

SDR 71/2016(R)

7 December 2016

## New house building in Wales, 2015-16- Revised

**This annual statistical release has been revised following the provision of revised figures for the number of dwellings completed in one local authority. The overall Wales figures for completions in 2015-16 shown throughout this release has also been revised accordingly.**

This release presents information on new house building activity in Wales and its impact on how many residential dwellings there are in Wales (i.e. dwelling stock levels). It covers the number of new dwellings started, where building work has commenced, and the number completed, where the building work has finished and the dwelling is ready for occupation. This edition covers the 2015-16 financial year as well as the January to March 2016 quarter. The information on new house building is used by the Welsh Government and local authorities to assess levels of housing supply across Wales and as an indication of whether housing need is being met.

Definitions of all terms used can be found in the glossary at the end of this release. A full set of data on new house building in Wales is available on [StatsWales](http://StatsWales).

### Key points:

- The number of new dwellings started fell during 2015-16 following a sustained increase over the previous three years. During 2015-16, a total of 6,708 new dwellings were started. Whilst this represented a decrease of 4 per cent on the previous year it was still 16 per cent above the number recorded in 2013-14, and 27 per cent above the number recorded in 2012-13.
- The number of new dwellings completed has been increasing since 2013-14. During 2015-16, 6,900 (revised) new dwellings were completed, up by 12 per cent (revised) on the previous year but still below the annual levels seen prior to the economic downturn.
- During 2015-16, the number of new dwellings completed for the private sector increased by 6 per cent compared to the previous year, whilst the number of completions for the social sector increased by 50 per cent (revised) to 1,254 (revised), which was the highest number recorded since 1998-99.
- 39 per cent (revised) of new dwellings completed in Wales during 2015-16 were 3 bedroom properties.

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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 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 declined to 16 per cent, from 19 per cent of total stock in 2000-01.

The Public Policy Institute for Wales (PPIW) commissioned a report<sup>1</sup> by the late Alan Holmans which was published in October 2015 and provided new estimates of the need and demand for housing in Wales over the period 2011 to 2031. Based on the Welsh Government's official projections for the growth in the number of households (the 'principal projection'), the report estimated that 174,000 additional homes are required in Wales between 2011 and 2031, of which 109,000 are market sector and 65,000 are non-market. This equates to an annual average of 8,700 dwellings, of which 3,500 (40 per cent) would be non-market 'social' housing and 5,200 (60 per cent) would be in the market sector. New housing supply has been less than this, averaging at around 6,000 a year over the last 5 years; 6,900 (r) new homes were completed during 2015-16, of which 1,254 (r) (18 per cent)(r) were social housing.

## 2. Source of data

The information presented in this release, on the number of new dwellings started and completed in Wales, is based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the National House Building Council (NHBC), which is a private approved inspector (PAI). It does not include information from other private approved inspectors. The exclusion of this information means that there is currently a small under-count in the overall number of new dwellings started and completed. This issue is currently under consideration and we are exploring the possibility of the future collection and publication of data from PAIs other than the NHBC.

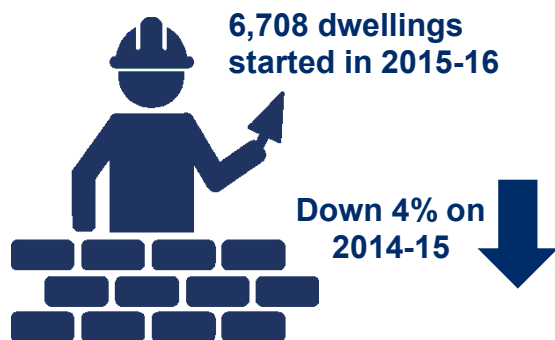
The figures provided by local authorities and the NHBC are from records kept for building control purposes. Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) are increasingly making use of design/build procurement, where the contractor is responsible for obtaining all building consents. It is therefore sometimes difficult for the building control officers who record the data to identify whether a dwelling is being built for an RSL or for a private developer, which may lead to an under-count of RSL new house building and an over-count for the private sector. These issues were covered in the statistical article '[Quality Improvements to New House Building Statistics](#)' and further information is provided in the 'Key quality information' section of this release.

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<sup>1</sup> The report, 'Future Need and Demand for Housing in Wales', is available at the following link: <http://ppiwi.org.uk/ppiw-report-publication-future-need-and-demand-for-housing-in-wales/>

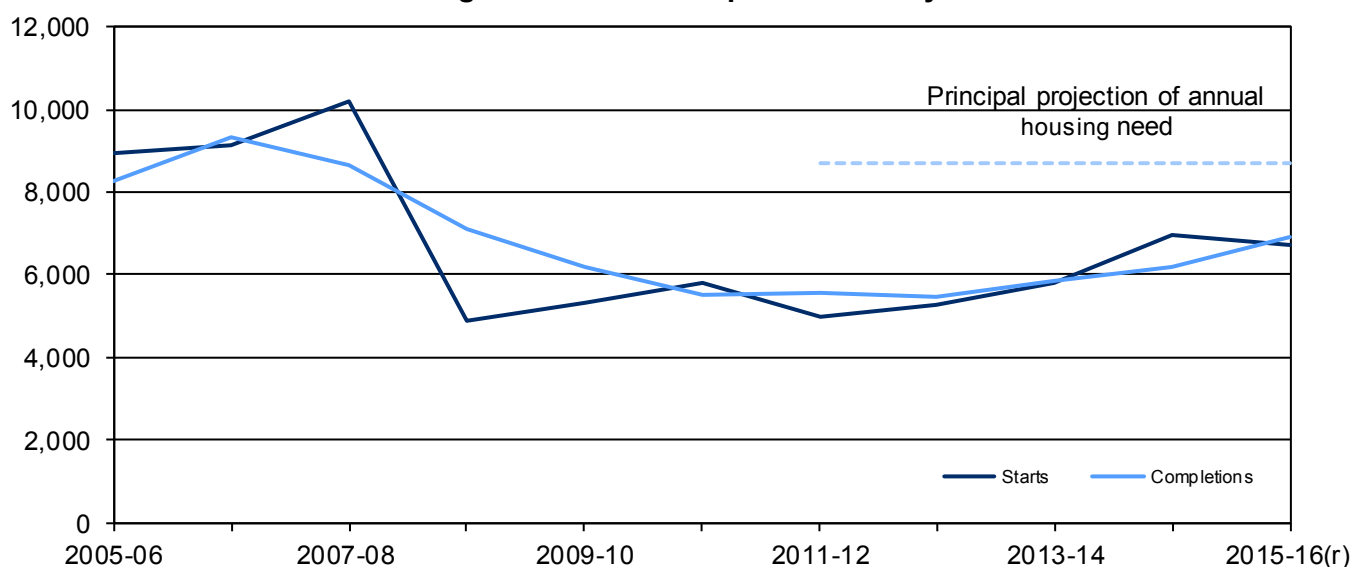
### 3. Starts

Prior to the economic downturn in 2007-08, both housing starts and completions were relatively stable, with between nine and ten thousand starts a year and around eight thousand homes completed. During 2008-09 the number of starts fell steeply and though numbers have begun to recover since 2012-13 they remain below the levels seen before the economic downturn.



