



## Social Landlord Housing Sales, 2020-21

14 October 2021  
SDR 321/2021

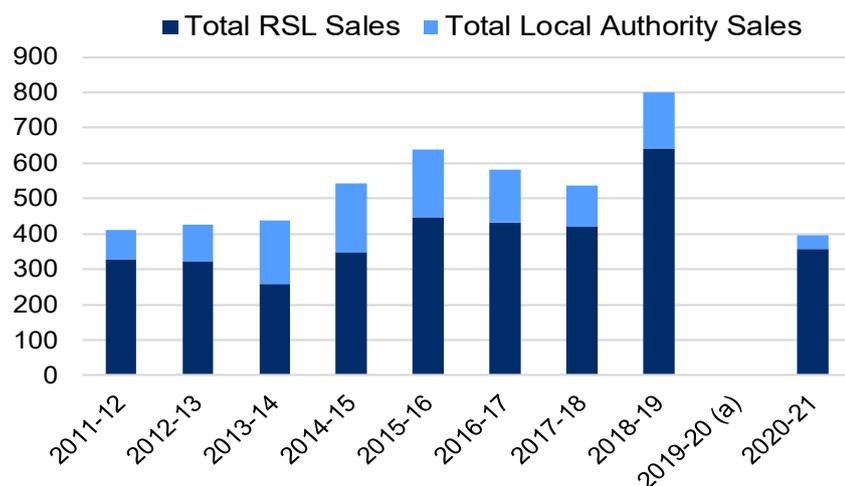
### Main points

During 2020-21, the overall number of housing sales by social landlords decreased markedly. This followed a peak in sales in 2018-19.

This is likely to be due to the ending of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire Schemes for existing stock in January 2019. (Further information is available on [page 2](#)).

Note that a small number of [statutory sales](#) via the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes were recorded in 2020-21. These related to sales that took longer to complete than expected or were approved to be extended for various reasons.

### Sales by social landlord type



Source: Social landlord housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

(a) Data for 2019-20 was not collected due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

- Between 2018-19 and 2020-21 the number of sales decreased by 50% to 397.
- Local authority sales were down by 75% to 40 dwellings while registered social landlord (RSL) sales were down by 44% to 357 dwellings.
- Since 2008-09, the majority of all social landlord housing sales have been by RSLs; these accounted for 90% of all sales during 2020-21.
- The majority of sales during 2020-21 (86%) were [non-statutory sales](#).

### About this release

This annual statistical release presents information on housing sales by social landlords. It covers sales of both local authority and Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings and includes the sale of social housing and other stock. The data are used by the Welsh Government and local authorities to monitor trends in social housing sales in the context of the overall level of Welsh housing stock.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, data for 2019-20 were not collected. See the [statement on our website](#) for further information.

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## Background

The tenure distribution of current dwelling stock is influenced by the sales of social landlord housing stock through Right to Buy and other schemes. Between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, a total of 40 local authority and 357 Registered Social Landlord (RSL) dwellings were sold and, therefore, became private sector dwellings. These sales resulted in an increase of 397 dwellings in private sector stock – other factors such as new build and conversions will also affect levels of private sector stock.

From March 2011 onwards, the [Housing \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) enabled local housing authorities to apply to suspend the right to buy and related rights in areas of housing pressure for up to five years. The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes were suspended in seven authorities – the Isle of Anglesey, Powys, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Swansea. The application to suspend the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire may have influenced the number of statutory sales within these authorities in the period prior to suspension taking effect.

During 2015 the Welsh Government [consulted on proposals on the future of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes](#). On 14 July 2015, the maximum discount available in relation to Right to Buy and Right to Acquire properties was reduced from £16,000 to £8,000.

[The Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights \(Wales\) Bill](#) was introduced in March 2017 and received Royal Assent as the [Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights \(Wales\) Act 2018](#) on 24 January 2018. The Act abolishes all variations of the Right to Buy, including the Preserved Right to Buy.

To encourage the development of new housing stock and protect recent investment, the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire ended for ‘new homes’ two months after Royal Assent on 24 March 2018. A ‘new home’ is one which has not been let as social housing during the six months before 24 March 2018. For existing social housing stock, final abolition took place on 26 January 2019

Whilst we have no specific evidence of how tenants may have reacted to the legislation it is likely to have impacted on the number applying to make use of these schemes over the period prior to their final abolition in March 2018 (for new homes) and January 2019 (for existing stock) respectively.

Further information is available in the [‘Key quality information’](#) section of this release.

## All social landlord housing sales

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



**This release analyses data on all social landlord housing sales. The types of social landlord housing covered are outlined below.**

**Social housing which includes:**

- General needs and sheltered housing let by social landlords at social rent
- Other supported housing
- Extra Care housing
- Non self-contained housing units

**Non-social housing which includes:**

- Properties at intermediate rents (including Rent First<sup>1</sup>)
- Shared Equity (including Homebuy)
- Low Cost Home ownership
- Shared ownership
- Flexible tenure for the elderly
- Residential care homes
- Nursing care homes
- Properties at market rents
- Other investment properties

Following a consultation in the Spring of 2012, a split between sales of social housing and other non-social housing were collected and published from 2013-14 onwards. Further information is available in the [‘Key quality information’](#) section.

