)
Household type	Single adults (69%)	Single adults (44%), One parent households (33%)
Main reasons for moving	To be near friends, relatives, school or work (18%)	Overcrowding (25%) and need for independent accommodation (19%)
Source of referral	Unspecified (44%) and direct application (30%)	Direct application (39%) or nominated by local authority (46%)
b) Tenants aged 60 and over		
Characteristic of tenants	Between HC region (9% of migrants)	Within HC region (91% of migrants)
Main reasons for moving	To be near friends, relatives, school or work (46%)	Need for sheltered housing (28%) or problems with health or disability (28%)
Source of referral	Direct application (55%)	Direct application (38%) or nominated by local authority (32%)

THE GEOGRAPHY OF BETWEEN REGION MIGRATION

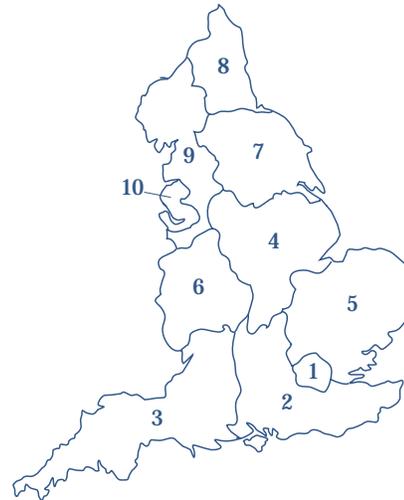
Recent research (Bate et al, 2000) on the geography of migration in England suggests that in the immediate future, as in the recent past, population increases will continue principally in the southern regions of the country. Significantly it is estimated that the movement of population from northern areas to southern areas contributes little to the process; population growth in the south arises principally from a combination of migration out of London, from natural increase and from some inward international migration. However, some northern and midland regions, and especially conurbations in these regions, continue to lose population at a critical rate. The bulk of movement out of the northern conurbations is to non-metropolitan parts of the same and adjacent regions, contributing to long established national counterurbanisation trends (Champion, 1999). London also conforms to the counterurbanisation pattern and as a consequence, uniquely for regions of the south, has experienced significant out migration. An analysis of the movement of RSL new tenants into and out of regions (including London) illustrates the manner in which RSL tenants match or depart from these national trends.

In 1999-2000, between region movement in the RSL sector was mainly between adjacent regions. Migrants from adjacent regions made up over 50% of all in-migrants except in three regions: the South West, the North East and Merseyside (Figure 3). In the South West the largest proportion of in-migrants not from adjacent regions (25%) was from London, in the North East, 20% came from the South East region and in Merseyside, 14% came from London. Similarly, out-migration, with the exception of two regions, was predominantly to adjacent regions. In the case of the North East, an additional 20% went to the South East and East regions (the clearest examples of a north-south drift), and in the case of Merseyside, a further 12% went to Yorkshire & Humberside. North to south movement of between region migrants in the RSL sector in 1999-2000 was small and relatively insignificant.

CORE analysis

FIGURE 3 Origin of within-region migrants

Region	% of in-migrants from adjacent regions	% of out-migrants to adjacent regions
1. London	57	71
2. South East	86	77
3. South West	42	51
4. East Midlands	73	81
5. East	74	57
6. West Midlands	66	63
7. Yorkshire & Humberside	54	51
8. North East	34	47
9. North West	62	67
10. Merseyside	43	40



Of all the regions, London recorded the largest out migration of RSL new tenants in 1999-2000. Even when allowance is made for regional differences in the size of RSL stock, London still remains the region with the largest out-migration (Table 5). The major beneficiaries of London migrants were the South East and the East, both adjacent to London with substantial non-metropolitan populations. The movement of RSL

new tenancies in London seems to conform to a counterurbanisation pattern and matches the general drift of population from London to adjacent regions. The South East region gains the most in absolute terms from net migration, although Yorkshire & Humberside gains more when net migration is measured as a proportion of stock (final column, Table 5).

TABLE 5 Net migration by region

Region	Out Migration	In Migration	Net Migration	Net migration / stock*1000
1. London	1418	523	-895	-8.55
8. North East	290	190	-100	-1.73
9. North West	602	501	-101	-0.42
10. Merseyside	202	206	4	0.06
4. East Midlands	595	608	13	0.27
6. West Midlands	496	551	55	0.27
3. South West	521	608	87	0.76
5. East	582	855	273	2.23
2. South East	863	1238	375	2.88
7. Yorkshire & Humberside	444	726	282	3.86

CONCLUSION

This report has demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of RSL new tenants are housed in the same region and local authority of their previous residence and that, when they do migrate across an administrative boundary, the majority move to an adjacent area. The analysis of movement into and out of London indicates that RSL new tenants contribute to the well established regional pattern of movement out of the capital to adjacent regions in the south and east, and further suggests that they conform to well established national patterns of out-migration from metropolitan areas. This latter pattern is also illustrated by the tendency of RSL new tenants who move to a different local authority district from their previous residence to favour the less deprived areas; as the DETR deprivation index demonstrates, the most deprived areas from which RSL tenants move are overwhelmingly metropolitan.

CORE analysis

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CORE ANNUAL DIGEST 1999/2000 - new publication

The CORE Annual Digest for 1999/2000 provides commentary and statistics on over 210,000 RSL lettings and 10,000 Sales. Following the successful introduction of a CD-ROM of statistical tables last year, we have again published the Digest with a similar CD and concise six-page summary of key facts. To order your copy contact Evelyn Quate at the JCSHR on 01334 467290. Price £10.

Copies of the 1998/99 CORE Annual Digest and CD can now be purchased at the reduced price of £10 (previously £25). The 1998/99 Digest includes a detailed 30 page commentary of RSL new lettings and sales.

CORE Data Analysis Service

CORE also operates a Data Analysis Service which provides special analyses of CORE data. CORE data can be invaluable for housing strategies, comparative studies, commercial assessments and many other applications. Analyses may be undertaken to meet needs at local authority, regional or national levels or for any selected subgroup of associations. Comparisons to show trends over time can be made. If you would like further information or to commission an analysis, please contact George Marshall on 020 7843 2266 at the National Housing Federation, 175 Grays Inn Road, London, WC1X 8UP (email: georgem@housing.org.uk)



Please visit the CORE Web Site at
www.core.ac.uk

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