During 2015-16, the number of new dwellings started decreased by 4 per cent, to 6,708 dwellings, compared to the previous year, this is still the second highest annual number recorded since 2007-08. During 2015-16, both the number of planning applications submitted and approved increased compared with the previous year though the percentage increase in applications was lower than that seen during 2014-15.

**Chart 1 – Number of new dwellings started and completed annually**



Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

- Quarterly figures show that during January to March 2016, there were 1,405 new dwellings started in Wales, which is down 17 per cent on the same quarter in 2014-15. This decrease is predominantly a reflection of the large increase seen in the number of starts throughout 2014-15. The number of new dwellings started in January to March 2016 was up 2 per cent on the same quarter of 2013-14, and up 6 per cent on the same quarter of 2012-13.

Quarterly data for both starts and completions is available on [StatsWales](http://stats.wales.gov.uk).

### 4. Completions

The downturn in completions since 2007-08 was more gradual than that of the housing starts. Following a small decrease in 2012-13, the number of completions has increased over the last three years.

- During 2015-16, the number of completions increased by 12 per cent (r) compared to the previous year, to 6,900 dwellings (r), though they remain below the levels seen prior to the economic downturn. Generally, there is a time lag between starts and completions due to the time taken to build a house. During 2014-15 the

**6,900 (r) dwellings completed in 2015-16**



**Up 12% (r) on 2014-15**



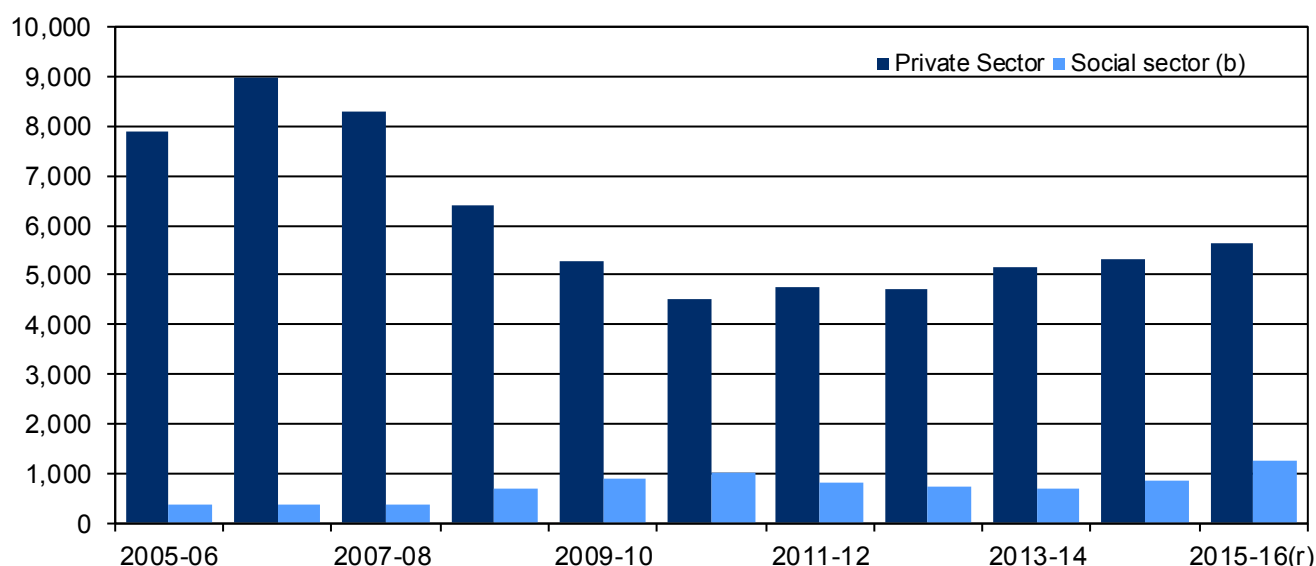
number of dwellings started increased by 20 per cent which may explain the increase in completions seen during 2015-16. Similarly the slight decrease in starts during 2015-16 may impact on the number of completions in future years.

- Quarterly figures for January to March 2016 show a total of 1,377 (r) completions, which is up by 2 per cent (r) on the same quarter of 2014-15, though the previous three quarters of 2015-16 had all seen increases of at least 10 per cent compared to the previous year.
- Completions during January to March 2016 were down by almost a third (32 per cent) (r) compared with the previous October to December 2015 quarter. This may be due to seasonal factors with completions often lower during January to March. The figures shown in this release have not been seasonally adjusted.

## 4.1 Completions by tenure

- The majority of activity continues to be carried out by the private sector, accounting for 82 per cent (r) of all new dwellings completed during 2015-16.

**Chart 2 - New dwellings completed by tenure (a)**



Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

- (a) Figures include all dwellings inspected by the National House Building Council. Excludes acquisitions and hostel bed spaces.  
 (b) Includes all new dwellings completed by registered social landlords and local authorities.

- During 2015-16, a total of 5,646 dwellings were completed by the private sector, up by 6 per cent on the previous year and the highest number of private sector dwellings completed annually since 2008-09. The increase in the number of private sector completions may have been influenced by the Help to Buy-Wales Shared Equity Loan scheme which was introduced in January 2014. Under the scheme, loans are available to buyers wishing to purchase a new-build property worth up to £300,000. Between 2 January 2014 and 30 April 2016, a total of 3,244 property purchases were completed under this scheme. More information on Help to Buy-Wales is available in the 'Key quality information'.
- RSLs were responsible for all new social sector housing during 2015-16, with no dwellings completed by local authorities over this period. RSL completions were up by 50 per cent (r) on the previous year, with a total of 1,254 (r) new dwellings completed and the highest number recorded since 1998-99. There were increases in RSL completions in 14 of the 22 local authorities during 2015-16 (Table 1).

