



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

# Social Housing Sales: 2016-17, England



## Housing Statistical Release

23 November 2017

### Sales

- In 2016-17 there were 23,186 sales of social housing dwellings, 13,652 by local authorities and 9,534 by private registered providers (PRP) (housing associations). The 23,186 sales amount to 0.6% of the total stock of 4 million social houses.
- Between 2015-16 and 2016-17, local authority sales increased by 9% and PRP sales were up 1%. The PRP increase was due primarily to increased preserved Right to Buy sales.
- Local authority Right to Buy sales amounted to 13,416, an increase of 10% on the previous year. There were 4,694 Right to Buy sales by PRPs, up 18% on the previous year. The total Right to Buy sales were 18,110.

### Right to Buy Discounts

- In 2016-17, local authority Right to Buy sales had an average discount, of 43% of the selling price, 16 percentage points higher than in 2011-12.
- PRP Right to Buy sales had an average discount of 49% of the selling price, 18 percentage points higher than in 2011-12.

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### Date of next publication:

Autumn 2018

# Introduction

This Statistical Release presents National Statistics on annual sales of social housing dwellings in England up to 2016-17. It complements the statistical releases on quarterly local authority 'Right to Buy sales in England' with statistics on sales by private registered providers and includes other schemes and types of sale in addition to the Right to Buy scheme.

For the total and type of social housing sales all Shared Ownership sales are excluded, so that the focus is on the sale of existing social housing stock. For the financial and household characteristics Shared Ownership has been presented separately as they show the trends in different sales types.

## Total Social Housing Sales

The numbers of social housing sales during the 1980's when Right to Buy was first introduced, averaged approximately 97,000 annually. Total sales then decreased in the 1990s, averaging approximately 47,000 annually and there was a further downward trend in social housing sales in the mid-2000s, when the number of sales decreased greatly between 2006-07 and 2009-10, possibly due to the financial crisis.

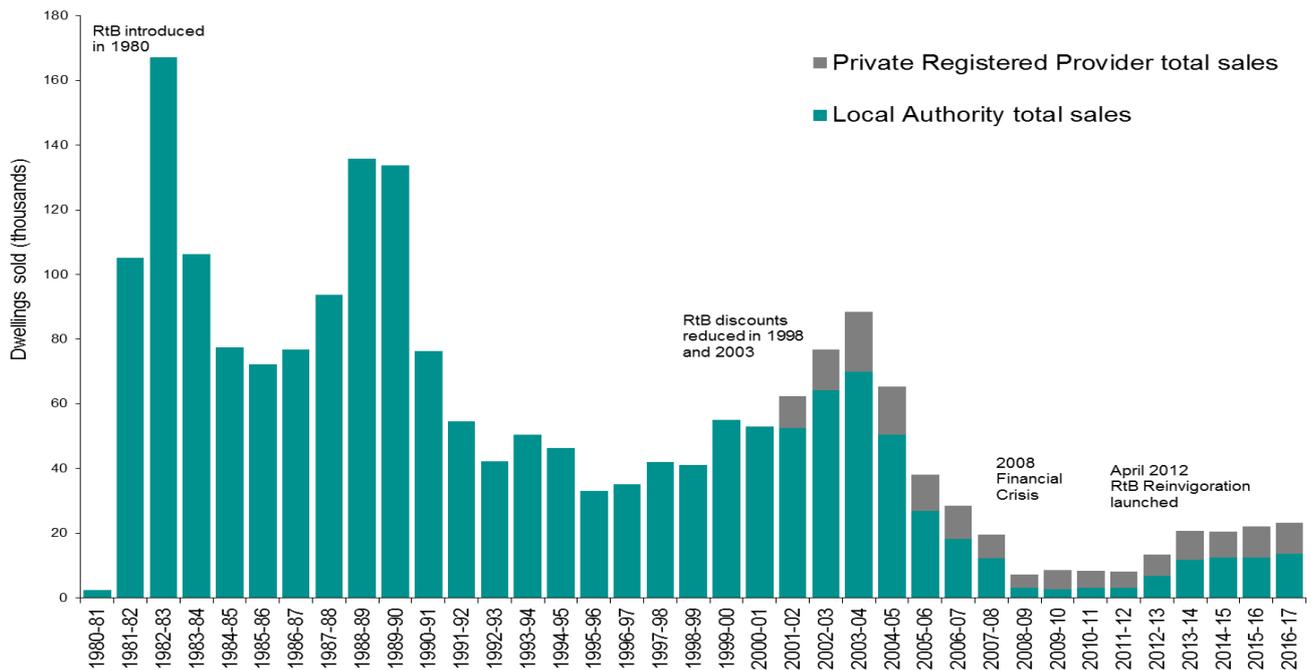
Since 2012-13 there has been an increase in total social housing sales, reflecting the increased discounts introduced in 2012-13 and the recovery of the housing market.

