

## Additional Affordable Housing Provision in Wales

### What are these statistics?

Additional affordable housing statistics provide summary information on the number of additional affordable housing units delivered across Wales during the year. The figures cover all additional affordable housing units, whether through new build, purchase, acquisition, leasing or conversion of existing dwellings. They do not take account of any loss of affordable housing stock through demolitions or sales during the year.

As well as the detailed analysis shown within this annual release, all data at an individual local authority and National Park level are published on StatsWales.

### Policy and operational context

Affordable housing applies to housing where there are secure mechanisms in place to ensure that it is accessible to those who cannot afford market housing, both on first occupation and for subsequent occupiers as defined in [Technical Advice Note \(TAN\) 2: Planning and Affordable Housing \(2006\)](#).

The figures cover all additional affordable housing units, whether through new build, purchase, acquisition, leasing or conversion of existing dwellings. They do not take account of any loss of affordable housing stock through demolitions or sales during the year.

Affordable housing includes social rented housing that is provided by local authorities and registered social landlords as well as intermediate housing where prices or rents are above those of social rent but below market housing prices or rents. Figures include additional affordable housing units provided under schemes which may provide for stair-casing to full ownership as long as there are secure arrangements in place to ensure the recycling of capital receipts to provide replacement affordable housing.

The additional affordable housing figures shown within this release includes those housing units leased to provide accommodation for homeless families where the lease is for more than a year. It should be noted however that these units do not fully conform to the TAN 2 definition in relation to the subsequent occupation once the lease has expired.

The additional affordable housing figures will include any units that have been specifically delivered through planning obligations (section 106 agreements) or planning conditions either as a part of or as a result of market housing developments. The number of affordable homes provided on a particular site will be determined by the local authority's planning policy and negotiations with the developer. The agreed affordable housing contribution will be secured via a section 106 agreement which is a legally binding contract between a developer and a local planning authority that operates alongside a planning permission.

The data collection was originally introduced to monitor the progress made towards the target to increase the supply of affordable homes in Wales by 6,500 by 2011 as set out in 'One Wales' the previous government strategy.

In September 2016, the current Welsh Government have announced the Programme '[Taking Wales Forward 2016 -2021](#)' which includes a commitment to work in partnership to deliver an extra affordable homes 20,000 during 2016-21, including supporting construction of more than 6,000 homes through the Help to Buy scheme. Under the Help to Buy- Wales scheme, loans are available to buyers wishing to purchase a new-build property worth up to £300,000.

In February 2018 the Welsh Government introduced two new schemes, [Rent to Own – Wales](#) and [Shared Ownership – Wales](#), aimed at offering the opportunity of home ownership to households who can afford the monthly mortgage payments but do not have the level of deposit normally required to purchase a home.

Under Rent to Own – Wales, aspiring buyers will pay market rents for new-build homes from participating housing associations, and will have the option to purchase these from the end of the second year of their rental period. Upon exercising the option to purchase, the aspiring buyer will be gifted an amount equivalent to 25% of the rent they have paid and 50% of any increase in the value of the home, to use as a mortgage deposit. This will help them to purchase the home that they are renting. **Information on affordable housing units delivered via the new Rent to Own scheme-Wales are not included in the total additional affordable housing figures shown within this release as they do not fully conform with the TAN 2 definition.** A breakdown of the Rent to Own – Wales figures has however been provided in Section 6 of the release.

Shared Ownership - Wales is a part-buy, part-rent scheme suitable for aspiring buyers who have some deposit but are unable to obtain the level of mortgage to purchase the home outright. Aspiring buyers can purchase an initial share of 25% to 75% of the value of new-build homes, which are available for this scheme from participating housing associations. They can staircase up to full ownership at any time. Rent will be payable on the un-owned share. The number of additional affordable housing units delivered using the Shared Ownership - Wales scheme are included in the **total additional affordable housing figures shown within this release as they do conform to the TAN 2 definition.**

Local authorities set overall Affordable Housing targets in their Affordable Housing Delivery Statements and are required to set targets in their Local Development Plans (LDPs) for affordable housing delivered through the planning system.

In June 2019, Welsh Government published [estimates of additional housing need split by tenure \(affordable and market\), at a national and regional level.](#)

## Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

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.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Well-being of Wales report](#).

The statistics included in this release could 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.

### Users and uses

This information is used to look at trends in the provision of additional affordable housing units over time. This information will be used alongside other information (including on Help to Buy) to monitor the progress made towards the current government’s target to deliver 20,000 affordable homes as well as monitoring the commitments outlined in the [‘National Housing Strategy’](#).