- The increase in the number of RSL completions during 2015-16 may have been influenced by the availability of additional grant funding. The Housing Finance Grant was introduced during 2013-14 which contributes to borrowing costs incurred by RSLs to fund additional affordable homes to be built in 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16. In April 2014, a Housing Supply Pact was agreed between the Welsh Government and Community Housing Cymru (CHC) to support the delivery of the previous government target to deliver 10,000 additional affordable homes by 31 March 2016.

## 5. Local authority data

**Table 1 – New dwellings started and completed, by unitary authority, 2015-16 (a)**

Local Authority	Number				
	Starts		Completions		
	All tenures	Private Sector	Registered Social Landlords	Local Authorities	All tenures
Isle of Anglesey	55	61	0	0	61
Gwynedd	224	137	4	0	141
Conwy	191	186	39	0	225
Denbighshire	89	128	14	0	142
Flintshire	554	495	16	0	511
Wrexham	232	127	54	0	181
Powys	170	140	2	0	142
Ceredigion	88	79	2	0	81
Pembrokeshire	323	196	74	0	270
Carmarthenshire	374	399	148 (r)	0	547 (r)
Swansea	597	365	92	0	457
Neath Port Talbot	267	232	76	0	308
Bridgend	412	437	79	0	516
The Vale of Glamorgan	843	576	118	0	694
Cardiff	356	520	112	0	632
Rhondda Cynon Taf	301	306	20	0	326
Merthyr Tydfil	86	96	27	0	123
Caerphilly	154	120	96	0	216
Blaenau Gwent	82	66	58	0	124
Torfaen	130	111	36	0	147
Monmouthshire	263	196	44	0	240
Newport	917	673	143	0	816
<b>Wales</b>	<b>6,708</b>	<b>5,646</b>	<b>1,254 (r)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,900 (r)</b>

Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

(a) Figures include all dwellings inspected by the National House Building Council. Excludes acquisitions and hostel bedspaces.

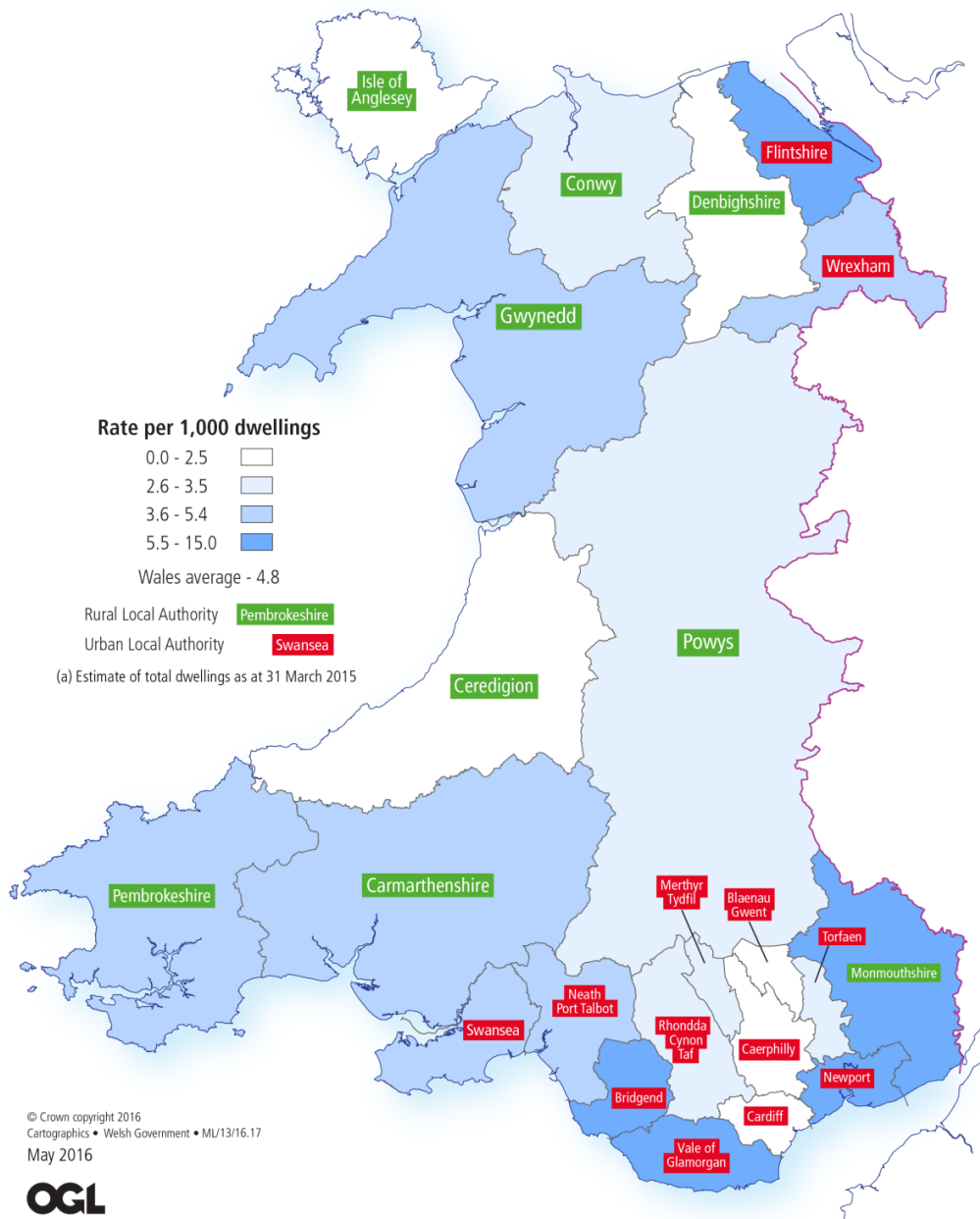
(r) The data has been revised since previously published.

## 5.1 Starts by local authority

- On an annual basis, Newport reported the highest number of starts during 2015-16, with 917 new dwellings started, which represents around 14 per cent of the overall Wales total. This was closely followed by The Vale of Glamorgan, with 843 new dwellings started during 2015-16, accounting for 13 per cent of all starts. For Newport, this was an increase of 15 per cent on the number started during 2014-15, mainly because of a number of developments at Rogerstone, Maesglas, Llanwern, Duffryn, Lysacht Village, as well as at the site of the former Pirelli Factory. The Vale of Glamorgan recorded an even larger increase in starts during 2015-16, with 89 per cent more than the previous year, mainly due to new developments at Barry Waterfront, Wenvoe, Culverhouse Cross, and at the Former Ignore Caravan Park.
- The lowest number of starts during 2015-16 was in the Isle of Anglesey, with just 55 new dwellings started, followed by Blaenau Gwent with 82 new dwellings started. This was a 35 per cent decrease for the Isle of Anglesey, and a 32 per cent decrease for Blaenau Gwent, compared to last year.