- In 2016-17 there were 23,186 sales of social housing dwellings, an increase of 5 per cent compared to 2015-16.
- Of these 23,186 sales, 13,652 were by local authorities (an increase of 9 per cent compared to the 2015-16 figure) and 9,534 were by private registered providers (an increase of 1 per cent compared to 2015-16).
- The increase in private registered provider sales is mainly due to more Right to Buy sales (18 per cent up). This increase is to be due to a general increase in Right to Buy sales this year, which includes a small number of voluntary Right to Buy sales (275) under the pilot that was run with five housing associations.
- The 23,186 sales from 2016-17 are 26 per cent of the 2003-04 peak, and around 14 per cent of the 1982-83 peak.
- The total of 23,186 sales in 2016-17 amounts to about 0.6 per cent of the total social rented stock of 4 million.
- Whilst there were 23,186 social housing sales in 2016/17, the latest available figures for 2016<sup>1</sup> show that there was a net increase of 12,000 socially rented houses.

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<sup>1</sup> Source Live Table 104 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

**Chart 1.1: Total social housing sales in England 1980-81 to 2016-17 <sup>1</sup>**



1. Figures for private registered providers are only available from 2001-02, however they would have been relatively small before that point

Source: LOGASNet Return (DCLG), Local Authority Housing Statistics Return (DCLG) and Statistical Data Return (HCA)

Further detail on social housing sales, including data at a local authority level and footnotes are available in the Department's Live Tables. The tables relevant to this section are Tables 678 and 691 and can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>.

# Type of Social Housing Sales

In 2016-17:

- 18,110 social housing sales were through the Right to Buy, preserved or voluntary Right to Buy schemes, Local authority Right to Buy totalled 13,416 and private registered providers sold 4,694 under preserved or voluntary Right to Buy.



Source: LOGASNet Return (DCLG), Local Authority Housing Statistics Return (DCLG) and Statistical Data Return (HCA)

Statistics are available for dwellings sold under 'Right to Acquire' (in Live Table 677) and 'Social HomeBuy' (in Live Table 683).

