

SDR 85/2016

13 July 2016

Social housing sales in Wales, 2015-16

This statistical release presents information on social housing sales in Wales and their impact on dwelling stock. It covers sales of both local authority and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings. Information relating to social housing sales refers to the financial year 2015-16, but also contains comparisons with figures for earlier periods. Information on dwelling stock estimates is as at 31 March 2015. Definitions of all terms used can be found in the 'Glossary' towards the end of the release.

This information is collected in order to assess the level of social housing sales across Wales during the period. The data are used by the Welsh Government and local authorities to help monitor trends in the overall level of Welsh housing stock, to assess the level and type of housing supply across Wales and as an indication of whether housing need is being met.

A [White Paper consultation](#) on the future of Right to Buy and Right Acquire was carried out by the Welsh Government between 22 January and 16 April 2015. The consultation put forward proposals for changes to the existing legislation in order to reduce the maximum discount available to a tenant applying to buy their home and also the development of new legislation to end Right to Buy and Right to Acquire in Wales. Further information is available in the 'Key quality information' section towards the end of this release.

Key Points

- The overall number of social housing sales has been increasing annually since 2009-10, though numbers remain well below the levels seen in the years prior to 2008-09.
- During 2015-16, the number of sales increased by 17 per cent, compared to the previous year, to 638. This varied by landlord type, with sales of registered social landlord (RSL) dwellings up by 28 per cent (to 447 dwellings), and local authority sales down by 2 per cent (to 191 dwellings).
- Over the last three years, the majority of all social housing sales have been statutory sales (via Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes), accounting for 56 per cent of all sales in 2015-16. Again this varied by landlord type, with statutory sales accounting for 93 per cent of all local authority sales, but for 41 per cent of all RSL sales.
- Since 2008-09, the majority of all social housing sales have been by RSLs. During 2015-16, RSL sales accounted for over two thirds (70 per cent) of all social housing sales.

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1. Wider Context

The total number of dwellings in Wales at 31 March 2015 was estimated to be 1.4 million, which is an increase of 10.3 per cent since 2000-01. The tenure pattern of dwellings has changed over this period, with the private sector (owner-occupied and privately rented dwellings) expanding and socially rented housing declining. By 31 March 2015, the private sector accounted for 84 per cent of all dwellings, compared with 81 per cent in 2000-01, whilst the social rented sector had declined to 16 per cent, from 19 per cent of total stock in 2000-01.

The tenure distribution of current dwelling stock is influenced by the sales of social housing stock through Right to Buy and other schemes. Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, a total of 192 local authority and 447 Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings were sold and, therefore, became private sector dwellings. These sales will have resulted in an increase of 638 dwellings in private sector stock – other factors such as new build and conversions will also affect levels of private sector stock.

During 2015 the Welsh Government consulted on proposals on the future of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes. Proposals included:

- (a) Reducing the maximum discount available to a tenant who applies to buy their home from their council or housing association and,
- (b) Developing new legislation which, if passed by the National Assembly for Wales, will end the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire.

On 14 July 2015, the maximum discount available in relation to Right to Buy and Right to Acquire properties was reduced from £16,000 to £8,000.

Whilst we have no specific evidence of how tenants may have reacted to these proposals, the reduction in the maximum discount and anticipation of the potential ending of Right to Buy and Right to Acquire in Wales may have changed tenants' behaviour during 2015-16 and affected the number applying to make use of these schemes.

2. All Social Housing Sales

The information that follows, on the number of social housing sales in Wales, is based on the reports of local authorities and RSLs. It covers statutory sales of social housing through the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes, as well as non-statutory (voluntary and other) sales of stock held by local authorities and RSLs.

- Overall, the total number of social housing sales has been decreasing since the peak of over 7,000 sales in 2003-04. Though numbers have been increasing slightly since 2009-10 they still remain well below the levels seen in the years prior to 2008-09. During 2015-16, there were a total of 638 social housing sales, up by 17 per cent on 2014-15. This increase was due to the rise in RSL sales which were up by 28 per cent on the previous year, to 447 dwellings, while the sale of local authority housing fell by 2 per cent over the same period (Table1).

Table 1 – Social Housing Sales (a)

Year	Local Authority Dwellings			Registered Social Landlord Dwellings			Total Social Housing Sales (d)
	Right to Buy	Voluntary and Other	Total Sales	Right to Buy and Right to Acquire (b)	Voluntary and Other (c)	Total Sales	
2000-01	3,475	64	3,539	85	140	225	3,764
2001-02	3,448	14	3,462	68	188	256	3,718
2002-03	4,913	86	4,999	79	194	273	5,272
2003-04	6,811	54	6,865	96	226	322	7,187
2004-05	3,974	25	3,999	181	234	415	4,414
2005-06	1,787	7	1,794	78	163	241	2,035
2006-07	1,250	38	1,288	71	341	412	1,700
2007-08	821	14	835	52	351	403	1,238
2008-09	158	0	158	51	188	239	397
2009-10	139	1	140	35	174	209	349
2010-11	103	12	115	69	191	260	375
2011-12	82	2	84	89	239	328	412
2012-13	94	10	104	76	246	322	426
2013-14(e)	156	23	179	97	162	259	438
2014-15(e)	176	19	195	110	239	349	544
2015-16(e)	177	14	191	182	265	447	638

Source: Social housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

(a) Data is affected by the large scale voluntary stock transfers of local authority stock. See the 'Key quality information' section for further details.

