

SDR 93/2014

12 June 2014

Social housing sales in Wales, 2013-14

This statistical release presents information on Social Housing Sales in Wales and their impact on dwelling stock. It covers sales of both local authority dwellings and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings. Information relating to Social Housing Sales refers to the financial year 2013-14, together with comparisons with figures for earlier periods. Information on dwelling stock estimates is as at 31 March 2013. Definitions of all terms used can be found in a glossary at 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 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.

Changes to the data items collected and published on social housing sales were proposed and consulted on in 2012. Some of the changes proposed in this consultation were implemented in the 2013-14 data collection and are reflected in this release. Further information is available in the Key Quality Information section towards the end of this release.

Summary

- Following a steady downward trend, social housing sales have increased over the last four years and during 2013-14 there were 3 per cent more sales than in 2012-13. However, this varied across landlord type, with local authority sales up by 72 per cent on the previous year, whilst the sale of RSL dwellings was down by 20 per cent.
- Between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, a total of 438 social rented and non social rented dwellings were transferred into the private sector through the sale of 179 local authority dwellings and 259 RSL dwellings, via Right to Buy, Right to Acquire and other schemes.
- During 2013-14 the majority of social housing sales continued to be sales of RSL dwellings which accounted for 59 per cent of all dwellings sold.
- Prior to 2009-10 the majority of all sales were statutory sales through the Right to Buy (RTB) and Right to Acquire (RTA) schemes, though this trend switched in recent years with more non-statutory sales. However during 2013-14 statutory sales accounted for 58 per cent of all sales whilst 42 per cent of all sales were non statutory voluntary and other sales.

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1. Wider Context

The total number of dwellings in Wales at 31 March 2013 was estimated to be 1.4 million, this is an increase of 9 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 2013, 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 2013 and 31 March 2014, a total of 179 local authority and 259 RSL dwellings were sold and therefore became private sector dwellings. As a result of these sales, private sector stock levels in Wales increased by 438 dwellings during 2013-14.

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 registered social landlords. The information 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 registered social landlords.

- 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 increased slightly over the last four years. During 2013-14 there were a total of 438 social housing sales, up by 3 per cent on 2012-13. This was mainly due to the increase in the sales of local authority dwellings.

Table 1 – Social Housing Sales (a)

	Local Authority Dwellings			Registered Social Landlord Dwellings			Total Social Housing Sales (d)	<i>Number</i>
	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 (r)	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	156	23	179	97	162	259	438	

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 only collected for October to December 2004-05 onwards

(c) Voluntary sales figures only 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 LA 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 (RTB) and Right to Acquire (RTA) schemes, though this trend switched in recent years with more non-statutory sales. However during 2013-14 statutory sales accounted for 58 per cent of all sales (253 dwellings) whilst 42 per cent of all sales (185 dwellings) were non statutory voluntary and other sales.

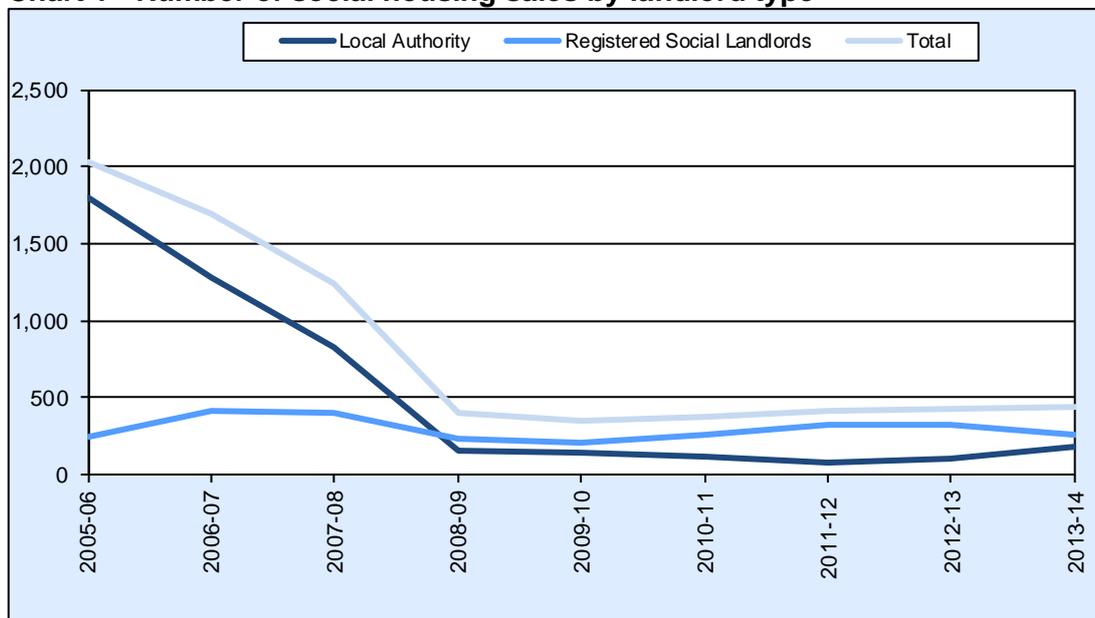
Whilst the majority of social housing is rented out at social rents (i.e. social rented dwellings), some social housing have intermediate rents, which are above social rents but below market rents, these are known as non social rented dwellings. Following the changes to the data collected on social housing sales for 2013-14, it is possible to differentiate, for the first time, 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 and Glossary sections of this release.