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<sup>1</sup> [Rent First](#) is a subsidised intermediate rent solution providing people with a mid-market rental housing solution as well as potentially assisting them in the outright purchase of their home in the future. Rent First aims to help local authorities and housing associations meet their housing objectives. These include creating mixed income developments and communities which can access affordable properties to buy or rent.

## **Terms used in this section**

### **Statutory sales – these are sales made via the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes.**

- The Right to Buy (RTB) scheme was introduced by the 1980 Housing Act and came into effect in October 1980. The RTB scheme allowed 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.
- The Right to Acquire (RTA) scheme was introduced by the 1996 Housing Act and came into effect from 1 April 1997. This scheme only applied to tenants of registered social landlords. The Right to Acquire scheme gave 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.

### **Non-statutory sales – these include ‘voluntary’ and ‘other’ sales.**

- Voluntary sales include the outright sale of property which may be surplus to requirements due to low demand or where it is uneconomic to repair.
- ‘Other’ sales include those sold via shared equity (including Homebuy), low cost home ownership, shared ownership and flexible tenure for the elderly schemes. They also include the sale of intermediate rented properties (including Rent First), other intermediate tenure dwellings such as residential and nursing homes and properties at market rent and other investment properties.

**Table 1 – Social landlord housing sales (a)**

Year	Local Authority Dwellings			Registered Social Landlord Dwellings			Number
	Right to Buy	Voluntary and Other	Total LA Sales	Right to Buy and Right to Acquire (b)	Voluntary and Other (c)	Total RSL Sales	Total Social Housing Sales (d)
2000-01	3,475	64	3,539	85	140	225	3,764
2001-02	3,448	14	3,462	68	188	256	3,718
2002-03	4,913	86	4,999	79	194	273	5,272
2003-04	6,811	54	6,865	96	226	322	7,187
2004-05	3,974	25	3,999	181	234	415	4,414
2005-06	1,787	7	1,794	78	163	241	2,035
2006-07	1,250	38	1,288	71	341	412	1,700
2007-08	821	14	835	52	351	403	1,238
2008-09	158	0	158	51	188	239	397
2009-10	139	1	140	35	174	209	349
2010-11	103	12	115	69	191	260	375
2011-12	82	2	84	89	239	328	412
2012-13	94	10	104	76	246	322	426
2013-14(e)	156	23	179	97	162	259	438
2014-15(e)	176	19	195	110	239	349	544
2015-16(e)	177	14	191	182	265	447	638
2016-17(e)	141	10	151	133	299	432	583
2017-18(e)	111	8	119	125	294	419	538
2018-19(e)	154	7	161	288	352	640	801
2019-20(f)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
2020-21(e)	37	3	40	18	339	357	397

Source: Social landlord housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

- (a) Data is affected by the large scale voluntary stock transfers of local authority stock. See the '[Key quality information](#)' section for further details.
- (b) Right to Acquire figures collected for October to December 2004-05 onwards.
- (c) Voluntary sales figures collected from registered social landlords from January to March 2010 onwards.
- (d) Total Sales covers the total number of Local Authority and Registered Social Landlord dwellings sold.
- (e) For 2013-14 onwards a new single form was used to collect sales data for LAs and RSLs. This has meant some changes in definitions. For more information please see '[Key quality information](#)'.
- (f) Data not collected due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The total number of social landlord housing sales has been decreasing since the peak of over 7,000 sales in 2003-04 and has remained below 1,000 each year from 2008-9 onwards.

Following an increase in the overall number of sales in 2018-19, there was a marked decrease in 2020-21 to 397 dwellings. The sale of RSL dwellings decreased by 44% (to 357 dwellings) between 2018-19 and 2020-21 whereas local authority sales decreased by 75% to 40 dwellings ([Table 1](#)).

It is likely the increase of sales (and particularly [statutory sales](#)) observed in 2018-19 followed by the decrease in 2020-21 is due to applicants making use of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes ahead of their final abolition for existing stock in January 2019. Numbers of sales in 2020-21 have returned to the levels observed around 10 years ago.

During 2020-21, 47% (188 dwellings) of all sales were of [social housing](#). This was a decrease of 66% on the 559 social housing dwellings sold during 2018-19 and represented less than 0.1% of the entire social housing stock of 231,413 dwellings as at 31 March 2019 (social housing stock data for 31 March 2020 was not collected due to the coronavirus pandemic).

The remaining 209 sales (53%) were of [non-social housing](#) which includes intermediate rented, shared equity and low cost home-ownership properties.

## Sales by type

The distribution of sales by type was markedly different in 2020-21 compared to 2018-19. This is likely to be due to the ending of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire Schemes for existing stock in January 2019.

Overall, 86% of all sales were [non-statutory \('voluntary' and 'other'\) sales](#).