Local authorities and National Parks use the information to monitor local affordable housing delivery targets; develop their Local Housing Market Assessments; for effective cross-authority working on Affordable Housing issues and accurate benchmarking; for evidencing how housing demand is being met locally and for assessing future requirement and need in order to plan and allocate resources effectively.

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
- Geographic profiling, comparisons and benchmarking.

There is a variety of users of these statistics including national and local government, researchers, academics and students.

## Strengths and limitations of the data

### Strengths

- The information is processed and published frequently and in an ordered manner to enable users to see the statistics when they are current and of greatest interest.
- Outputs have a clear focus on Wales and have been developed to meet the internal and external user need in Wales.
- Detailed statistics are provided via our [StatsWales](#) website at local authority level.

### Limitations

- The information includes units leased to provide accommodation for homeless families where the lease extends over 1 year. These private sector units do not fully conform to the (TAN)2 definition in relation to the subsequent occupation once the lease has expired.
- Because of the devolved administrations and differing policy, there is less scope for direct UK comparisons (see 'Coherence' later in the document).
- The 'Planned' data shown in this release is based on information provided by local authorities only.

## Data processing cycle

### Data collection

The figures shown in this Statistical Release are based on information collected via annual statistical returns completed by local authorities, registered social landlords and National Park authorities in Wales. Prior to introduction of this data collection, data providers were involved in the development of both the forms and the guidance through attendance at three regional events. These events ensured that data providers fully understood the guidance and provided information on a consistent basis.

Local authorities, National Park authorities and registered social landlords are notified of the data collection exercise timetable in advance. This allows adequate time for local authorities, National Park 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 when completing the forms.

Copies of the current additional [affordable housing data collection forms](#) are available.

During 2018-19, data were collected from the 22 Local Authorities (LAs), 3 National Park Authorities (NPAs) and all Welsh Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), covering additional affordable housing across all tenures. All RSLs registered in England who operate in Wales were also contacted but all reported zero activity during 2018-19. The 2018-19 collection achieved a one hundred percent response rate.

The data was collected to determine not only how many additional affordable homes were delivered during the 2018-19 financial year, but also how many were planned for delivery in the 2019-20 financial year. The 'Planned' data shown in this release is based on information provided by local authorities only.

The figures in this release are based on additional affordable housing units and do not take account of any reduction of affordable housing stock. Further information is available in Section 2 of the release.

Additional affordable housing units delivered or planned include units leased to provide accommodation for homeless families where the lease extends over 1 year.

The data collection identified affordable homes/units provided through different tenures (social rented, intermediate rented and shared equity) as well as whether the units were delivered:

- With capital grant funding (e.g. Social Housing Grant [SHG], Vibrant and Viable Places, Welsh Housing Partnership (WHO) and the Housing Finance Grant (HFG) ;
- on affordable housing exception sites or through planning obligations (Section 106 agreements);
- on local authority and other public sector land; and
- inside or outside National Park areas.

For the purposes of this data collection, housing provided through the following schemes and initiatives has been counted:

- General Needs including Homebuy
- Vulnerable Households and Extra Care
- Mortgage Rescue
- Section 106 New Build Units (committed and windfall)
- Affordable Housing Exception Site Policy (inc. Community Land Trusts [CLTs])
- Empty Homes initiatives
- Leasing Schemes (leases of more than one year)
- Shared Ownership – Wales

Additional affordable housing units are recorded as being delivered through planning obligations or on affordable housing exception sites, irrespective of when planning permission was granted. Those additional affordable housing units delivered or granted planning permission through planning obligations may or may not be on affordable housing exception sites.

From 2011-12 onwards local authorities were required to provide information on the number of additional affordable housing units which were delivered on land made available by other public sector bodies within the last five years as well as the number delivered on local authority land. The affordable units may or may not have been provided by means of a section 106 planning agreement. The land may have been sold at market value, at a discount, or transferred at nil cost. The other public sector bodies included are listed in the Glossary section of this release.

## Validation and verification

Individual LAs are responsible for providing high quality data. The WG Data Collection Team are responsible for validating and undertaking reasonable checks on this data in order to ensure that the data meet the requirements for 'National Statistics'. The WG Housing Statistics team are responsible for the quality assurance of the analysis in the outputs.

The information is collected annually via Excel spreadsheets which are downloaded from the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data. There is guidance in the spreadsheet, which assists users on completing the form. The spreadsheets allow respondents to validate some data before sending the spreadsheet to the Welsh Government.

Examples of validation checks within the forms include cross checks with other relevant tables and checks to ensure data is logically consistent. 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.