- Over three quarters of all sales (336 dwellings) were of social rented dwellings however this represented less than 1 per cent of the 223,170 ¹social rented dwellings at 31 March 2013. The remaining 102 sales (23 per cent) were of non social rented dwellings including shared-equity, low-cost home ownership, intermediate rented and other intermediate dwellings.

3. 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 and by 2010-11 RSLs were responsible for the majority of social sector dwellings, which is largely due to the large scale voluntary transfers of stock from local authorities to RSLs.

Chart 1 - Number of social housing sales by landlord type



Source: Annual social Housing sales returns from local authorities and RSLs.

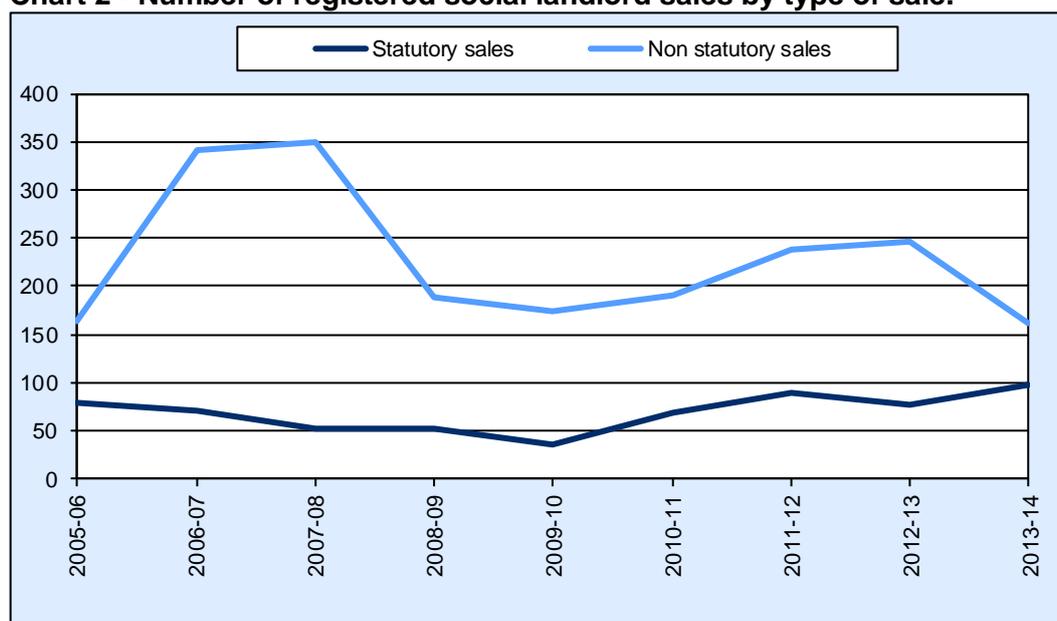
- The proportion of RSL sales generally increased until 2011-12 when it reached 80 per cent of all social housing sales. Since then however both the number and proportion of RSLs sales have

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

decreased. During 2013-14 there were 259 sales of RSL dwellings down by a fifth on 2012-13 and accounting for 59 per cent of all social housing sales.