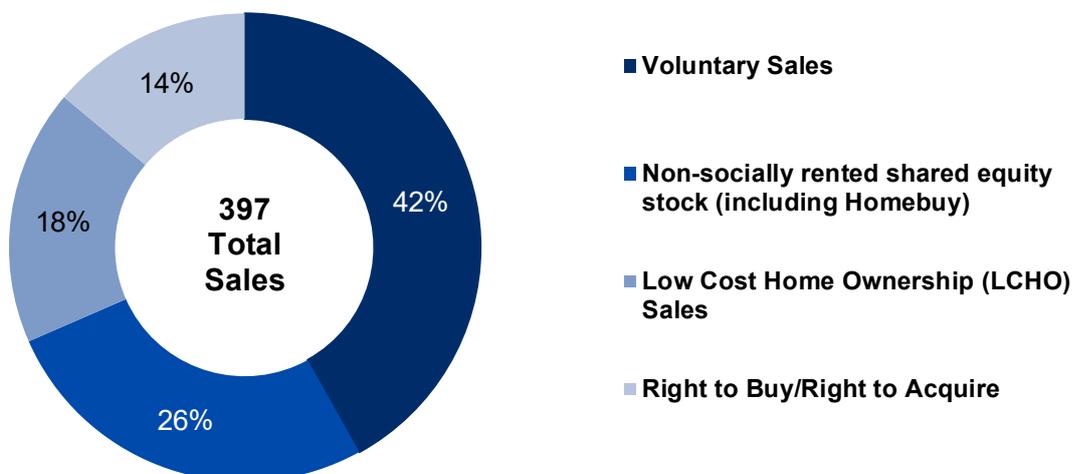
Nearly half all sales were 'Voluntary' sales (42%) which include the outright sale of a property where, for example, it is surplus to requirements due to low demand or where it is uneconomic to repair. Voluntary sales may cover both social housing and non-social housing.

There were 105 sales (26%) via shared equity schemes including Home Buy schemes which allow those who are unable to meet their housing needs in the market to buy a home. Where the scheme is available the social landlord provides an equity loan of between 30% and 50% of the property purchase price. The loan can be repaid at any time but must be repaid when the house is sold.

A further 18% of all sales during 2020-21 were via the low-cost home ownership scheme. This scheme allows qualifying purchasers to buy a share of the property with a proportional rent payable on the remaining share to the social landlord.

Just 1 sale was of an intermediate rented property ([Chart 1](#)).

**Chart 1 - Percentage of sales by type, 2020-21**



Source: Social landlord housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

## Sales by local authority

The highest number of all sales during 2020-21 was in Newport (64 dwellings), followed by Caerphilly (33 dwellings), Conwy and Neath Port Talbot (26 dwellings each).

The lowest number of sales was recorded in Merthyr Tydfil at just 2 dwellings followed by Blaenau Gwent at 4 dwellings.

**Table 2 – Number of statutory (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) and non-statutory sales by local authority, 2020-21 (a) (b)**

Provider	<i>Number</i>								
	Local Authority Sales			Registered Social Landlord Sales			Total Social Landlord Housing Sales (b)		
	Right to Buy	Voluntary and Other	Total LA Sales	Right to Buy and Right to Acquire	Voluntary and Other	Total RSL Sales	Right to Buy and Right to Acquire	Voluntary and Other	Total Sales
Isle of Anglesey (c)	.	.	.	0	10	10	0	10	10
Gwynedd	.	.	.	0	21	21	0	21	21
Conwy	.	.	.	1	25	26	1	25	26
Denbighshire (c)	0	1	1	0	14	14	0	15	15
Flintshire (c)	0	0	0	0	17	17	0	17	17
Wrexham	13	0	13	0	3	3	13	3	16
Powys	0	0	0	0	7	7	0	7	7
Ceredigion	.	.	.	0	7	7	0	7	7
Pembrokeshire	5	0	5	0	13	13	5	13	18
Carmarthenshire (c)	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	8	8
Swansea (c)	0	0	0	0	14	14	0	14	14
Neath Port Talbot	.	.	.	3	23	26	3	23	26
Bridgend	0	0	0	0	12	12	0	12	12
The Vale of Glamorgan	1	0	1	0	18	18	1	18	19
Cardiff	1	2	3	1	13	14	2	15	17
Rhondda Cynon Taf	.	.	.	4	12	16	4	12	16
Merthyr Tydfil	.	.	.	2	0	2	2	0	2
Caerphilly	17	0	17	0	16	16	17	16	33
Blaenau Gwent	.	.	.	2	2	4	2	2	4
Torfaen	.	.	.	5	20	25	5	20	25
Monmouthshire	.	.	.	0	20	20	0	20	20
Newport	.	.	.	0	64	64	0	64	64
<b>Wales</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>397</b>

Source: Social landlord housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