(b) Right to Acquire figures collected for October to December 2004-05 onwards

(c) Voluntary sales figures collected from registered social landlords from January to March 2010 onwards.

(d) Total Social Housing Sales covers the total number of Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord dwellings sold

(e) For 2013-14 onwards a new single form was used to collect sales data for LAs and RSLs. This has meant some changes in definitions. For more information please see 'Key quality information'.

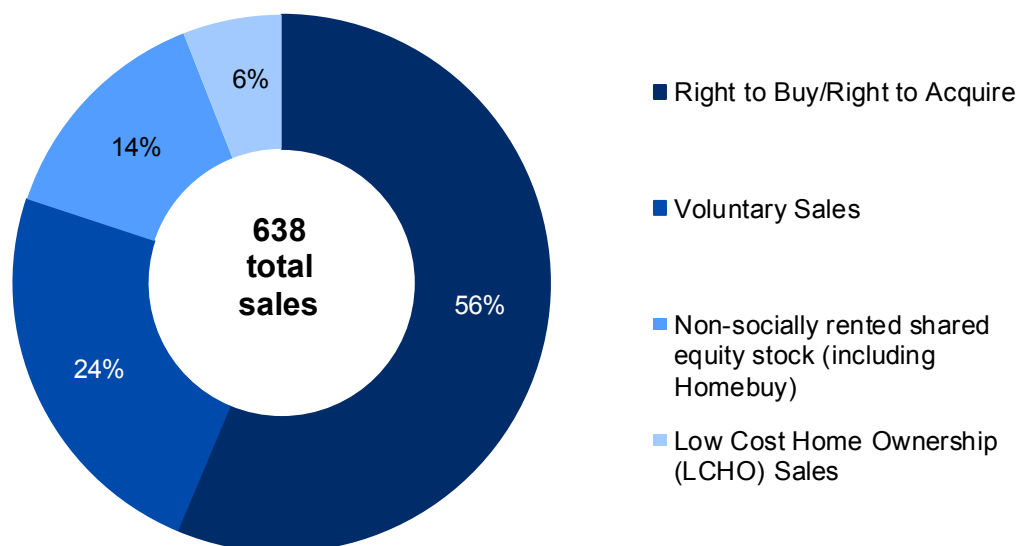
- Prior to 2009-10, the majority of all sales were statutory sales, through the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes. This trend switched between 2009-10 and 2012-13, with more non-statutory sales. Over the past three years however, the majority of sales were statutory and accounted for 56 per cent (359 dwellings) of all sales during 2015-16.

Whilst the majority of social housing is rented out at social rent prices (i.e. social rented dwellings), some social housing have intermediate rents, which are above social rents, but below market rents. These are known as non-social rented dwellings. Following the changes to the data collected on social housing sales for 2013-14 onwards, it is possible to differentiate between sales of social rented and non-social rented dwellings. Non-social rented dwellings will also include shared equity, low cost home ownership and other shared ownership dwellings. Further information is available in the 'Key quality information'.

- Over two thirds (71 per cent) of all sales during 2015-16 were of social rented dwellings, but this represented less than 1 per cent of the 224,090¹ social rented dwellings at 31 March 2015. The remaining 188 sales (29 per cent) were of non-social rented dwellings, including shared-equity, low-cost home ownership, intermediate rented, other intermediate dwellings and non social rented voluntary sales. These sales could have been made through schemes such as Homebuy, Rent First or Homes within Reach.
- During 2015-16, over half of all sales (56 per cent) were statutory sales via the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire schemes, and just under a quarter (24 per cent) were voluntary sales. Voluntary sales include the outright sale of a property where, for example, it is surplus to requirements due to low demand or where it is uneconomic to repair.
- A further 14 per cent of all sales during 2015-16 were via shared equity schemes. Shared equity schemes such as Home Buy allow those who are unable to meet their housing needs in the market to buy a home. Where the scheme is available the social landlord provides an equity loan of between 30 and 50 per cent of the property purchase price. The loan can be repaid at any time but must be repaid when the house is sold.

There were 38 sales (6 per cent of all sales) via the low-cost home ownership scheme during 2015-16. This scheme allows qualifying purchasers to buy a share of the property with a proportional rent payable on the remaining share to the social landlord (Chart 1)..

Chart 1 - Percentage of Sales by Type, 2015-16



Source: Social housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

¹ Includes all self-contained and non-self-contained social rented dwellings and assumes 3 bed spaces are equal to one dwelling.

3. Social Housing Sales by Local Authority

Looking at social housing sales by both local authorities and RSLs, the highest number of statutory sales (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) during 2015-16 was in Wrexham (44 dwellings), followed by Caerphilly (34 dwellings). Pembrokeshire reported the highest number of all non-statutory (voluntary and other) sales (62 dwellings), followed by Cardiff (31 dwellings).