# New House Building

**MAP 1:** New dwellings started during 2015-16 per 1,000 dwellings (a)



To take into account the size of the housing stock in each of the different local authorities across Wales, Map 1 shows the number of new dwellings started during the year 2015-16, per 1,000 dwellings. The total number of dwellings is taken from the dwelling stock estimates as at 31 March 2015.

The overall number of new dwellings started across Wales decreased by 4 per cent during 2015-16, with an average rate of 4.8 starts per 1,000 existing dwellings. The Vale of Glamorgan had the highest rate of starts, at 15.0 per 1,000 dwellings, closely followed by Newport with a rate of 14.1, mainly due to the new developments listed above. The lowest rate was seen in the Isle of Anglesey at 1.6 starts per 1,000 dwellings.



Although there was no link between the volumes of starts and whether the local authority is rural or urban, the volume of starts may be affected by whether a National Park is situated within a local authority, as there is a need for these areas to be protected. In 7 of the 9 rural authorities, the rate of new dwellings started per 1,000 dwellings was below the Wales average.

## 5.2 Completions by local authority

- Newport was the authority with the highest number of completions during 2015-16 (816 dwellings), mainly due to the completion of housing on some large scale developments in Maesglas, Llanwern, Duffryn and Lysacht Village.
- The authority showing the largest increases in the number of new dwellings completed during 2015-16 was the Vale of Glamorgan, where numbers were up by 131 per cent compared with the previous year, mainly due to the completion of a number of large scale developments in Barry and Penarth. In Cardiff, numbers were up by 59 per cent, mainly due to the completion of a new development at Grangetown and new flats in Ely and Roath.
- In contrast, the lowest number of dwellings completed over the year was in the Isle of Anglesey, at 61 dwellings, followed by Ceredigion (81 dwellings).
- Over 2015-16 as a whole, the private sector was responsible for all completions in the Isle of Anglesey and for the majority of completions in the other 21 authorities, ranging from 53 per cent in Blaenau Gwent to 99 per cent in Powys and 98 per cent in Ceredigion.

Similarly to Map 1, Map 2 takes into account the size of the housing stock in the different local authorities across Wales, by showing the number of new dwellings completed during 2015-16 per 1,000 dwellings.

There was no clear pattern in terms of the volume of completions across Wales during 2015-16. As with starts, the highest volume of completions was seen in the two authorities of Newport and the Vale of Glamorgan with rates 12.5 and 12.4 per 1,000 dwellings respectively.

The lowest volume of completions was in the Isle of Anglesey at just 1.8 completed dwellings per 1,000 dwellings, followed by Powys at 2.2 per 1,000 dwellings. The rate was below the Wales average of 4.9 (r) completions per 1,000 dwellings in 16 of the 22 local authorities during 2015-16, of which 7 were rural authorities.

## 6. New house building by number of bedrooms

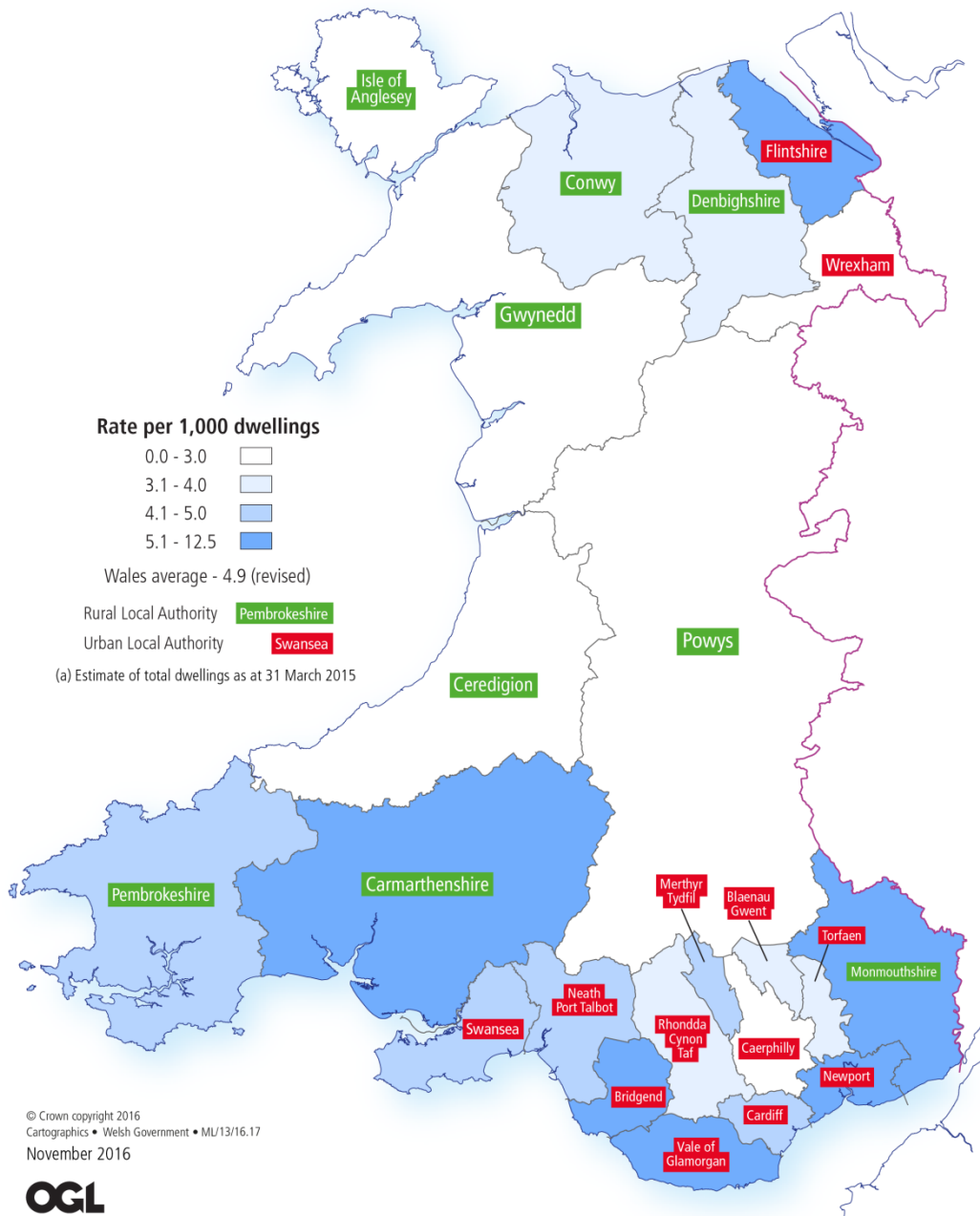
During 2015-16, 78 per cent (r) (5,374) of all new dwellings built were houses and bungalows and the remaining 22 per cent (r) (1,526 (r)) were flats. The largest proportion (39 per cent (r)) of the homes built during 2015-16 were 3 bedroom properties, with larger (4 or more bedroom) properties accounting for 26 per cent (r). A further 23 per cent of new homes built in 2014-16 were 2 bedroom properties and 12 per cent (r) were 1 bedroom properties (Chart 3). The vast majority (99 per cent) of the larger 3 or more bedroom properties completed during 2015-16 were houses and bungalows, whilst most (94 per cent) of the one bedroom properties were flats.