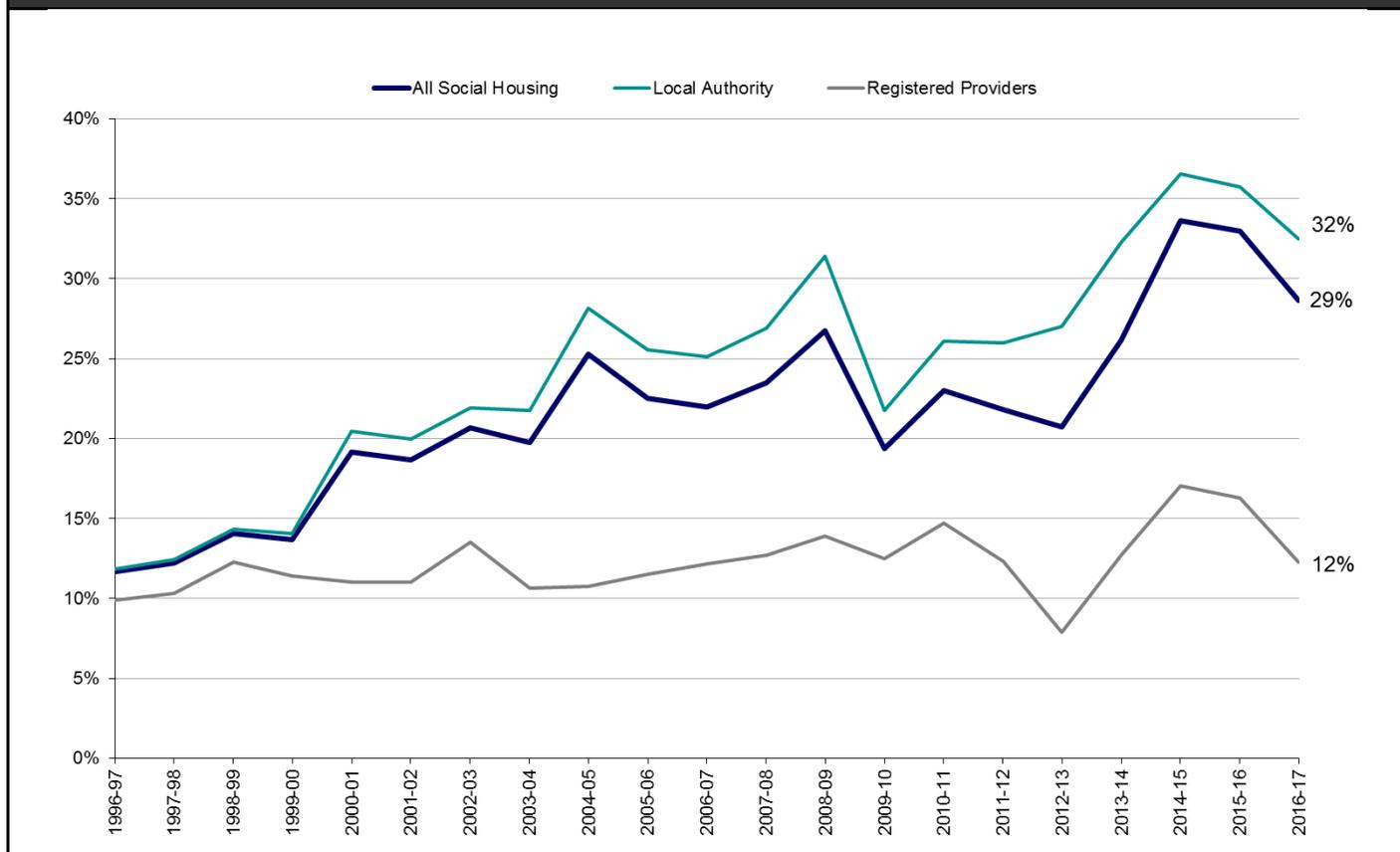
- In 2016-17 there were 580 sales under the Right to Acquire scheme. This compares to 400 sales in 2015-16.
- In 2016-17 there were 20 sales under Social HomeBuy, compared with 30 sales in 2015-16.

The total number of Right to Buy sales peaked in 1982-83 with 167,000 sales before following a downward trend. There were smaller peaks in 1988-89 (136,000) and 2003-04 (84,000) but since 2003-04 sales have been relatively low, with annual sales below 4,000 between 2008-09 and 2011-12.

- In 2016-17 there were 18,110 Right to Buy sales, compared to 16,223 in 2015-16.
- There were 13,416 local authority sales and 4,694 private registered provider sales under preserved or voluntary Right to Buy in 2016-17. Compared to 2015-16 sales this is an increase of 10 per cent for local authorities and an increase of 18 per cent for private registered providers.

## Right to Buy sales of Flats:

Chart 2.2: Proportion of Right to Buy sales that were flats 1996-97 to 2016-17



Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics Return (DCLG) and CORE data collection (DCLG)

- In 2016-17, 29 per cent of social housing dwellings sold through Right to Buy were flats. 32 per cent of local authority Right to Buy sales were flats whilst 12 per cent of private registered provider Right to Buy sales were flats.

Further details on the types of social housing sales are available in the Department's Live Tables. They can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>. The tables covering this topic in particular are 671, 677, 681, 683 and 685.

# Right to Buy sales – Financial Information

The 'discount percentage' is the percentage below market value that a dwelling is sold for under the Right to Buy scheme. The average 'discount percentage' decreased steadily between 1998-99 and 2007-08, from 50 per cent to 24 per cent for local authorities and from 50 per cent to 30 per cent for private registered providers (PRPs) respectively. In 2012-13 the discount increased back towards 1998-99 values with a 'discount percentage' of 45 per cent value for local authorities and 49 per cent value for PRPs.

These increases reflect changes made to the scheme between April 2012 and July 2014 which increased the maximum discounts available for buyers (see the [History of the Right to Buy Scheme](#) for further details).