Table 2 – Number of Statutory (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) and Non-Statutory Sales by Local Authority, 2015-16 (a) (b)

	Local Authority Sales			Registered Social Landlord Sales			Total Social Housing Sales (c)		
	Right to Buy	Voluntary and Other	Total Sales	Right to Acquire	Voluntary and Other	Total Sales	Right to Buy and Acquire	Voluntary and Other	Total Sales
Isle of Anglesey	10	0	10	0	4	4	10	4	14
Gwynedd	.	.	.	15	11	26	15	11	26
Conwy	.	.	.	4	9	13	4	9	13
Denbighshire	8	0	8	0	6	6	8	6	14
Flintshire	11	0	11	3	8	11	14	8	22
Wrexham	42	0	42	2	1	3	44	1	45
Powys	15	0	15	0	3	3	15	3	18
Ceredigion	.	.	.	1	3	4	1	3	4
Pembrokeshire	11	0	11	1	62	63	12	62	74
Carmarthenshire (d)	3	0	3	0	7	7	3	7	10
Swansea (d)	19	0	19	2	5	7	21	5	26
Neath Port Talbot	.	.	.	21	16	37	21	16	37
Bridgend	.	.	.	10	19	29	10	19	29
The Vale of Glamorgan	8	0	8	0	11	11	8	11	19
Cardiff	19	14	33	2	17	19	21	31	52
Rhondda Cynon Taf	.	.	.	26	26	52	26	26	52
Merthyr Tydfil	.	.	.	26	1	27	26	1	27
Caerphilly	31	0	31	3	23	26	34	23	57
Blaenau Gwent	.	.	.	20	5	25	20	5	25
Torfaen	.	.	.	15	5	20	15	5	20
Monmouthshire	.	.	.	4	9	13	4	9	13
Newport	.	.	.	27	14	41	27	14	41
Wales	177	14	191	182	265	447	359	279	638

Source: Social housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

(a) Data is affected by the large scale voluntary stock transfers of local authority stock. See the 'Key quality information' section for further details.

(b) For 2013-14 onwards a new single form was used to collect sales data for LAs and RSLs. This has meant some changes in definitions. For more information please see 'Key quality information'.

(c) Total Social Housing Sales covers the total number of Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord dwellings sold.

(d) In Carmarthenshire Right to Buy and Right to Acquire were suspended in a direction under the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure on 19 January 2015 and in Swansea they were both suspended on 30 March 2015. The sales shown in the table are based on applications made prior to the suspensions coming into force. More information on the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure is available in the Key Quality Information section.

. Not applicable - Local Authority has transferred stock to RSLs. See point 10 in key quality information section.

Statutory sales of RSL dwellings (via the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes) were less widespread across Wales than non-statutory sales. In 5 of the 22 local authorities, RSLs reported no statutory sales, whilst only one statutory sale was reported in a further 2 authorities.

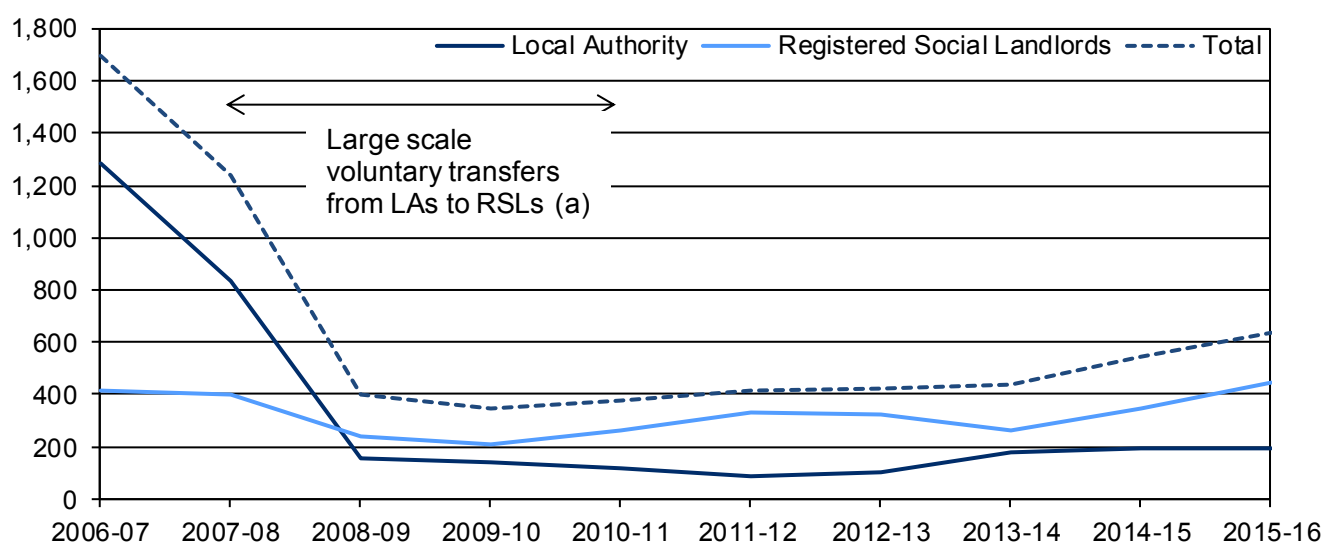
During 2015-16, the highest volume of statutory RSL sales was in Newport (27 dwellings), followed by Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf both with 26 dwellings sold.

In contrast to statutory sales, RSLs reported non-statutory (voluntary and other) sales in all local authorities. The largest number of non-statutory RSL sales was reported in Pembrokeshire (62 dwellings), whilst the lowest numbers were in Wrexham and Merthyr Tydfil (both only 1 dwelling).