**40% of  
dwellings  
completed in  
2015-16 were  
3 bedroom  
properties**

# New House Building

**MAP 2:** New dwellings completed during 2015-16 per 1,000 dwellings (a) (revised)



It is noticeable that prior to 2012-13, 3 bedroom properties saw the highest number of completions followed by 2 bedroom properties, whilst from 2012-13 onwards the highest number of completions were 3 bedroom followed by 4 bedroom properties (Chart 3).

**Table 2: New dwellings completed, by bedroom number (a)**

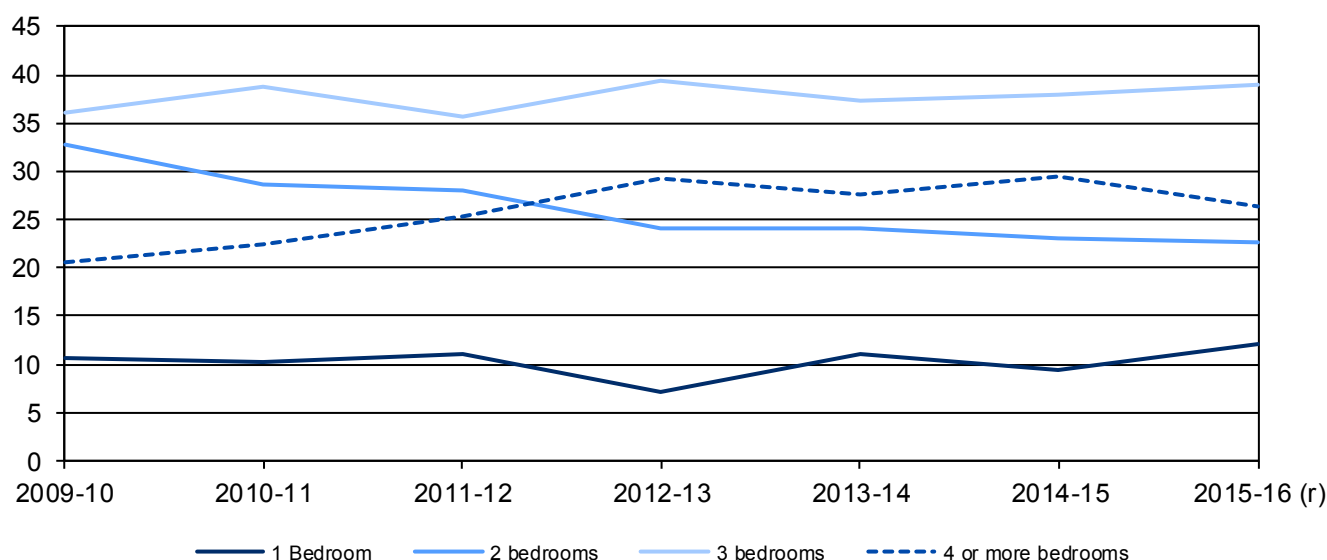
Bedrooms	Number						
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
1 bedroom:	658	561	613	391	645	586	830 (r)
2 bedrooms:	2,020	1,580	1,558	1,318	1,402	1,416	1,564 (r)
3 bedrooms:	2,232	2,134	1,990	2,143	2,179	2,344	2,683
4 (or more) bedrooms:	1,264	1,230	1,414	1,599	1,617	1,824	1,823
<b>All completions</b>	<b>6,174</b>	<b>5,505</b>	<b>5,575</b>	<b>5,451</b>	<b>5,843</b>	<b>6,170</b>	<b>6,900 (r)</b>

Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

(a) Figures include all dwellings inspected by the National House Building Council. Excludes acquisitions and hostel bedspaces

(r) The data has been revised since previously published.

**Chart 3 – Percentage of new dwellings completed by bedroom number**



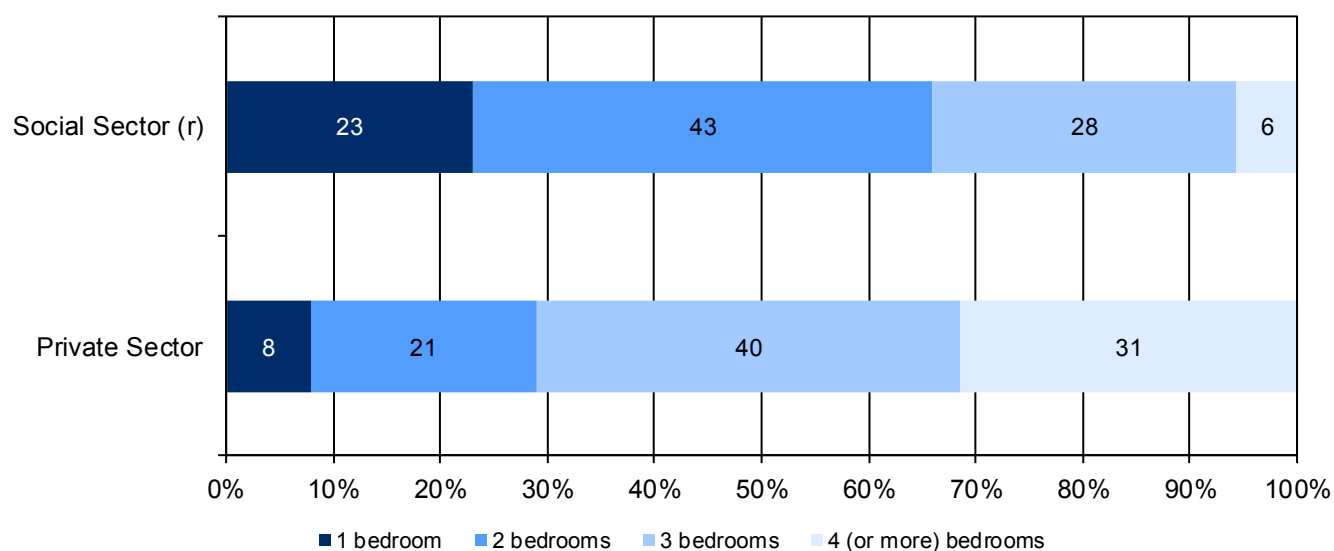
Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

(r) The data has been revised since previously published.