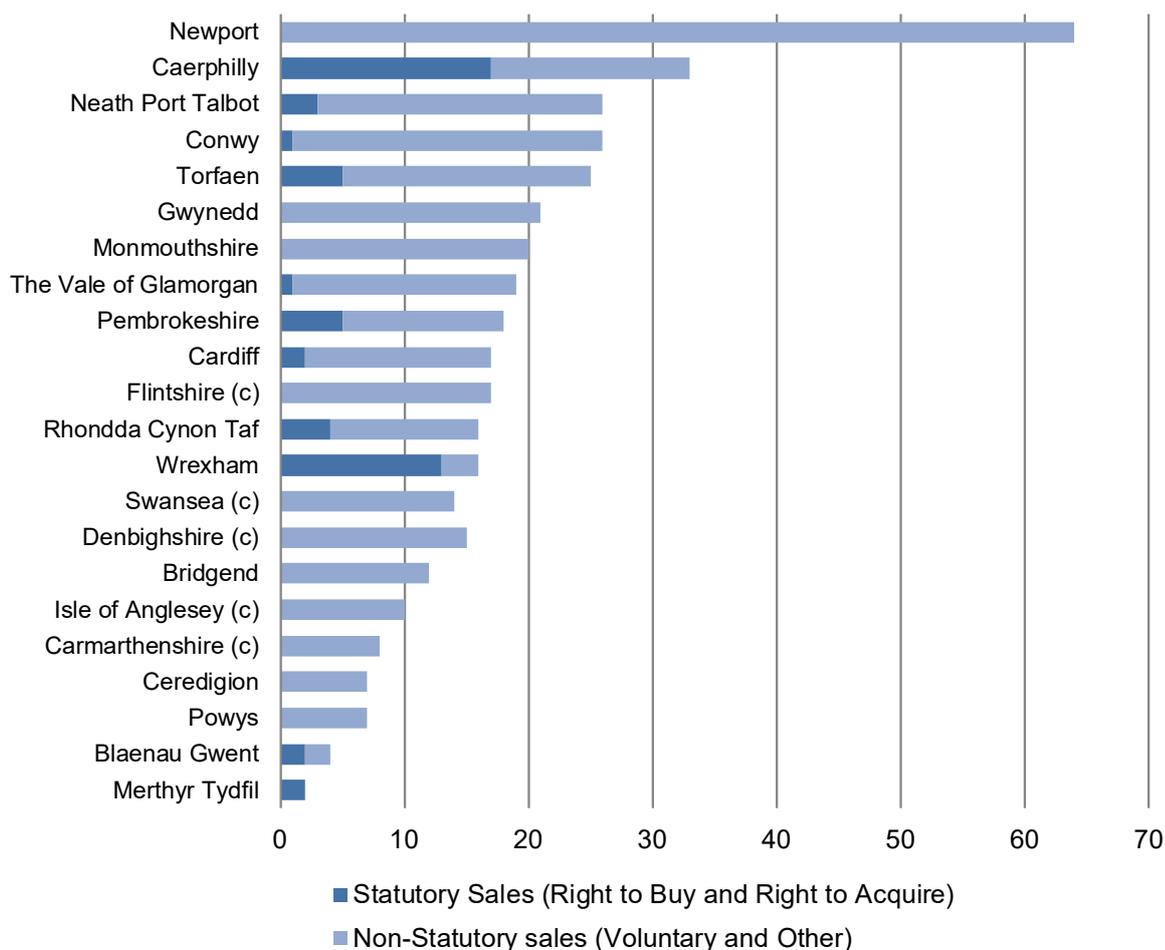
(a) Data is affected by the large scale voluntary stock transfers of local authority stock. See the ['Key quality information'](#) section for further details.

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

(c) The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire were suspended in a direction under the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure in Carmarthenshire on 19 January 2015, in Swansea on 30 March 2015, Isle of Anglesey on 6 September 2016, Flintshire on 21 February 2017 and Denbighshire on 28 March 2017. The sales shown in the table are based on applications made prior to the suspensions coming into force. More information on the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure is available in the ['Key quality information'](#) section.

"." represents not applicable as the local authority have transferred stock to RSL's. See the ['Key quality information'](#) section.

**Chart 2 – Number of all social landlord housing sales by type of sale and by local authority area, 2020-21 (a) (b)**



Source: Social landlord housing sales from Local Authorities & RSLs

- (a) Data is affected by the large scale voluntary stock transfers of local authority stock. See the 'Key quality information' section for further details.
- (b) For 2013-14 onwards a new single form was used to collect sales data for LAs and RSLs. This has meant some changes in definitions. For more information please see 'Key quality information'.
- (c) The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire were suspended in a direction under the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure in Carmarthenshire on 19 January 2015, in Swansea on 30 March 2015, Isle of Anglesey on 6 September 2016, Flintshire on 21 February 2017 and Denbighshire on 28 March 2017. The sales shown in the table are based on applications made prior to the suspensions coming into force. More information on the 2011 Housing (Wales) Measure is available in the Key Quality Information section.