4. Sales by Landlord Type

Since 2008-09, the majority of social housing sales have been sales of RSL dwellings. It is noticeable that, according to the dwelling stock estimates, the amount of social housing owned and managed by RSLs has been increasing substantially since 2007-08. The majority of social sector dwellings have been owned and managed by RSLs since 2010-11, this is mainly due to the large-scale voluntary transfers of stock from local authorities to RSLs (see point 9 in the 'Key quality information').

Chart 2– Number of Social Housing Sales by Landlord Type (a)



Source: Annual social housing sales returns from Local Authorities and RSLs.

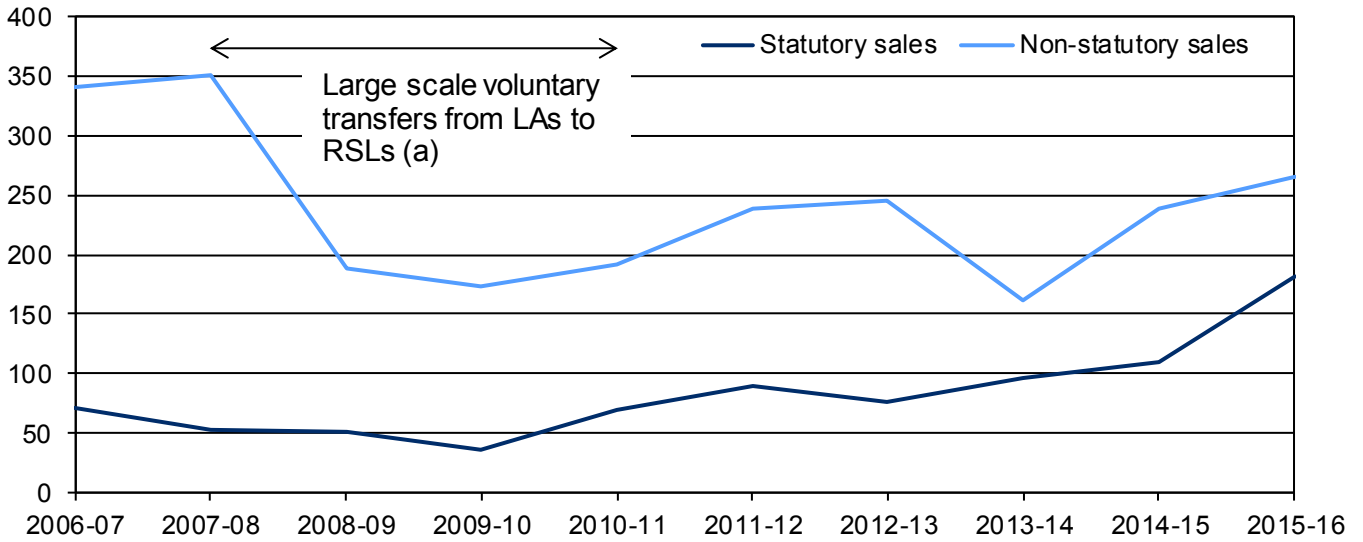
(a) See point 10 in Key Quality Information section

- The proportion of social housing sales that were RSL dwellings increased annually from 2003-04, reaching a peak of 80 per cent of total sales in 2011-12. The proportion of RSLs sales decreased in subsequent years, dropping to 59 per cent (259 dwellings) during 2013-14, before increasing again. During 2015-16, RSL sales accounted for 70 per cent of all sales (447 dwellings).
- The number and proportion of social housing sales that were local authority dwellings fell consistently from 2003-04 to 2011-12 (in contrast to RSL sales). Local authority sales increased for those local authorities retaining social housing stock during the subsequent two years, reaching 41 per cent (179 dwellings) in 2013-14. During 2015-16, there were 191 local authority sales, which represented 30 per cent of all social housing sales across Wales.
- The majority of both local authority and RSL sales in 2015-16 were stock rented at social rent prices, though the proportion was higher for local authorities (93 per cent) than for RSLs (61 per cent). However, the total number of social rented dwellings sold was higher for RSLs (273 dwellings) than for local authorities (177 dwellings) during 2015-16.

5. Sales by Type of Sale

The proportion of statutory and non-statutory sales differs between the local authorities and the RSLs. Whilst, on average, more than 95 per cent of all local authority sales each year are via the Right to Buy scheme, the majority of RSL sales each year are non-statutory. This may be because most non-statutory sales are of non-social rented dwellings, and the majority of social housing not at social rents tends to be RSL dwellings. At 31 March 2016, 93 per cent of all of social housing at non-social rents were RSL dwellings, whilst only 7 per cent were local authority dwellings.

Chart 3 – Number of Registered Social Landlord Sales by Type of Sale (a).

