

Welsh Government

## Consultation Document

# Proposed Changes to Social Housing Sales Data Collections

Date of issue: 12 January 2012

Action required: Responses by 1 March 2012



## **Overview**

This consultation seeks views on:

- Changes to the data items collected and the accompanying definitions;
- The use of publications on social housing sales.

## **How to respond**

You can respond to the consultation by using the [online form](#). If you have any difficulty in accessing this form, an Excel spreadsheet version of the form is also available to download and e-mail back to [stats.housing@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:stats.housing@wales.gsi.gov.uk) or posted to

Judith David  
Housing Statistics  
Statistical Directorate  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

## **Further information and related documents**

**Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.**

## **Contact details**

For further information, please contact Rhiannon Caunt or Judy David

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

Telephone: Rhiannon Caunt on 029 2082 5063,  
or Judy David on 029 2082 5055

## Data protection

### How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

## **Background**

The Housing Information Group and its sub-groups are gradually reviewing the different housing data collections. Social housing sales data was high on the list as it has not been fully reviewed for nearly 15 years.

The Housing Information Group is a forum for the Welsh Government, local authorities, housing associations, and participating agencies to share views about housing. These views cover statistical, research and other analytical requirements of Welsh housing policy and practice.

The collection of this data is currently spread across two returns, the local authority sales form and the Registered Social Landlord (RSL) sales form. It was collected quarterly up to the end of 2010-11 and has now moved to an annual collection cycle as a result of a recent consultation:

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/statistics/housingdata/?lang=en&ts=1&status=closed>

The information is published in a statistical release which is used by the Welsh Government to develop and monitor policies on social housing. Local authorities, RSLs and other housing organisations use the information to monitor the national and local picture with regards to the sale of social housing stock. This topic is of particular interest now that the Welsh Government has obtained the power to allow the suspension of 'Right to Buy' under certain circumstances<sup>1</sup>.

The latest statistical release is available here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/housing/sales/?lang=en>

The latest data collection forms are available here:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/about/data-collection/housing/social/?lang=en>

## **Where are we now?**

Statistics on social housing sales have not been reviewed fully for nearly 15 years. Concerns had been raised regarding the continuing relevance and accuracy of some of the information collected.

In the autumn of 2011 a sub group of the Housing Information Group (HIG) was established to review the social housing data items collected and their associated guidance. The group included internal Welsh Government colleagues as well as external representatives from local authorities and Community Housing Cymru on behalf of RSLs.

---

<sup>1</sup> Further details are available at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/publications/measure2011/?lang=en&ts=1>

## **Proposals for change**

The review process identified a number of changes which could be made to the current data collection form. These would ensure that the information collected and published on social housing sales remains relevant, accurate and meets the needs of users. The changes aim to provide more clarity to data providers and remove data items no longer relevant or required by end users of the data.

The changes identified include:

- Merge the two existing forms into one form for both local authorities and RSLs;
- 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; and
- introducing a new First Release specifically covering Social Housing Sales.

Further information is provided on each of these proposals on the following pages. These proposals have been developed from feedback obtained through informal consultation with the fire and rescue services in Wales.

## **What outcomes do we expect?**

If the proposals in the consultation are agreed, we will implement changes to publications from March 2012 and for the data collection for the 2011-12 financial year. We will need to keep collections under review to ensure that they remain relevant and continue to collect good quality information.

Your contributions will help us to understand the impact these changes could have on the individuals and organisations that use these statistics. The outcome of this consultation will inform our decision as to whether these changes can be implemented.

**Proposal 1:** Merge the two existing forms into one form for both local authorities and RSLs.

### **The evidence for change**

Social housing sales is now the only remaining area of data collection where local authorities and RSLs collect data on a different basis. This change would allow better comparison between social landlords and remove inconsistencies in the reporting of different types of sale.

#### **Specific consultation questions:**

- *Do you agree with the proposal?*
- *What are your reasons for this, including any impact this change might have on your work?*

**Proposal 2:** We will remove data items that are no longer needed, in particular:

- Tables 3 and 4 of the local authority form covering the disposal of land for housing and the disposal of dwellings built and financed by private developers on local authority owned land completed respectively.
- Data on Right to Buy claims, responses and claims outstanding at the end of the period.
- The detailed breakdown of Right to Buy sale prices and discounts. Although we will still collect the total figure.