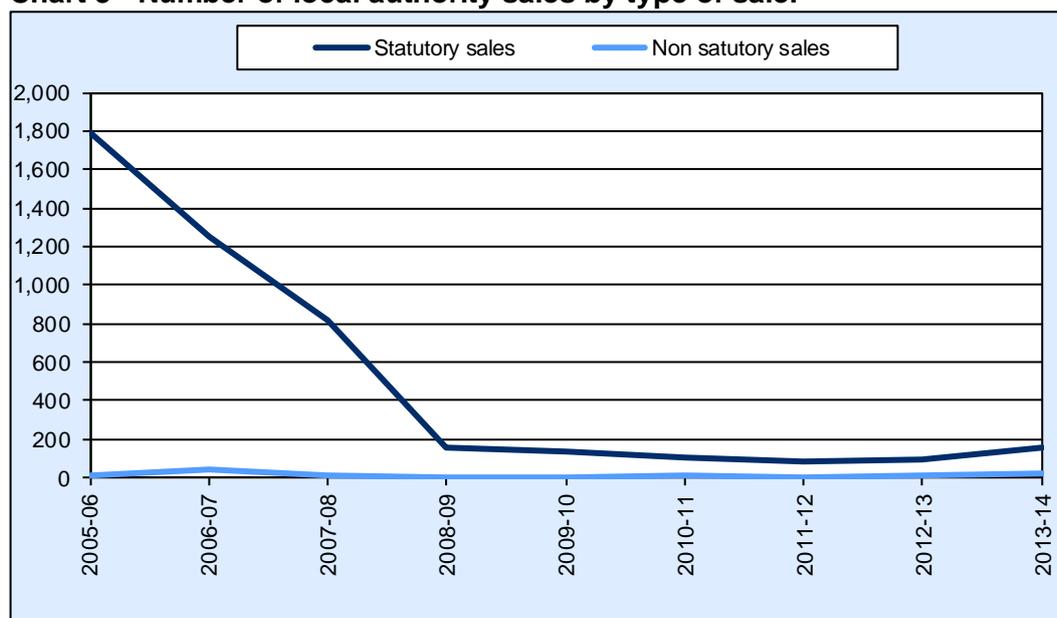
- Whilst the number and proportion of local authority sales fell consistently from 2003-04 to 2011-12, in contrast to RSL sales, both the number and proportion of local authority sales has been increasing over the last two years. During 2013-14 sales of local authority owned dwellings increased by 72 per cent to 179 dwellings accounting for 41 per cent of all social housing sales across Wales compared with 24 per cent of all sales in 2012-13.
- The majority of both local authority and RSL sales in 2013-14 were of social rented stock, though the proportion was higher for local authorities (88 per cent) than for RSLs (69 per cent). However the RSLs sold a higher number of social rented dwellings during 2013-14, at 178 dwellings compared to the 158 social rented dwellings sold by local authorities.
- The proportion of statutory and non statutory sales differs however between the local authorities and the RSLs. Whilst on average around 9 in 10 of all local authority sales each year are via the RTB 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 2013 around 99 per cent of all of non social rented dwellings were RSL dwellings, whilst only 1 per cent were local authority dwellings.

Chart 2 - Number of registered social landlord sales by type of sale.



- During 2013-14 the majority of RSL sales (63 per cent) continued to be non statutory however the number decreased by over a third compared with the previous year to 162 non statutory sales. Half of the non statutory sales were sales of non social rented dwellings.
- The statutory sale of RSL dwellings, via the RTB and RTA schemes, has generally been increasing since 2009-10, rising to 97 statutory sales during 2013-14. All of these statutory sales were sales of social rented dwellings.

Chart 3 - Number of local authority sales by type of sale.



- In contrast to RSLs, the majority of local authority sales during 2013-14 continued to be statutory sales via the RTB scheme which accounted for 87 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 local authority RTB sales each year dropping to less than 2,000 a year during 2005-06 and 2006-07. Since then however the number of local authority statutory sales via the RTB scheme has decreased to around a 100 sales each year.
- During 2013-14 a total of 156 local authority dwellings were sold via RTB schemes all of which were social rented dwellings. There were a further 23 non statutory sales of local authority dwellings during 2013-14 of which 91 per cent were non social rented dwellings and the remainder (2 dwellings) were social rented dwellings.

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.

Data Source and Coverage

Social Housing Sales

2. 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 social housing sales data collection forms are available at the following link:

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

3. Further information on the data processing cycle can also be found in in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).
4. 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 2013 were not required to submit a data return.

Registered Social Landlord Sales

5. The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire sales shown in the release are classified as statutory sales.
6. 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.
7. 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

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 dwelling stock estimates by tenure is estimated from the Annual population Survey, local authority returns and RSL returns.
9. For detailed methodology and quality information for dwelling stock estimates quoted in this release, please see the dwelling stock estimates statistical first release:
<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>
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 2012-13 were released on 10 April 2014 and can be found at: <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/dwelling-stock-estimates/?lang=en>

Users and Uses

12. The 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](#).
15. 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.
16. Welsh housing statistics adhere to the Welsh the 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 to 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.
17. More detailed quality information relating specifically to social housing sales, which is not included in the quality report, is given below.
18. The 2013-2014 collection achieved a 100% response rate.