A small number of [statutory sales](#) via the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire schemes were recorded in 2020-21. These related to sales that took longer to complete than expected or were approved to be extended for various reasons. However, [statutory sales](#) still continued to account for a larger proportion of all local authority sales than was the case for all RSL sales. Statutory sales accounted for 93% of all local authority sales during 2020-21 but just 5% of RSL sales. Statutory Sales were generally less widespread across Wales than [non-statutory \(voluntary and other\) sales](#) mainly due to the introduction of the [Housing \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) in 7 of the 22 local authorities.

The highest number of statutory sales (Right to Buy and Right to Acquire) during 2020-21 was in Caerphilly (17 statutory sales) and Wrexham (13 statutory sales). Newport recorded the highest number of [non-statutory \(voluntary and other\) sales](#) at 64 followed by Conwy at 25 sales.

## Sales by landlord type

Prior to 2008-09, the majority of social landlord housing sales were of local authority dwellings.

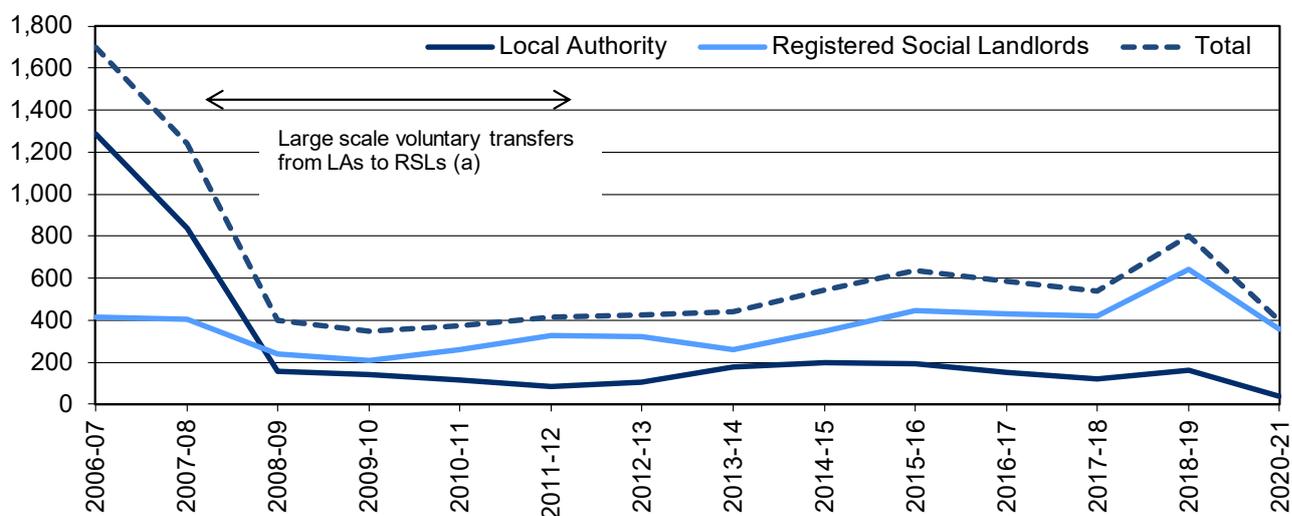
The large-scale voluntary transfers of stock from local authorities to RSLs since 2007-08 however has increased the amount of housing owned and managed by RSLs and resulted in a sharp decline in local authority sales ([Chart 2](#)).



During 2020-21, RSL sales accounted for 90 per cent of all sales (357 dwellings) and local authority sales accounted for 10 per cent (40 dwellings).

Further information is provided in the [‘Key quality information’](#) section of this release.