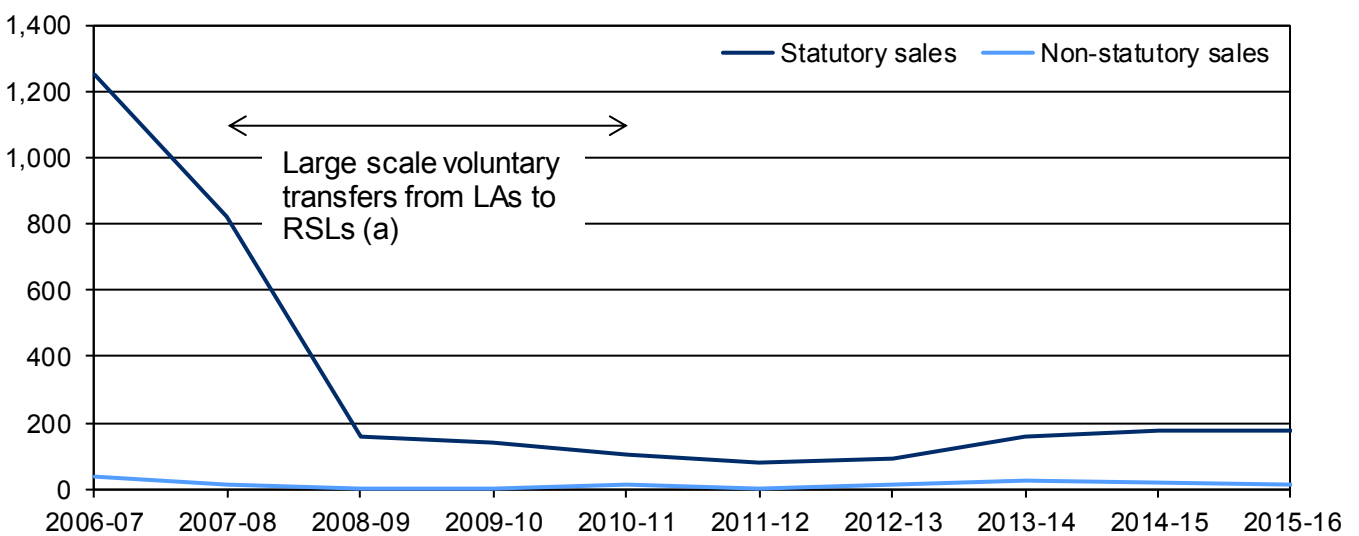


Source: Annual social housing sales returns from Local Authorities and RSLs.

(a) See point 10 in Key Quality Information section

- During 2015-16, the majority of RSL sales (59 per cent) continued to be non-statutory, increasing to 265 dwellings, from 239 dwellings during 2014-15. Two thirds of the non-statutory sales were sales of non-social rented dwellings, up from 53 per cent during 2014-15.
- The statutory sale of RSL dwellings, via the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes, has been generally increasing since 2009-10, reaching 182 statutory sales during 2015-16. All of these statutory sales were sales of social rented dwellings.

Chart 4 – Number of Local Authority Sales by Type of Sale (a).



Source: Annual social housing sales returns from Local Authorities and RSLs.

(a) See point 10 in Key Quality Information section

- In contrast to RSLs, the majority of local authority sales during 2015-16 continued to be statutory sales (via the Right to Buy scheme), which accounted for 93 per cent of all local authority sales.
- Over the five years between 2000-01 and 2004-05, there was an average of around 4,500 Right to Buy sales of local authority dwellings each year, dropping to less than 2,000 a year during 2005-06 and 2006-07. Over the period from 2007-08 to 2010-11, many local authorities transferred their stock to RSLs. Since then, the number of local authority sales through Right to Buy has decreased further, dropping below 100 sales during 2011-12 and 2012-13. The number of Right to Buy sales of local authority dwellings has risen in recent years, but is still below 200 each year.
- The number of local authority dwellings sold through Right to Buy has been increasing year on year since 2011-12, reaching 177 dwellings during 2015-16, all of which were social rented dwellings. There were 14 non-statutory sales of local authority dwellings during 2015-16, all of which were non-social rented dwellings.

6. Key Quality Information

1. In addition to the information below, further details can be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#) which is available on our website.

Policy Context

2. The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016. The indicators and associated technical information can be found here: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/how-do-you-measure-nations-progress-national-indicators>.

Further information on the Act can be found here:- <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act>

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Data Source and Coverage

Social Housing Sales

3. Information is collected annually, via Excel spreadsheets downloaded from the Afon file transfer website, which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current social housing sales data collection forms are available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/social-housing-sales-local-authorities-registered-social-landlords-data-collection/?lang=en>
4. Further information on the data processing cycle can also be found in in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).
5. Data were requested from all of the 22 Local Authorities in Wales and from all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). Those social landlords without stock at 31 March 2016 were not required to submit a data return.

Registered Social Landlord Sales

6. The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire sales shown in the release are classified as statutory sales.
7. The voluntary and other sales shown in the release include those purchased under shared equity, intermediate rented, low cost homeownership (including shared ownership) and other intermediate sales such as flexible tenure for the elderly and extra care housing options.
8. The RSL sales guidance was updated from January-March 2010 onwards. We now only count shared ownership sales when they are completed and the landlord no longer owns a share. Prior to this we only counted these sales when the initial share was sold. As a result some properties have been counted at the point of initial sale before 2010 and may be counted again if the resident buys the property outright.

Stock

9. Estimates of the total dwelling stock are calculated annually by the Welsh Government and are based on data from the population census. Estimates from the census are updated annually to take account of new house building and demolitions. The breakdown of dwelling stock estimates by tenure is estimated from the Annual Population Survey, local authority returns and RSL returns.

10. Data on social housing stock has been affected by the large scale voluntary transfers of local authority housing stock to RSLs, as shown below. All transfers covered 100 per cent of the local authority housing stock.