### **The evidence for change**

We did not identify any users for this data during discussions. It is not good practice to continue data collection without a reason and the removal of these items will reduce the burden on data providers. Similar data is also collected as part of the new affordable housing data collection; this relates to new affordable housing delivered on former local authority land.

#### **Specific consultation questions:**

- *Do you agree with the proposal?*
- *What are your reasons for this, including any impact this change might have on your work?*

**Proposal 3:** We will update the categories of intermediate tenure sales and ask the question of all social landlords.

- We will replace the existing local authority categories.
- We will replace the existing Homebuy and other categories on the old RSL form with four categories: Shared equity, intermediate rents, low cost home ownership and other intermediate sales.
- The 'other intermediate sales' column will cover Extra care and Flexible Tenure for the Elderly schemes.

A copy of the draft data collection return is attached for reference.

### **The evidence for change**

There have been a range of new schemes over the past few years. The new categories provide high level headings with examples of the schemes. This will allow for future developments to still fit in the table.

**Specific consultation questions:**

- *Do you agree with the proposal?*
- *Do you think the new 'other intermediate sales' column in Table 2 will be used?*
- *What are your reasons for this, including any impact this change might have on your work?*

**Proposal 4:** To introduce a new table looking at the impact of the suspension of the Right to Buy

- We will ask for the number of units covered by the suspension of the Right to Buy by local authority area.

**The evidence for change**

The Welsh Government now has the power to enable local housing authorities to apply to suspend the right to buy and related rights in areas of housing pressure for up to five years<sup>2</sup>. This table seeks to monitor the impact on any such suspensions in future. There are currently no suspensions in place as of January 2012.

**Specific consultation questions:**

- *Do you agree with the proposal?*
- *Do you think that this data item is a good measure of the impact of suspensions?*
- *What are your reasons for this, including any impact this change might have on your work?*

**Proposal 5:** To introduce a new First Release specifically covering Social Housing Sales

- We will publish an annual Statistical First Release on Social Housing Sales.

**The evidence for change**

Sales data has in recent years been published together with new build statistics. Sales data is now collected annually whilst new build figures have remained quarterly. It seems a logical step to split these outputs.

**Specific consultation questions:**

- *Do you agree with the proposal?*
- *What are your reasons for this, including any impact this change might have on your work?*
- *Do you use the existing release on new build and social housing sales?*
- *If yes, a) which parts of the sales section of the release do you use; and b) is there anything specific you would like to be included in the new release? If yes please provide reasons.*
- *Do you use the existing data on the StatsWales website?*  
[www.statswales.wales.gov.uk](http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk)
- *If yes, which data in particular do you use?*

---

<sup>2</sup> Further details are available at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/publications/measure2011/?lang=en>



These proposals have been agreed in principle by the [Housing Information Group](#), which contains representatives from the Welsh Government, external users of social housing sales statistics and data providers.

As the proposals in this consultation have already been agreed in principle by the Housing Information Group and its social housing sales sub-group, the consultation period will run for 6 weeks rather than the usual 12 week period.

**Table 1: Sales of social rented stock**

Sales by Welsh social landlords, 2011-12

PLEASE SELECT LANDLORD

[Go to the guidance](#)  
[Go to definitions](#)

[Table 2](#)  
[Back to Home Page](#)

	Sales of social rented stock					Sales of social rented stock					Comment					
	Houses with:				V1	Flats with:				V1						
	Right to Buy	Right to Acquire	Voluntary sales	Total		Right to Buy	Right to Acquire	Voluntary sales	Total							
a	b	c	d	a	b	c	e	f	g	h	e	f	g			
1	Isle of Anglesey			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
2	Gwynedd			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
3	Conwy			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
4	Denbighshire			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
5	Flintshire			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
6	Wrexham			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
7	Powys			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
8	Ceredigion			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
9	Pembrokeshire			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
10	Carmarthenshire			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
11	Swansea			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
12	Neath Port Talbot			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
13	Bridgend			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
14	The Vale of Glamorgan			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
15	Cardiff			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
16	Rhondda Cynon Taf			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
17	Merthyr Tydfil			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
18	Caerphilly			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
19	Blaenau Gwent			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
20	Torfaen			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
21	Monmouthshire			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
22	Newport			0	X	X	X				0	X	X	X		
23	<b>Wales</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>