On average, over the last 5 years the majority of new homes built (around 66 per cent) have been larger 3 and 4 (or more) bedroom properties, while only around 10 per cent each year were 1 bedroom dwellings. However, latest figures show the average household size in Wales is falling and this is projected to continue, mainly due to increasing numbers of single person households. Recent welfare reforms may also lead to an increased demand for smaller properties.

Over the last 5 years, the size of dwellings varies according to tenure, with a higher percentage of one bedroom dwellings in the social sector, at around 23 per cent (r), compared with just 8 per cent of private sector housing (Chart 4). On average, since 2011-12, the majority (71 per cent) of all new private sector housing has been larger 3 and 4 (or more) bedroom properties, while in the social sector they accounted for 34 per cent (r), with the largest portion of newly built social housing (43 per cent) being 2 bedroom properties.

**Chart 4 – Average percentage of dwellings completed by tenure and bedroom number, 2011-12 to 2015-16**



Source: New house building collection from local authorities & NHBC

(r) The data has been revised since previously published.

## 7. New house building across the UK

Since 2000-01, the level of new house building completions has followed a roughly similar pattern across the 4 countries of the UK, with an upward trend to 2006-07 and 2007-08, before dropping back dramatically in the years following the financial crisis.

**Table 3 – Number of new dwellings completed by country, 2000-01 to 2014-15**

Financial Year	Number			
	England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland
2000-01	133,260	8,330	22,110	11,670
2001-02	129,870	8,270	22,570	13,490
2002-03	137,740	8,310	22,750	14,420
2003-04	143,960	8,300	23,820	14,510
2004-05	155,890	8,490	26,470	15,770
2005-06	163,400	8,250	24,950	17,410
2006-07	167,680	9,330	24,270	17,800
2007-08	170,610	8,660	25,790	13,480
2008-09	140,990	7,120	21,010	9,720
2009-10	119,910	6,170	17,110	9,750
2010-11	107,870	5,510	16,420	6,120
2011-12	118,510	5,580	15,980	5,690
2012-13	107,980	5,450	14,060	5,530
2013-14	112,330	5,840	14,890	5,320
2014-15	124,490	6,170	16,270	5,510
2015-16	~	6,900 (r)	~	~

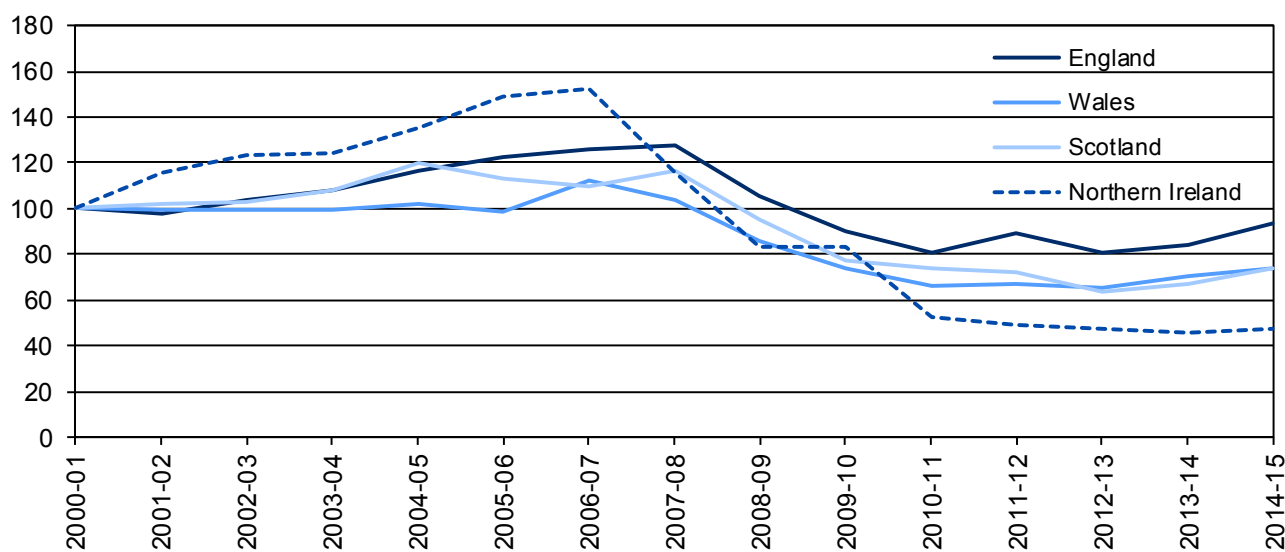
Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (Live Table 209)

(r) The data has been revised since previously published.

~ Data is not yet available for 2015-16 for England, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Data is rounded to the nearest 10

**Chart 5 – Indexed number of new dwellings completed across the UK (2000-01 = 100) (a)**



Source: Department for Communities and Local Government (Live Table 209)

(a) The actual number of new dwellings completed varies considerably, the data shown in the chart has been indexed, with 2000-01 used as the base year and set at 100, to ensure comparability in terms of scale.

Data for all 4 countries is not available for 2015-16 but during 2014-15 all had seen increases in the number of completions. In Wales numbers increased by 6 per cent during 2014-15 which was above the increase of 4 per cent seen in Northern Ireland but below the 11 per cent in England and 9 per cent in Scotland.

## Key quality information

1. In addition to the information below, further information 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>

Whilst the statistics in this release are not reflected directly in the National Indicators, they could help to 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

### New house building

3. Information is collected quarterly via Excel spreadsheets which are downloaded from the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current new house building data collection forms are available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/new-house-building-local-authority-data-collection/?lang=en>
4. Further information on the data processing cycle can also be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).
5. Data were collected from all of the 22 Local Authorities and from the National House Building Council (NHBC).
6. The information is based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the NHBC which is a private approved inspector. It does not include information from other private approved inspectors. The exclusion of this information means that there is currently a small under-count in the overall number of new dwellings started and completed.
7. New house building funded with capital grant funding includes funding via Social Housing Grant, Recycled Social Housing Grant and Strategic Capital Investment Fund and the Housing Finance Grant introduced in 2013-14.