Local authority	Date of transfer	Registered social landlord
Bridgend	12 September 2003	Valleys to Coast
Rhondda Cynon Taf	10 December 2007	RCT Homes
Monmouthshire	17 January 2008	Monmouthshire Housing
Torfaen	01 April 2008	Bron Afon Community Housing
Conwy	29 September 2008	Cartrefi Conwy
Newport	09 March 2009	Newport City Homes
Merthyr Tydfil	20 March 2009	Merthyr Valleys Homes
Ceredigion	30 November 2009	Tai Ceredigion
Gwynedd	12 April 2010	Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd
Blaenau Gwent	26 July 2010	Tai Calon Community Housing
Neath Port Talbot	05 March 2011	NPT Homes

11. The Dwelling Stock Estimates for 2014-15 were released on 20 April 2016. For detailed methodology and quality information for dwelling stock estimates quoted in this release, see the dwelling stock estimates statistical first release:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>

Users and Uses

12. This information is collected in order to assess the level of social housing sales across Wales during the period. The data is used to help monitor trends in the overall level of Welsh housing stock. Data is also used by the Welsh Government and local authorities to help assess the level and type of housing supply across Wales and as an indication as to whether housing need is being met.
13. More generally the information is used for:
- Monitoring housing trends;
 - Policy development;
 - Advice to Ministers;
 - Informing debate in the National Assembly for Wales and beyond; and
 - Geographic profiling, comparisons and benchmarking.
14. There are a variety of users of these statistics, including national and local government, researchers, academics and students. For further information on the users and uses please refer to the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).

Quality

15. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods, and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

16. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political reference.
17. Welsh housing statistics adhere to the Welsh Government's [Statistical Quality Management Strategy](#), and this is in line with the European Statistical System's six dimensions of quality, as listed in Principle 4 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further detail on how these are adhered to can be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#), which covers the general principles and processes leading up to the production of our housing statistics. The report covers various topics including definitions, coverage, timeliness, relevance and comparability.
18. The 2015-16 collection achieved a 100% response rate.

Administrative Data Quality Assurance

19. Data are collected from local authorities and registered social landlords via Excel spreadsheets. These are downloaded from the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data.
20. The spreadsheets allow respondents to validate some data before sending to the Welsh Government. Respondents are also given an opportunity to include contextual information where large changes have occurred (e.g. data items changing by more than 10% compared to the previous year). This enables some data cleansing at source and minimises follow up queries.
21. Local authorities and registered social landlords are notified of the data collection exercise timetable in advance. This allows adequate time for local authorities and registered social landlords to collate their information, and to raise any issues they may have. There is guidance in the spreadsheet, which assists users on completing the form.
22. Examples of validation checks within the forms include year-on-year changes, cross checks with other relevant data tables and checks to ensure data is logically consistent.

Validation and Verification

23. Once we receive the data, it goes through further validation and verification checks, for example:
 - Common sense check for any missing/incorrect data without any explanation;
 - Arithmetic consistency checks;
 - Cross checks against the data for the previous year;
 - Cross checks with other relevant data collections;
 - Thorough tolerance checks;
 - Verification that data outside of tolerances is actually correct.
24. If there is a validation error, we contact the local authority or registered social landlord and seek resolution. If we fail to get an answer within a reasonable timescale, we will use imputation to improve data quality. We will then inform the organisation and explain to them how we have amended or imputed the data. The method of imputation and the affected data is highlighted in the 'quality information' section of the first release.

Data Quality

25. In tables where figures have been rounded, the sum of the individual figures may not equal the total shown.
26. The Welsh Government's [guidance on statistical quality](#) is available.

Symbols

27. The following symbols may have been used in this release:

- negligible (less than half the final digit shown)
- .
- .. not available
- ~ not yet available
- * disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication
- p provisional
- r revised

Comparability

28. Prior to the 2011-12 collection, information on social housing sales was collected on a quarterly basis. The quarterly figures have been aggregated to create annual totals that are comparable with data for 2011-12 onwards.

29. During the spring of 2012 a consultation was carried out on proposed changes to the Social Housing Sales data collection. This consultation sought views on changes to the data items collected and the accompanying definitions and the use of publications on social housing sales. The changes were aimed at ensuring that the information collected and published on social housing sales remained relevant and accurate and meets the needs of users. A summary of responses to this consultation is available at:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/statistics/socialhousing/?lang=en&status=closed>

30. The forms remained unchanged for 2012-13, to allow data providers extra time to make the necessary changes to their data processing systems and to familiarise themselves with the new data requirements, definitions and guidance. For the 2013-14 data collection onwards however one form for both RSLs and local authorities was introduced and changes were made to the data items collected, in line with the consultation proposals. Information was also requested separately covering the sale of social rented dwellings and non-social rented dwellings. These changes are reflected in this release.

The Housing (Wales) Measure 2011

31. The Housing (Wales) Measure 2011 was passed by the National Assembly on 22 March 2011 and approved by the Privy Council on 10 May 2011. The Housing (Wales) Measure 2011 makes provision to support the more effective delivery of affordable housing in Wales. The 'Measure' contains two elements as outlined below:

- The 'Measure' enabled Welsh Ministers, on application from a local housing authority, to suspend the Right to Buy, the Preserved Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire held by tenants of a social housing provider in Wales, in areas of housing pressure.
- The 'Measure' will also provide the Welsh Ministers with enhanced regulatory and intervention powers concerning the provision of housing by Registered Social Landlords.