Comment

**Table 2: Sales of non-social rented stock**

Sales by Welsh social landlords, 2011-12

PLEASE SELECT LANDLORD

[Go to the guidance](#)  
[Go to definitions](#)

[Table 3](#)  
[Back to Home Page](#)

		Sales of non-social rented stock Houses with:						Sales of non-social rented stock Flats with:																				
		Shared equity (including Homebuy)	Intermediate rents (including Rent First)	Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) (including Shared Ownership)	Other intermediate sales	Voluntary sales	Total	V1																				
		Shared equity (including Homebuy)	Intermediate rents (including Rent First)	Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) (including Shared Ownership)	Other intermediate sales	Voluntary sales	Total	V1																				
		a	b	c	d	e	f	a	b	c	d	e	g	h	i	j	k	l	g	h	i	j	k	Comment				
1	Isle of Anglesey						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
2	Gwynedd						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
3	Conwy						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
4	Denbighshire						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
5	Flintshire						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
6	Wrexham						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
7	Powys						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
8	Ceredigion						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
9	Pembrokeshire						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
10	Cardiff						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
11	Swansea						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
12	Neath Port Talbot						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
13	Bridgend						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
14	The Vale of Glamorgan						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
15	Cardiff						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
16	Rhondda Cynon Taf						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
17	Merthyr Tydfil						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
18	Caerphilly						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
19	Blaenau Gwent						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
20	Torfaen						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
21	Monmouthshire						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
22	Newport						0	X	X	X	X	X						0	X	X	X	X	X					
23	<b>Wales</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>✓</b>					

Comment

**Table 3: Impact of the suspension of the Right to Buy** Sales by Welsh social landlords, 2011-12

[Go to the guidance](#)

[Go to definitions](#)

PLEASE SELECT LANDLORD

[Table 4](#)

[Back to Home Page](#)

**Do not include units owned by other landlords**

At 31 March 2012	
Number of your landlord's units covered by the suspension	V1

Comment
---------

	a	a	
1	Isle of Anglesey	✓	
2	Gwynedd	✓	
3	Conwy	✓	
4	Denbighshire	✓	
5	Flintshire	✓	
6	Wrexham	✓	
7	Powys	✓	
8	Ceredigion	✓	
9	Pembrokeshire	✓	
10	Carmarthenshire	✓	
11	Swansea	✓	
12	Neath Port Talbot	✓	
13	Bridgend	✓	
14	The Vale of Glamorgan	✓	
15	Cardiff	✓	
16	Rhondda Cynon Taf	✓	
17	Merthyr Tydfil	✓	
18	Caerphilly	✓	
19	Blaenau Gwent	✓	
20	Torfaen	✓	
21	Monmouthshire	✓	
22	Newport	✓	
23	<b>Wales</b>	<b>0</b>	✓

Comment	
---------	--

**Table 4: Selling prices and discounts for local authority Right to Buy sales**

Sales by Welsh social landlords, 2011-12

Only Local Authority data should be included.  
RSLs do not need to complete this table.

PLEASE SELECT LANDLORD

[Back to Home Page](#)

[Go to the guidance](#)

[Go to definitions](#)

£ / number	V1	Comment
a	a	

1	Selling price (excluding discount) for all Right to Buy units sold (£)		✘	
2	Total discounts for all Right to Buy units sold (£)		✘	
3	Total selling price (including discount) for all Right to Buy units sold (£)	£0.00	✓	
4	Total Right to Buy sales (number) (from Table 1)	0	✓	
5	Discount per unit (£) (Right to buy discounts should be £16,000 or less per property).	-	✓	

Comment

## General Guidance

### Guidance for all tables

[Back to Home Page](#)

#### Include:

- 0.1
- Sales of properties which are Social Housing Grant (SHG) funded or non-SHG funded;
  - Sales completed during the quarter;
  - Sales where the unit is a loss to the stock of the landlord.