**Chart 3 – Number of sales by landlord type (a)**

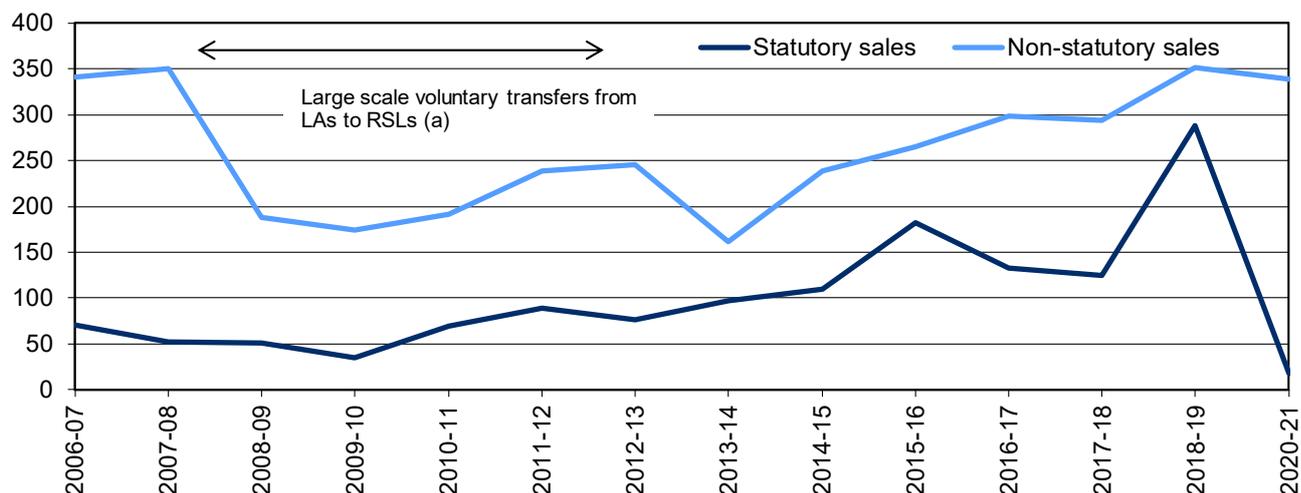


Source: Annual social landlord housing sales returns from Local Authorities and RSLs

(a) See the [‘Key quality information’](#) section for further details.

The majority of local authority sales in 2020-21 were of [social housing](#) whereas over half of RSL sales were of [non-social housing](#). The proportion of sales which were of social housing dwellings was higher for local authorities (95%) than for RSLs (43%) but numbers were lower at 38 local authority dwellings compared with 150 RSL dwellings.

**Chart 4 – Number of registered social landlord (RSL) sales by type of sale (a)**



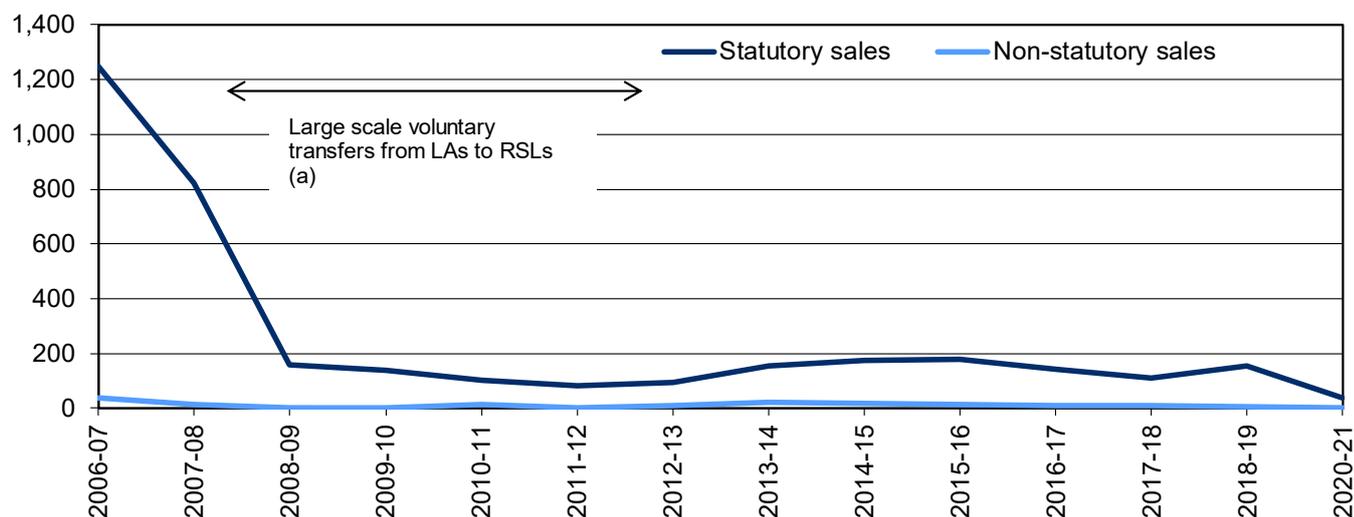
Source: Annual social landlord housing sales returns from Local Authorities and RSLs

(a) See the [‘Key quality information’](#) section for further details.

During 2020-21, the majority of RSL sales continued to be non-statutory. Nearly two thirds of these non-statutory sales (62%) were sales of non-social housing.

The number of statutory sales of RSL dwellings had been generally increasing each year since 2009-10 before dropping slightly in 2016-17 and 2017-18 and then markedly increasing in 2018-19. However, during 2020-21 the number of statutory sales of RSL dwellings decreased to just 18 compared with 288 in 2018-19. All of these statutory sales were sales of [social housing](#).

**Chart 5 – Number of local authority sales by type of sale (a)**



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

(a) See the [‘Key quality information’](#) section for further details.

In contrast to RSLs, the majority of local authority sales during 2020-21 continued to be statutory sales, which accounted for 95 per cent of all local authority sales.

Over the five years between 2000-01 and 2004-05, there was an annual average of around 4,500 Right to Buy sales of local authority dwellings, dropping to around 1,500 a year during 2005-06 and

2006-07. Over the period from 2007-08 to 2010-11, many local authorities transferred their stock to RSLs and the number of local authority sales through Right to Buy decreased substantially dropping to under 200 sales per year from 2008-09 onwards.

Between 2018-19 and 2020-21 the number of local authorities sales through Right to Buy decreased by a further 76% to 37.