Further information is available at the following link:

<http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/publications/measure2011/?lang=en>

To date 2 local authorities have suspended the Right to Buy, the Preserved Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire under the 2011 'Measure'. These are Carmarthenshire on 19th January 2015 and Swansea on 30th March 2015. Applications for suspension have been made by the Isle of Anglesey, Flintshire and Powys and these are currently under consideration by Welsh Government officials.

White Paper Consultation

32. A 'Consultation on the future of Right to Buy and Right to Acquire – a white paper for social housing' was carried out by the Welsh Government between 22 January and 16 April 2015. The consultation sought views on the following two proposals:

- changing existing legislation – which will reduce the maximum discount available to a tenant who applies to buy their home from their Council or Housing Association landlord;
- developing new legislation – which, if passed by the National Assembly for Wales, will end the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire.

Further information including a summary of responses received is available at the following link:
<http://gov.wales/consultations/housing-and-regeneration/future-of-right-to-buy/?status=closed&lang=en>

33. Following the May 2015 National Assembly for Wales elections, the First Minister has announced his intention to introduce a bill during 2016-17 to abolish the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes:
<http://gov.wales/newsroom/firstminister/2016/160628legprog/?lang=en>

Change in Level of Discount

34. On 14 July 2015, the maximum discount available in relation to Right to Buy and Right to Acquire properties was reduced from £16,000 to £8,000. The change was made by the Housing (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2015. Social landlords were required to ensure that any applications served on them before 14th July 2015 were subject to a maximum discount of £16,000 but any applications served on them after that date would be subject to a maximum discount of £8,000.

Accuracy

35. A series of validation steps are used to ensure that the data are correct and consistent. Upon receipt of the data, it is checked that it is complete and internally consistent. Confirmation is also sought for large numbers of units reported. If there are any problems or unexpected changes in the data, the providers are contacted for confirmation or correction of the data.

Revisions

36. This release contains the final data for 2015-16. Revisions can arise from events such as late returns from a local authority or RSL or when a data supplier notifies the Welsh Government that they have submitted incorrect information and resubmits this. Occasionally, revisions can occur due to errors in our statistical processes. In these cases, a judgement is made as to whether the change is significant enough to publish a revised statistical release.
37. Where changes are not deemed to be significant i.e. minor changes, these will be updated in the following year's statistical release. However, minor amendments to the figures may be reflected in the StatsWales tables prior to that next release.
38. We follow the Welsh Government's statistical revisions policy, details of which are available at:
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/about/statement-of-compliance/revisions-errors-postponements/?lang=en>

Accessibility

39. A full set of data on new social housing sales, including information by individual local authority and RSL is available to download from our StatsWales interactive website at the following link:
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Social-Housing-Sales>

Coherence with Other Statistics

Dwelling Stock Estimates

40. Estimates of the total dwelling stock are calculated by the Welsh Government and are based on data from the population censuses. The breakdown of dwelling stock estimates by tenure is estimated from 2011 Census information and information from the Annual Population Survey, local authority returns and registered social landlord (RSL) returns. Dwelling stock estimates between the 2001 and 2011 censuses have been revised to take account of the 2011 Census count of dwellings. The latest information on dwelling stock estimates is available at the following link:
<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>

Related Statistics

41. We publish a range of statistics on the housing market which you may find useful. These include the house price index, affordable housing provision and social housing stock. These are available from our website: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/?topic=Housing+and+regeneration&lang=en>

Related Statistics for Other UK Countries

England

42. England collects information annually on social housing sales for local authorities and publishes some summary information on sales of Registered Provider stock (previously known as Registered Social Landlords or housing associations). There is also information on the transfer of local authority dwellings to Registered Providers in the live tables:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/social-housing-sales-including-right-to-buy-and-transfers>

Scotland

43. Scotland collects information quarterly on all sales of local authority owned housing using two data collection returns which differ in terms of coverage.

44. The SALES1 summary return collects information on applications for and sales of local authority owned housing only. It covers all sales, not just sales to sitting tenants. Sales figures in local authorities that have transferred their housing stock to housing associations are **excluded** from the local authority figures.

45. The SALES3 case based return collects information on sales to sitting tenants only. This includes right to buy sales, rent to mortgage sales and voluntary sales. To create a consistent time series of right to buy sales and compare trends across Scotland, sales figures in local authorities that have transferred their housing stock to housing associations are **included** in the figures. The published tables are available at the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/Sales>

46. Some Housing Association data is included in the summary tables published in order to provide a more complete picture of Right to buy impact across Scotland. Further data on Housing Association Right to Buy transactions is published by the Scottish Housing Regulator on their website at:

www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk

47. More recently, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 will end the Right to Buy for all tenants. This will take effect after a 2-year notice period which ends in August 2016. Further information is available at the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-egeneration/HSfS/Sales/rtbentitlepage>

Northern Ireland

48. Information of sales to social housing tenants in Northern Ireland is available from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, in the following reports:

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/northern_ireland_housing_market_perspectives_2015-2018.pdf

http://www.nihe.gov.uk/43rd_annual_report.pdf

7. Glossary

Statutory sales

Statutory sales include all social rented dwellings sold to tenants through the **Right to Buy** or **Right to Acquire** schemes.