### Stock

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

10. The Dwelling Stock Estimates for 2014-15 were released on 20 April 2016 and can be found at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>
11. The information in the 'Wider Context' section of the release and the dwelling stock data used for the maps showing annual new build information relate to the current dwelling stock estimates at 31 March 2015.

### Users and uses

12. The information is used by the Welsh Government and local authorities to assess levels of housing supply across Wales, as an indication as to whether housing need is being met and forms part of the evidence base which informs the development and evaluation of housing policy by central and local government.
13. The stock data are also used by the Welsh Government for calculating dwelling stock estimates at a local authority and all Wales level. For detailed methodology and quality information for dwelling stock estimates, please see the statistical first release: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>
14. Local authorities use this information to develop their Local Housing Market Assessments; for benchmarking; for evidencing how housing need and demand is being met locally; and for assessing future requirement and need in order to plan and allocate resources effectively.
15. The information is also used as evidence for other housing market analysts, forecasters and decision makers, for example at the Bank of England and in the construction and banking industries, and for market research by a wide range of other businesses. They are used by the media in reports on the housing market, and by academics both in the UK and abroad.
16. 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.
17. 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

18. 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. 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.

19. 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.
20. More detailed quality information relating specifically to new house building, which is not included in the quality report, is given below.
21. The January to March quarter 2015-16 collection achieved a 100% response rate.

## Symbols

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

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

## Comparability

23. The data collected from local authorities and the NHBC on new dwellings started from 1 April 2011 onwards does not include a breakdown by tenure. Therefore, whilst it is possible to compare total starts for 2011-12 onwards with those for previous periods, it will not be possible to compare the tenure breakdown of new dwellings started.
24. The bands used in the maps are set depending on the spread of the data across local authorities and may differ to those used in the first release for previous years.

## Accuracy

25. The information is based on the reports of local authority building inspectors and the NHBC which is a private approved inspector. It does not include information from other private approved inspectors. The exclusion of this information means that there is currently a small under-count in the overall number of new dwellings started and completed. There has also been concern for some time that the misclassification of new builds by building inspectors has resulted in an under-count of RSL new house building and an over-count for the Private Sector.

26. Proposals to address both these issues were outlined in the statistical article '[Quality Improvements to New House Building Statistics](#)' published in August 2011. The proposals were initially intended to be introduced with effect from 1 April 2012; however, following detailed analysis of the data it was decided to delay the implementation of these changes until further investigation work had been carried out. Further information is available in the statistical article '[Delay to Quality Improvements to New House Building Statistics](#)' published February 2012. As initial investigations proved inconclusive a more extensive project has been undertaken and the findings outlined in the paper presented to the Housing Information group on 16 July 2013. The paper is available via the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/about/user-engagement/statistical-groups-committees/housing-information-group/16-april-20131/?lang=en>

A workshop was held in Cathays Park, Cardiff in August 2014, aimed at trying to assess and to resolve issues around the accuracy of the data collected and published on new house building. This work has continued to be taken forward including liaising with Local Authority Building Control representatives and investigating use of other private approved inspectors by RSLs to assess the level of possible under count.

## Revisions

27. This release contains the final data for the 2015-16 financial year and the January to March 2015-16 quarter.
28. The figures shown in this release for the number of dwellings completed during 2015-16 in Carmarthenshire have been changed following the receipt of revised data. The figure originally provided for the number of dwellings completed by RSLs in Carmarthenshire during the January to March quarter 2015-16 was revised from 37 dwellings to 148 dwellings. The quarterly and annual totals for both Carmarthenshire and Wales were revised accordingly. This resulted in the total number of completions in Wales for 2015-16 being revised from 6,789 to 6,900. Relevant data within the charts and tables and within Map 2 of this release were also revised accordingly.
29. 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.
30. Where changes are not deemed to be significant (i.e. minor changes), these will be updated in the following quarter's statistical release. However, minor amendments to the figures may be reflected in the StatsWales tables prior to that next release.
31. Revised data is marked with an (r) in the statistical release
32. 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

33. A full set of data on new house building in Wales, including information by individual local authority is available to download from our StatsWales interactive website at the following link: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/New-House-Building>
34. The consultation on official statistics which closed on 3rd March 2014 covered a range of proposals relating to official statistics products, including housing statistics outputs. Following the consultation, new house building information continues to be collected and published, via [StatsWales](#), on a quarterly basis however publication of the full quarterly Statistical Release has been replaced with an annual Statistical Release. We continue to:
- update quarterly data via StatsWales;

- pre-announce the publication of quarterly data on our release calendar; and
- update headline statistics on the Statistics and Research pages.

This allows users to continue to access all the new house building information on a quarterly basis, but with a less frequently published full output. The results of the consultation including a full summary of responses is available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/consultations/statistics/proposals-concerning-publication-official-statistics/?status=closed&lang=en>

## **Coherence with other statistics:**

### **Affordable housing**

35. Information has been collected annually, since April 2007, on the number of additional affordable housing units provided across Wales. 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). Affordable housing will include 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. The figures cover all additional affordable housing units (including general needs, supported housing, sheltered accommodation and extra care 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. In the case of conversions, only the net gain will be included. The latest information on additional affordable housing is available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/affordable-housing-provision/?lang=en>

### **Dwelling stock estimates**

36. Estimates of the total dwelling stock are calculated by the Welsh Government and are based on data from the population censuses. The latest dwelling stock estimates for Wales are as at 31 March 2015 and are available at the following link: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>

### **Help to Buy - Wales**

37. Help to Buy - Wales is a shared equity loan scheme introduced on 2 January 2014 designed to support home ownership, stimulate building activity and provide a boost to the housing sector and wider economy. Under the scheme, loans are available to buyers wishing to purchase a new-build property worth up to £300,000. Help to Buy - Wales support is available to all home buyers (not just first time buyers) who wish to purchase a new home, but may be constrained in doing so (for example, as a result of deposit requirements), but who could otherwise be expected to repay a mortgage.
38. A Help to Buy - Wales shared equity loan is a Welsh Government financial product made available to eligible applicants to purchase homes using a Welsh Government equity mortgage secured against a buyer's new residential property. The loan can be no more than 20 per cent of the value of an eligible new-build property. An eligible buyer must also provide a cash deposit of at least 5 per cent and secure a conventional mortgage of at least 75 per cent. The maximum Help to Buy - Wales Shared Equity Loan that applicants can apply for is £60,000.
39. All Help to Buy - Wales shared equity loans are issued by Help to Buy (Wales) Ltd. At the point at which a sale is completed through the scheme, Help to Buy (Wales) Ltd pay the equity loan finance to the house builder (via the buyer's solicitor or conveyancer). They are interest free for the first five years from the point at which the loan funding is drawn down. The property title is held by the home owner who can sell their home at any time; however, at the point of sale, the equity loan must be paid off, in full, based upon the market value of the property at that specific moment in time. More information on this process can be found on the scheme website: <http://helptobuywales.co.uk/?lang=en>