Symbols

19. 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

20. Prior to the 2011-12 collection, information on social housing sales was collected on a quarterly basis. The quarters have been aggregated up to create annual totals that are comparable with data for 2011-12 onwards.
21. The consultation 'Proposed Changes to Housing Data Collections' that ended on the 15 July 2011 suggested that the frequency of collection and publication of sales data should be changed from quarterly to annual. All but one of the responses agreed with this suggestion and this was implemented for the 2011-12 collection year. A summary of responses to this consultation is available on our website:
<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/housingdata/?lang=en&status=closed>
22. The consultation 'Proposed Changes to Social Housing Sales Data Collections' closed on 1st March 2012. 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 to the data items would ensure that the information collected and published on social housing sales remains relevant and accurate and meets the needs of users. The changes identified include:
- Merge the two existing forms into one form for both local authorities and RSLs
 - RSL's will be expected to provide sales data split by local authority area.
 - Removing data items that are no longer needed
 - Updating the categories of intermediate tenure sales
 - Introducing a new table looking at the impact of the suspension of the Right to Buy
 - Introducing a new First Release specifically covering Social Housing Sales
- A summary of responses to this consultation is available at:
<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/socialhousing/?lang=en&status=closed>
23. 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 year 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. For the first time information was requested separately covering the sale of social rented dwellings and non social rented dwellings. These changes are reflected in this release.
24. The changes to the form allow greater consistency of the information requested from local authorities and RSL's. For 2013-14, the following data was requested:
- Sales of social rented stock categorised by right to buy, right to acquire and voluntary sales (table 1 of new data collection form for RSLs and local authorities).
 - Sales of non social rented stock categorised by shared equity, intermediate rents, low cost home ownership, other intermediate sales and voluntary sales (table 2 of new data collection form for RSLs and local authorities)
 - Selling price and discounts for local authority right to buy sales, which includes selling price and total discounts (table 4 of new data collection form to be completed by local authorities only)

Information on the impact of the suspension of the right to buy was not collected for 2013-14 but will be included in the data collection return in future years when required. A copy of the new data collection form is available at the following link:

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

Accuracy

25. We use a series of validation steps to ensure that the data is correct and consistent. Upon receipt of the data, we check that it is complete and internally consistent. We also ask for confirmation of large numbers of units reported. If there are any problems or unexpected changes in the data we contact the data providers for confirmation or correction of the data.

Revisions

26. This release contains the final data for 2013-14. 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.

27. 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.

28. We follow the Welsh Government's statistical revisions policy, details of which are available at: <http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/about/statement-of-compliance/revisions-errors-postponements/?lang=en>

Accessibility

29. 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.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Housing/Social-Housing-Sales>

Coherence with Other Statistics:

Dwelling Stock estimates

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

Related Statistics

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

Related Statistics for Other UK Countries

England

32. 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

33. Scotland collect information quarterly on all sales of local authority owned housing only. Sales figures in local authorities that have transferred their housing stock to housing associations are **excluded** from the local authority figures:

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

They also collect information annually on sales to sitting tenants only. This includes right to buy sales, rent to mortgage sales and voluntary sales. Sales figures in **local authorities that have transferred their housing stock to housing associations** are **included** in the figures:

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

Northern Ireland

34. Northern Ireland collect information annually on sales of social housing from local authorities and housing associations:

http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/stats_and_research/stats-publications/stats-housing-publications.htm

Glossary

Extra care Housing

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.

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% 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.

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 Home Buy), low cost home ownership (including shared ownership) and other investment properties and dwellings not at social rents.

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-equity 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'.

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.

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 to a discount of 25 per cent of the value of the property, up to a maximum of £16,000

Right to Buy

The Right to Buy (RTB) scheme was introduced by the 1980 Housing Act and came into effect in October 1980. The Right to Buy 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. Right to Buy discounts range from 32 per cent to 70 per cent of the market value, 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. The Right to Buy 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://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/social/buy/?lang=en>

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.

Social Rented

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

Statutory Sales

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

Voluntary sales

This includes the outright sale of property, for example 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.

Further information

Further information is available from the Housing statistics web site:

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

More detailed data are available on the StatsWales website:

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

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

<http://wales.gov.uk/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:

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