## Key quality information

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

### 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 Statistics](#).

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

All statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for 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.

### Well Being of Future Generations Act 2015

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](#).

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

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

## **Users and uses**

This information is collected in order to assess the level of social landlord 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.

More generally the information is used for:

- Monitoring housing trends;
- Policy development;
- Advice to Ministers;
- Informing debate in the Senedd Cymru and beyond; and
- Geographic profiling, comparisons and benchmarking.

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](#).

## **Policy context**

### **The Housing (Wales) Measure 2011**

The Housing (Wales) Measure 2011 (now substantially repealed by the [Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights \(Wales\) Act 2018](#)) made provision to support the more effective delivery of affordable housing in Wales. The 'Measure' contained two elements as outlined below:

The 'Measure' enabled Welsh Ministers, on application from a local housing authority, to suspend the Right to Buy, the Preserved Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire held by tenants of a social landlord housing provider in Wales, in areas of housing pressure.

The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire was suspended in seven authorities:

- Carmarthenshire on 19 January 2015
- Swansea on 30 March 2015
- Isle of Anglesey on 6 September 2016
- Flintshire on 21 February 2017
- Denbighshire on 28 March 2017
- Cardiff on 19 July 2017
- Powys on 17 November 2017

Further information: [The Housing \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#)

## **White Paper Consultation on the ‘Future of Right to Buy and Abolition of Right to Buy and Associated Rights (Wales) Bill’**

A ‘Consultation on the future of Right to Buy and Right to Acquire – a white paper for social housing’ was carried out by the Welsh Government in early 2015. The consultation sought views on the following two proposals:

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

Further information including [a summary of responses received](#).

### **Change in level of discount**

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

### **Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights (Wales) Act 2018**

The ‘[Abolition of Right to Buy and Associated Rights \(Wales\) Bill](#)’ was introduced into the National Assembly for Wales (now Senedd Cymru) on 13 March 2017 and received Royal Assent on 24 January 2018. The Act ended the Right to Buy, Preserved Right to Buy and Right to Acquire for tenants of local authorities and registered social landlords. To ensure tenants were aware the Right to Buy was ending, the Act required the Welsh Government to publish information, which social landlords had to provide to affected tenants, within two months of Royal Assent.

To encourage the development of new housing stock and protect recent investment, the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire ended for ‘new homes’ two months after Royal Assent in March 2018. A ‘new home’ is one which had not been let as social housing for the six months before 24 March 2018. For existing social housing stock, final abolition took place one year after Royal Assent on 26 January 2019.

Further information: [Abolition of the Right to Buy and Associated Rights \(Wales\) Act 2018](#)

### **Data source and coverage**

#### **Social landlord housing sales**

Information is collected annually, via Excel spreadsheets downloaded from the Afon file transfer website, which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current [housing sales data collection forms](#) are available.

Further information on the data processing cycle can also be found in the [Housing Statistics Quality Report](#).

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 2018 were not required to submit a data return.

### Registered Social Landlord sales

The Right to Buy and Right to Acquire sales shown in the release are classified as [statutory sales](#).

The 'voluntary' and 'Other' sales shown in the release are classified as non-statutory. 'Voluntary' sales include the outright sale of property which may be surplus to requirements due to low demand or where it is uneconomic to repair. 'Other' sales will include those sold via shared equity (including Homebuy), low cost home ownership, shared ownership and flexible tenure for the elderly schemes. They also include the sale of intermediate rented properties (including Rent First), other intermediate tenure dwellings such as residential and nursing homes and properties at market rent and other investment properties.

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

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

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

The Dwelling Stock Estimates as at 31 March 2020 were released on 17 September 2020. For detailed methodology and quality information for dwelling stock estimates quoted in this release, see the [dwelling stock estimates statistical first release](#).

## 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 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.

## Administrative data quality assurance

Data are collected from local authorities and registered social landlords via Excel spreadsheets. These are downloaded from the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data.

The spreadsheets allow respondents to validate some data before sending to the Welsh Government. Respondents are also given an opportunity to include contextual information where large changes have occurred (e.g. data items changing by more than 10% compared to the previous year). This enables some data cleansing at source and minimises follow up queries.

Local authorities and registered social landlords are notified of the data collection exercise timetable in advance. This allows adequate time for local authorities and registered social landlords to collate their information, and to raise any issues they may have. There is guidance in the spreadsheet, which assists users on completing the form.

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

## Validation and verification

Once we receive the data, it goes through further validation and verification checks, for example:

- Common sense check for any missing/incorrect data without any explanation;
- Arithmetic consistency checks;
- Cross checks against the data for the previous year;
- Cross checks with other relevant data collections;
- Thorough tolerance checks;
- Verification that data outside of tolerances is actually correct.

If there is a validation error, we contact the local authority or registered social landlord and seek resolution. If we fail to get an answer within a reasonable timescale, we will use imputation to improve data quality. We will then inform the organisation and explain to them how we have amended or imputed the data. The method of imputation and the affected data is highlighted in the 'quality information' section of the first release.