On receipt of the data collection forms, the data collection team carry out 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.
- We undertake a series of validation steps to ensure that the data is correct and consistent.

The data collection team work closely with the different types of data providers to ensure the information provided is accurate and on a consistent basis. They also check that the data is consistent with the number of new build units reported during the past year and resolve any queries with landlords. If there is a validation error, we contact the local authority, National Park 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 and will inform the organisation and explain to them how we have amended or imputed the data.

We compare the data provided by local authorities with that provided by Registered Social Landlords. Where these figures do not correspond, we work with the data providers to make the data consistent. In a small number of cases, data providers are unable to make their data consistent within the timescale for publication. In these cases we use the combined figures provided by Registered Social Landlords, as well as any local authority and private developer activity, to make the final total for the local authority area. In such cases we keep the landlords informed that this will happen. It should also be noted that local authorities, National Parks and Welsh RSLs also worked together to ensure accuracy of information. Copies of the [data collection forms can be found on the website](#).

In tables where figures have been rounded, the sum of the individual figures may not equal the total shown.

## Publication

Once the data has been finalised, the release is compiled and key points and commentary are drafted. The release is independently checked and a final sense check is carried out by the relevant statistician prior to publication on the website.

## Standards

The statistics that are prepared adhere to recognised professional standards. They are produced in accordance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics independently under the responsibility of the Welsh Government Chief Statistician.

## 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.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in July 2019 following a compliance check by [the Office for Statistics Regulation](#). Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Within the Quality Report we have included more detail in relation to our knowledge of the quality assurance processes carried out by data providers and have also provided more detail in relation to overall responsibility for the quality management process.
- Added additional terms of the release glossary
- Referenced the cross-government work on affordable housing.
- We have enhanced trustworthiness by reviewing and reducing pre-release access

## Administrative Data Quality Assurance

This release has been scored against the UK Statistics Authority Administrative Data Quality Assurance matrix. The matrix is the UK Statistics Authority regulatory standard for the quality assurance of administrative data. The Standard recognises the increasing role that administrative data are playing in the production of official statistics and clarifies what producers of official statistics should do to assure themselves of the quality of these data. The toolkit that supports it provides helpful guidance to statistical producers about the practices they can adopt to assure the quality of the data they receive, and sets out the standards for assessing statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

We have assessed this release as follows:

- Operational context and administrative data collection (A2: Enhanced assurance): We provide information on the policy context within the statistical release, including a description of current government targets and funding programmes (see section on Policy and Operational within this document and the Statistical Release for further information)
- Communication with data supply partners (A2: Enhanced assurance): We have established an effective mode of communication with our data suppliers (see section on Data Collection for a description of how we communicate with data providers)
- Quality assurance principles, standards and checks applied by data suppliers (A1: Basic Assurance): we have broad knowledge of data suppliers QA checks (see section on Validation and Verification).
- Producer's quality assurance investigations and documentation (A2: Enhanced assurance): we provide information on our quality assurance checks and provide guidance on the strengths and limitations of the data (see section on Validation and Verification and Statistical release).

We consider the affordable housing statistics to be of medium data quality concern and of medium public interest as there is wide user and media interest. We are confident that the scores are appropriate according to the toolkit, both in terms of the data quality concerns and public interest level.

## Quality

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.

Details of the six dimensions, and how we adhere to them, are provided below:



## **Relevance**

The degree to which the statistical product meets user needs for both coverage and content.

The data in this Statistical Release form the basis of evidence on affordable housing provision in Wales and are used by the Welsh Government, local authorities, and other housing organisations to monitor trends in the provision of additional affordable housing units over time. Other interests and uses of this data are outlined above.

We actively review all our outputs and welcome feedback.

## **Accuracy**

Figures entered for 'Planned 2019-20' are data providers' best estimates and therefore may be subject to change when reported as 'Delivered' in future years. As an indication of the accuracy of the estimates provided, the number of additional affordable housing units 'Delivered' in 2017-18 (2,316) were 22 per cent lower than the estimated number of 2,952 units reported in 2016-17 as 'Planned' for delivery during 2017-18.

The 'Planned' data shown in this release is based on information provided by local authorities only.

## **Revisions**

This release contains the final data for 2018-19 financial year. However sometimes local authorities submit revised data in future years. If this happens, we will update the information in the following year's statistical release.

We follow the [Welsh Government's statistical revisions policy](#).

## **Timeliness and punctuality**

Timeliness refers to the lapse of time between publication and the period to which the data refer. Punctuality refers to the time lag between the actual and planned dates of publication.