Right to Buy

The Right to Buy (RTB) scheme was introduced by the 1980 Housing Act and came into effect in October 1980. The RTB scheme allows qualifying tenants of local authorities and RSLs to purchase the home they rent from the social landlord at discounted prices, according to the length of their tenancy. RTB discounts range from 32 per cent to 70 per cent of the market value, and prior to 14 July 2015 up to a maximum discount of £16,000, depending on the type of property, the residential area and time spent as a tenant of social housing. RTB may not apply to certain types of property and restrictions to subsequent sales apply in rural areas. Further information is available from the Welsh Government website at: <http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/housing-supply/buying-and-selling/council-house/?lang=en>

Right to Acquire

The Right to Acquire (RTA) scheme was introduced by the 1996 Housing Act and came into effect from 1 April 1997. This scheme only applies to tenants of registered social landlords. The Right to Acquire scheme gives qualifying tenants of RSLs a right to purchase their home, if the property was provided using Social Housing Grant or was transferred from a local authority on or after 1 April 1997, subject to specified exceptions. Qualifying tenants are entitled, prior to 14 July 2015, to a discount of 25 per cent of the value of the property, up to a maximum of £16,000.

Following the public consultation on the future of the Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire (referred to in paragraph 22 above), from 14 July 2015 onwards, the maximum discount available in relation to Right to Buy and Right to Acquire properties changed from the current level of £16,000 to £8,000. The change is made by the Housing (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) (Limits on Discount) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2015. This Order amends the Housing (Right to Acquire) (Discount) (Wales) Order 1997 and the Housing (Right to Buy) (Limits on Discount) (Wales) Order 1999 to reduce the discount available, in relation to both Right to Acquire and Right to Buy, to £8,000 from £16,000. Social landlords needed to ensure any applications served on them before 14 July 2015 were subject to a maximum discount of £16,000, but any applications served on them on or after 14 July 2015 were subject to a maximum discount of £8,000.

Non-statutory sales

Non-statutory sales include the **voluntary** outright sale of property which may be surplus to requirements due to low demand or is uneconomic to repair and other sales. Other sales will include those sold via **shared ownership** and low cost home ownership schemes as well as the sale of intermediate rented properties and the sale of other intermediate dwellings such as **Extra care housing** and **Flexible tenure for the elderly**.

Voluntary sales

This includes the outright sale of property; for example, if the property is surplus to requirements due to low demand or is uneconomic to repair. They will include any sales to non-registered RSLs or the private sector and can be sales of both social rented and non-social rented dwellings.

Shared ownership

This scheme allows qualifying purchasers to buy a share of the property value with a proportional rent payable on the remaining share to the RSL. Shared ownership has largely been replaced by the **Homebuy** scheme.

Homebuy

The Homebuy scheme is administered by housing associations and helps people who are unable to meet their housing needs in the market to buy a suitable home. Where the scheme is available, the housing association provides an equity loan of between 30 and 50 per cent of the property purchase price (although percentages may vary). When the loan is repaid, the amount repayable will be the same agreed percentage of the value of the property at the time. The loan can be repaid at any time, but must be repaid when the property is sold.

There are two ways that Homebuy loans are provided:

- Housing associations can choose to sell any property in its ownership on Homebuy equity sharing terms. This will include sales of properties under 'neutral tenure' principles where newbuild properties are let or sold according to the need of the applicant.
- 'Do-it-Yourself' or 'DIY' Homebuy - eligible purchasers can choose a qualifying property from the open market and the RSL provides an equity loan for a percentage of the purchase price.

Extra care housing

These are specific housing schemes, offering flats and support amenities to elderly people. Residents may opt to rent or to buy, where available.

Flexible tenure for the elderly

Includes specific housing schemes developed in 1990s to provide flexible tenure options for older people in housing schemes designed specifically for their needs.

Intermediate Rents (Including Rent First)

The unit is owned by the social landlord and the rent is set above the social level but below market level. They can be Welsh Government grant funded or landlord funded.

Low Cost Home Ownership

This scheme allows qualifying purchasers to buy a share of the property with a proportional rent payable on the remaining share to the social landlord.

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)

RSLs are organisations that provide and manage properties for people who would otherwise be unable to afford to rent or buy privately. Registered social landlord (RSL) is the technical name for housing associations that are registered with the Welsh Government and are inspected on a regular basis to maintain a good standard of management.

Social rented

These are wholly rented dwellings owned and managed by local authorities and registered social landlords, with rent levels set below market rents.

Non-social rented

Some social housing will have intermediate rents that are above social rents, but below market rents, these are known as non-social rented dwellings. As well as intermediate rented dwellings (including Rent First), non-social rented dwellings will also include shared equity (including **Homebuy**), low cost home ownership (**including shared ownership**) and other investment properties and dwellings not at social rents.

8. Further information

Further information is available from the Housing Statistics web site:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/?topic=Housing+and+community&lang=en>

More detailed data are available on the StatsWales website:

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Social-Housing-Sales>

Data Collection forms used to collect the information presented within this release can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/social-housing-sales-local-authorities-registered-social-landlords-data-collection/?lang=en>

We actively encourage feedback from our users. If you have any comments please e-mail us at:

stats.housing@wales.gsi.gov.uk

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National Statistics status

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.



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