#### Exclude:

- 0.2
- Transfers of stock between social landlords. Please note the details in the comment box at the bottom of the page;
  - Demolitions;
  - Initial sales, re-sales and staircasing.

#### Which table should I record the sale on?

- 0.3
- For all self-contained stock in Stock Tables 1, 2 and 3 (general needs, supported, sheltered, extra care), use Sales Table 1. However if the sale is through an extra care or flexible tenure for the elderly scheme, use Table 2, 'other intermediate sales'.
  - For all non self-contained stock (bedsits and hostels/shared accommodation) in Stock Table 4, use Sales Table 1. Count each unit or bedspace as 1 unit.
  - For all intermediate tenures in Stock Table 5, column 1, use Sales Table 2.
  - For 'other tenures not at social rents' in Stock Table 5, column 2, use Sales Table 2 and the 'voluntary sales' column.

#### Table 1: Sales of social rented stock

- 1.1
- No specific guidance.

#### Table 2: Sales of non-social rented stock

- 2.1
- No specific guidance.

#### Table 3: Impact of the suspension of the Right to Buy

- 3.1
- Include all units in the suspension area, regardless of whether they qualify for Right to Buy or Right to Acquire.
- 3.2
- Count units as in the stock form.

#### Table 4: Selling prices and discounts for local authority Right to Buy sales

- 4.1
- Only local authorities need to complete this table.

## Definitions

Sales by Welsh social landlords, 2011-12

[Back to Home Page](#)

Extracare Housing	Specific housing schemes offering flats and support amenities to elderly people. Residents may opt to rent or to buy where available. Include in Table 2, 'Other intermediate sales'
Flexible Tenure for the Elderly	Includes specific housing schemes developed in the 1990s to provide flexible tenure options for older people in housing schemes designed specifically for their needs. Include in Table 2, 'Other intermediate sales'
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. Can be Welsh Government grant funded or landlord funded. Includes Rent First. Record in Table 2.
Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) (including Shared 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. Include in Table 2.
Right to Acquire	The Right to Acquire (RTA) scheme was introduced by the Housing Act 1996 with effect from 1 April 1997. The scheme enables eligible housing association tenants living in qualifying properties to buy their rented home at a discount. RTA only applies to properties built or acquired by housing associations, both charitable and non-charitable, with public funds from 1 April 1997 onwards. Properties transferred from a local authority to a housing association after 1 April 1997 are also eligible. Some properties are exempt from RTA including sheltered housing and homes located in small rural settlements. Include in Table 1.
Right to Buy	The Right to Buy scheme (RTB) was introduced by the 1980 Housing Act with effect from October 1980. RTB is available to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• secure tenants of RSLs; and</li> <li>• RSL assured tenants who have been transferred with their homes as part of a stock transfer from a local authority to an RSL; these tenants have a preserved RTB.</li> </ul> Qualifying tenants may purchase the home they rent from their social landlord at a discount. Includes flats sold on leasehold terms. Include in Table 1.
Shared equity (including Homebuy)	A Shared Equity scheme such as Homebuy helps people who are unable to meet their housing needs in the market to buy a suitable home. Where the scheme is available, the social landlord provides an equity loan of between 30% and 50% of the property purchase price. 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. <p>There are two ways that Homebuy loans are provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A social landlord 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; and</li> <li>• 'Do-it-Yourself' or 'DIY' Homebuy; eligible purchasers can choose a qualifying property from the open market and the social landlord provides an equity loan for a percentage of the purchase price.</li> </ul> Include in Table 2.
Staircasing	Moving between percentages for a shared equity scheme for example from 50:50 to 70:30 or vice versa.
Voluntary sales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This includes the outright sale of property, for example the property is surplus to requirements due to low demand or is uneconomic to repair.</li> <li>• Record any sales to non-registered RSLs or the private sector as voluntary sales.</li> </ul> Include in Table 1 if the property is at social rents, otherwise include in Table 2.