40. Latest published data covering completed purchases under the scheme from 2 January 2014 to 30 April 2016 are available at the following link: <https://stats.wales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/Help-To-Buy>

### **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**

42. Wales and the other UK countries use broadly consistent definitions for starts and completions in collecting house building data. Until now, all four countries have collected starts and completions data split into the three tenure types of private sector, housing association and local authority. However, from 2011-12 onwards, the tenure split for housing starts has not been collected in Wales.
43. As in Wales, some housing association starts and completions in England can be misreported as private enterprise starts, because it is sometimes difficult for data providers to identify whether a dwelling is being built for a housing association or for a private developer. This is not thought to be a problem in Northern Ireland and Scotland, where data on housing association house building are collected directly from housing association administrations, rather than from building inspection teams.
44. As in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland usually achieve 100 per cent response; however, in England a small proportion of the data are imputed for missing responses.

### **New house building across the UK**

45. Recent work carried out by the Government Statistical Service identified new house building statistics as being fully comparable across the four UK countries. Further information on the comparability of the data across the UK is available in the report at the attached link: <https://gss.civilservice.gov.uk/statistics/presentation-and-dissemination/comparing-official-statistics-across-uk/>
46. Comparable new house building data for the four UK countries have been published in the Compendium of UK Statistics available at the following link: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160105160709/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/compendiums/compendium-of-uk-statistics/index.html>
47. In keeping with the principles of good practice, we have therefore included within this release comparative data on new house building completions for all four UK countries in order to minimise the time and burden for users in obtaining the comparative data.

### **England**

48. England collect information quarterly on new house building supply, including starts and completions: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/departments-for-communities-and-local-government/series/house-building-statistics>

### **Scotland**

49. Scotland collect information quarterly on new house building, including starts and completions: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS/NewBuild>

## Northern Ireland

50. Northern Ireland collect information quarterly on new house building, including starts and completions:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/topics/dsd-statistics-and-research-housing/housing-statistics>

51. Following consultation with users the Analytical Services Unit of Northern Ireland e made changes to the new dwelling starts and completions data included in their Housing Bulletin and Housing Statistics reports. These changes were included for the first time in the the Northern Ireland Housing Bulletin, released on the 27th October 2015. Further information about the review, which covered data quality improvements of source data and an evaluation of the historical adjustment factor used in relation to private sector completions, is available at the following link:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/review-new-dwelling-starts-and-completions>

The latest published quarterly information on new housing starts and completions covers the October to December quarter 2015 and is available at the following link:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/northern-ireland-housing-bulletin-october-december-2015>

## 52. NHBC registrations

The National House Building Council (NHBC) also publish regular statistics about the number of new builds registered for their NHBC ten-year warranty in the UK, including data for Wales. Their release of statistics indicates that nationally NHBC provides warranties on approximately 80 per cent of new homes built in the UK. House builders registered with NHBC are required to register a house with NHBC at least 21 days before building starts.

Whilst NHBC calculate registrations as the number of homes registered, less a 'small' percentage reduction to allow for likely cancellations, they do not represent the actual number of houses started in a period.

Also, the NHBC registrations do not include any registrations made with other private approved inspectors or with local authorities. The NHBC publish quarterly new home registration statistics for the 4 UK countries and English regions as well as an annual review. These are available at the following links:

<http://www.nhbc.co.uk/NewsandComment/Name,65938,en.html>

[http://www.nhbc.co.uk/cms/publish/consumer/NewsandComment/Stats/2015\\_Annual\\_Stats.pdf](http://www.nhbc.co.uk/cms/publish/consumer/NewsandComment/Stats/2015_Annual_Stats.pdf)

Whilst the overall pattern from 2005 of NHBC registrations is similar to that of official statistics on new house building starts, the actual number of registrations and the year on year changes can differ considerably from the official statistics. Year-on-year percentage change in the number of registrations across the UK and Wales has fluctuated considerably over the last 4 years.

Annual NHBC figures show new housing registrations were down by 2 per cent in Wales during 2015 compared with a 33 per cent increase during 2014. Although overall NHBC registrations are slightly down on the previous year, the 2015 total is still the second highest NHBC has registered in Wales since 2007.

## **Glossary**

### **Capital grants funding**

Capital Grants Funding includes Social Housing Grant (SHG), any recycled Social Housing Grant (RCG) or strategic Capital Investment Fund (SCIF) but excludes those housing units funded from other sources.

### **Completions**

A dwelling is defined as completed when a completion notice has been served and when it has become ready for occupation.

### **Dwelling**

A dwelling is a self-contained unit of accommodation. A self-contained dwelling is accommodation occupied by a household with exclusive use of bath/shower, inside WC and some cooking facilities. A dwelling can therefore house a single household or a number of households which share at least one of the basic facilities but do not share living accommodation.

### **National Park Authorities (NPAs)**

**Brecon Beacons NPA** has boundaries in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Torfaen.

**Pembrokeshire Coast NPA** has boundaries in Pembrokeshire only.

**Snowdonia NPA** has boundaries in Conwy and Gwynedd.

### **New house building**

In Wales, new house building is undertaken by the private sector, RSLs and local authorities. Local authorities and the National House Building Council (NHBC) provide information on the progress of new house building in each sector, in respect of dwellings inspected by them under Building Control Regulations. It does not currently include information from private approved inspectors.

### **Private approved inspectors**

In addition to local authorities and the NHBC, house building starts and completions can be certified by other independent Approved Inspectors known as Private Approved Inspectors (PAIs).

### **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. Social landlords must be registered with the Welsh Government and are inspected on a regular basis to maintain a good standard of management.

### **Starts**

A dwelling or conversion is defined as 'started' when work commences and the requirements of the building regulations apply (e.g. excavation of foundations, drainage, structural alterations).



## 8. Further information

Further information is available from the statistics web site:

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

More detailed data are available on the StatsWales website:

<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Housing/New-House-Building>

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

[Data Collection forms](#)

‘Improving Lives and Communities – Homes in Wales’ - National Housing Strategy:

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

‘Programme for Government 2011-2016’ - current government programme:

<http://gov.wales/about/programmeforgov/?lang=en>

‘A White Paper for Better Lives and Communities’:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/housing-and-regeneration/housewhitepaper/?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](mailto:stats.housing@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

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