All outputs adhere to the Code of Practice for Official Statistics by pre-announcing the date of publication through the [Upcoming pages on the Statistics for Wales website](#). Furthermore, should the need arise to postpone an output this would follow the Welsh Governments [Revisions, Errors and Postponements](#) arrangements.

We publish releases as soon as practical after the relevant time period.

## **Accessibility and clarity**

Accessibility is the ease with which users are able to access the data, also reflecting the format(s) in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information. Clarity refers to the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice.

Affordable Housing statistics for Wales are published in an accessible, orderly, pre-announced manner on the Welsh Government website at 9:30am on the day of publication.

An RSS feed alerts registered users to this publication and a tweet from [@StatisticsWales](#) alerts Twitter users to its release. Simultaneously the releases are also published on GOV.UK.

We aim to inform known key users of the publication of the statistics when they are published. An e-mail is circulated to the [Housing Information Group](#).

All releases are available to download for free. More detailed data are also available at the same time on the [StatsWales website](#) and this can be manipulated online or downloaded into spreadsheets for use offline.

In our outputs, we aim to provide a balance of commentary, summary tables, charts and maps where relevant. The aim is to 'tell the story' in the output, without the bulletin or report becoming overly long.

We aim to use Plain English in our outputs and all outputs adhere to the Welsh Government accessibility policy. Furthermore, all our headlines are published in Welsh and English.

We regularly peer review our outputs internally.

Further information regarding the statistics can be obtained by contacting the relevant staff detailed on the release or via [stats.housing@gov.wales](mailto:stats.housing@gov.wales).

A full set of data including information by individual local authority and individual RSL back to 2007-08 is available to download from our [StatsWales interactive website](#).

## **Comparability**

The degree to which data can be compared over time and domain.

Prior to 2010-11, no validation of 'Planned' and 'Proposed' figures was undertaken therefore there may be slight discrepancies between the estimates provided by both the LAs and the Welsh RSLs for years prior to 2010-11 and so should be treated with caution. For the 2012-13 data collection onwards RSLs were not required to report on the number of additional affordable housing units planned and proposed for delivery in future years. The 'Planned' and 'Proposed' data shown in this release is based on information provided by local authorities only.

## **Coherence**

The degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but which refer to the same phenomenon, are similar.

Previously the Welsh Economy Research Unit (WERU) of Cardiff University also collected information on the provision of affordable housing which was published by Community Housing Cymru. Since 2015-16, this exercise has been carried out for Community Housing Cymru by Beaufort Research rather than WERU. As with the WERU collection however, the definitions used and coverage are different to those used in this collection and the figures are therefore not comparable.

The Welsh Government also publish separate statistics on New House Building. This data is based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the National House Building Council (NHBC). It is sometimes difficult for building control officers who record the data to identify the intended final tenure of the property (the basis for the tenure information). This may lead to an under-count of social sector new house building and an over-count for the private sector. Therefore the tenure data of new build statistics should be treated with caution.

## Geographic areas

National Park Authorities (NPAs):

- **Brecon Beacons NPA** extends into areas of Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen.
- **Pembrokeshire Coast NPA** extends in to areas of Pembrokeshire only.
- **Snowdonia NPA** extends in to areas of Conwy and Gwynedd.

The local authority groupings used in the charts and maps are as follows:

**Rural authorities:** Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire.

**Urban authorities:** Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Flintshire, Wrexham, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, The Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff and Newport.

## Related Statistics for Other UK Countries

On 6 November 2019, ONS published two reports on affordable housing statistics as part of a UK wide programme of work to improve housing and planning statistics:

- (a) [Comparing affordable housing in the UK](#), an article making cross-UK comparisons of affordable housing statistics
- (b) [Affordable Housing Statistics in the UK](#), a review of definitions, terminology and the feasibility of harmonising affordable housing statistical definitions.

These reports provide detailed information on the definition of affordable housing in each country, the terminology used and a summary of the differences across countries. Below are links to the individual country releases.

### England

[England publishes a single statistical release on affordable housing](#). The latest published data covers 2017-18, data for 2018-19 will be published November 2019.

### Scotland

[The Scottish Government publish an annual report on provision under the Affordable Housing Supply Programme](#).

### Northern Ireland

[Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and the Department for Communities publish an annual compendium on housing statistics](#), which includes data tables relating to changes to social stock.

## Evaluation

We always welcome feedback on any of our statistics. Please contact us via email: [stats.housing@gov.wales](mailto:stats.housing@gov.wales)

Produced by Knowledge and Analytical Services, Welsh Government

Last updated: November 2019.