## **Comparability**

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

Following a consultation on proposed changes to the Social Landlord Housing Sales data collection, from 2013-14 onwards the collection consisted of one form for both RSLs and local authorities. Changes were also made to the data items collected, in line with the consultation proposals. Information was requested separately covering the sale of social and non-social dwellings. These changes are reflected in this release.

## **Accuracy**

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

## **Revisions**

This release contains the final data for 2020-21. 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.

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.

We follow our [statistical revisions policy](#).

## **Accessibility**

A full set of data on new social landlord housing sales, including information by individual local authority and RSL is available to download from [StatsWales](#).

## **Coherence with other statistics**

### **Dwelling stock estimates**

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.

### **Related statistics**

We publish a range of statistics on housing supply. These include [new house building](#), [affordable housing provision](#) and [Help to Buy-Wales](#).

## **Related statistics for other UK countries**

### **England**

England collects and published information annually on social landlord 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). This latest information for 2017-18 is available on the [GOV.UK website](#).

### **Scotland**

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

The SALES1 summary return collects information on applications for and sales of local authority owned housing only. It covers all sales, not just sales to sitting tenants. The SALES3 case based return collects information on sales to sitting tenants only. This includes right to buy sales, rent to mortgage sales and voluntary sales. The published tables are available from the [Scottish Government website](#).

Further data on Housing Association Right to Buy transactions is published by the [Scottish Housing Regulator](#).

More recently, the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014 ended the Right to Buy for all tenants. This took effect after a 2-year notice period which ended in August 2016. Further information is available from the [Scottish Government website](#).

### **Northern Ireland**

Information on sales to social housing tenants in Northern Ireland is available from the [Department of Communities Northern Ireland](#).

## Glossary

### Statutory sales

[Statutory sales](#) include all social rented dwellings sold to tenants through the **Right to Buy** or **Right to Acquire** schemes.

### Right to Buy

The [Right to Buy \(RTB\) scheme](#) was introduced by the 1980 Housing Act and came into effect in October 1980. The RTB scheme allowed qualifying tenants of local authorities and RSLs to purchase the home they rented from the social landlord at discounted prices, according to the length of their tenancy. RTB discounts ranged from 32 per cent to 70 per cent of the market value, and prior to 14 July 2015 up to a maximum discount of £16,000, depending on the type of property, the residential area and time spent as a tenant of social housing. RTB did not apply to certain types of property and restrictions to subsequent sales applied in rural areas.

### 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 applied to tenants of registered social landlords. The Right to Acquire scheme gave 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 were entitled, prior to 14 July 2015, to a discount of 25 per cent of the value of the property, up to a maximum of £16,000.

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

### Non-statutory sales

[Non-statutory sales](#) include 'Voluntary' and 'Other' sales. **Voluntary** sales include the outright sale of property which may be surplus to requirements due to low demand or is uneconomic to repair. **'Other' sales** - these will include those sold via shared equity (including Homebuy), low cost home ownership and other shared ownership and flexible tenure for the elderly schemes. They also include the sale of intermediate rented properties (including Rent First), other intermediate tenure dwellings such as residential and nursing homes and properties at market rent and other investment properties.

## **Voluntary sales**

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

## **Shared ownership**

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

## **Homebuy**

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

There are two ways that Homebuy loans are provided:

Housing associations can choose to sell any property in its ownership on Homebuy equity sharing terms. This will include sales of properties under 'neutral tenure' principles where newbuild properties are let or sold according to the need of the applicant.

'Do-it-Yourself' or 'DIY' Homebuy – eligible purchasers can choose a qualifying property from the open market and the RSL provides an equity loan for a percentage of the purchase price.

## **Extra care housing**

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

## **Flexible tenure for the elderly**

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

## **Intermediate rents (including Rent First)**

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

## **Low cost home ownership**

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

## **Registered Social Landlords (RSLs)**

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

## **Stock at social rents**

These are general needs and sheltered dwellings wholly owned and managed by social landlords (local authorities and registered social landlords), and fall within the scope of the Welsh Government's policy for social housing rents.

## **Social housing**

This includes "stock at social rents" (i.e. general needs and sheltered housing), extra care, other supported housing and non self-contained housing units

## **Other (non-social housing)**

This includes intermediate rented dwellings (including Rent first), housing let at market rents, shared equity (including Homebuy), low cost home ownership, shared ownership, flexible tenure for the elderly, investment properties and other non social housing such as residential care and nursing homes.

## **Rent First**

[Rent First](#) is a subsidised intermediate rent solution providing people with a mid-market rental housing solution as well as potentially assisting them in the outright purchase of their home in the future. Rent First aims to help local authorities and housing associations meet their housing objectives. These include creating mixed income developments and communities which can access affordable properties to buy or rent.

## **Further details**

The document is available at:

<https://gov.wales/social-landlord-housing-sales>

## **Next update**

Annual release July 2022.

## **We want your feedback**

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to

[stats.housing@gov.wales](mailto:stats.housing@gov.wales).

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