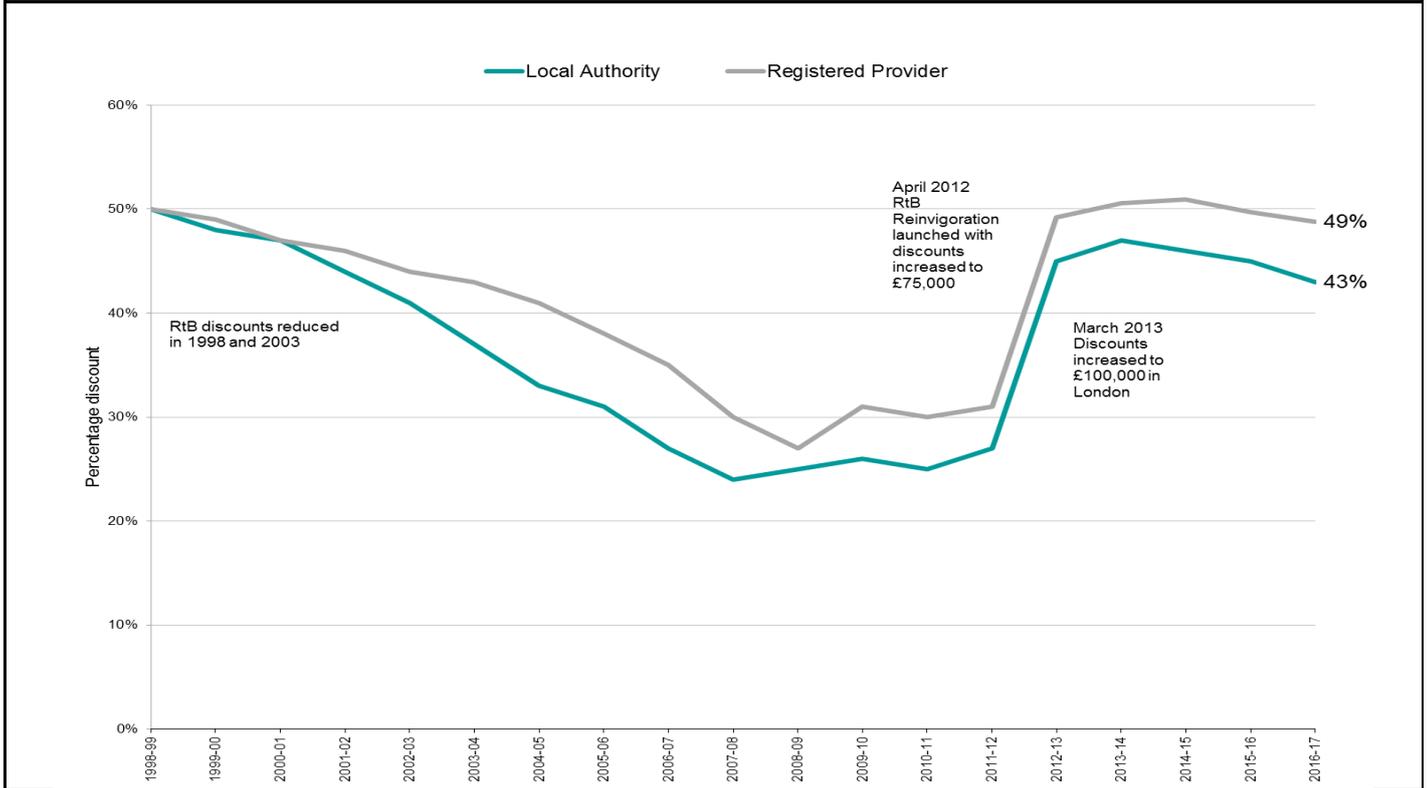
## Local authority dwellings:

- There were 29,590 Right to Buy applications made to local authorities in 2016-17. This figure is over 3 times larger than the 9,000 in 2011-12, and a decrease of 8 per cent compared to 2015-16.
- The average Right to Buy discount per local authority dwelling sold was £61,810 in 2016-17, more than double the 2011-12 value of £26,690. The increase reflects both the increased discounts with the re-invigoration of Right to Buy in April 2012 and the overall increase in house prices.
- The average discount, as a percentage of market value, of Right to Buy local authority dwellings sold was 43 per cent in 2016-17. This is 2 percentage point lower than in 2015-16 and 16 percentage points higher than in 2011-12.

## Private registered provider dwellings:

- The average Right to Buy discount per private registered provider dwelling sold was £54,520 in 2016-17, just under double the 2011-12 value of £28,410. These data have been revised this year, going back to 2012-13 and details can be found in Live Table 682.
- The average discount, as a percentage of market value, of Right to Buy registered provider dwellings sold was 49 per cent in 2016-17, one per cent down from 2015-16. This 18 percentage points higher than in 2011-12.

**Chart 3.1: Average Right to Buy discounts as a percentage of market value in England 1998-99 to 2016-17**



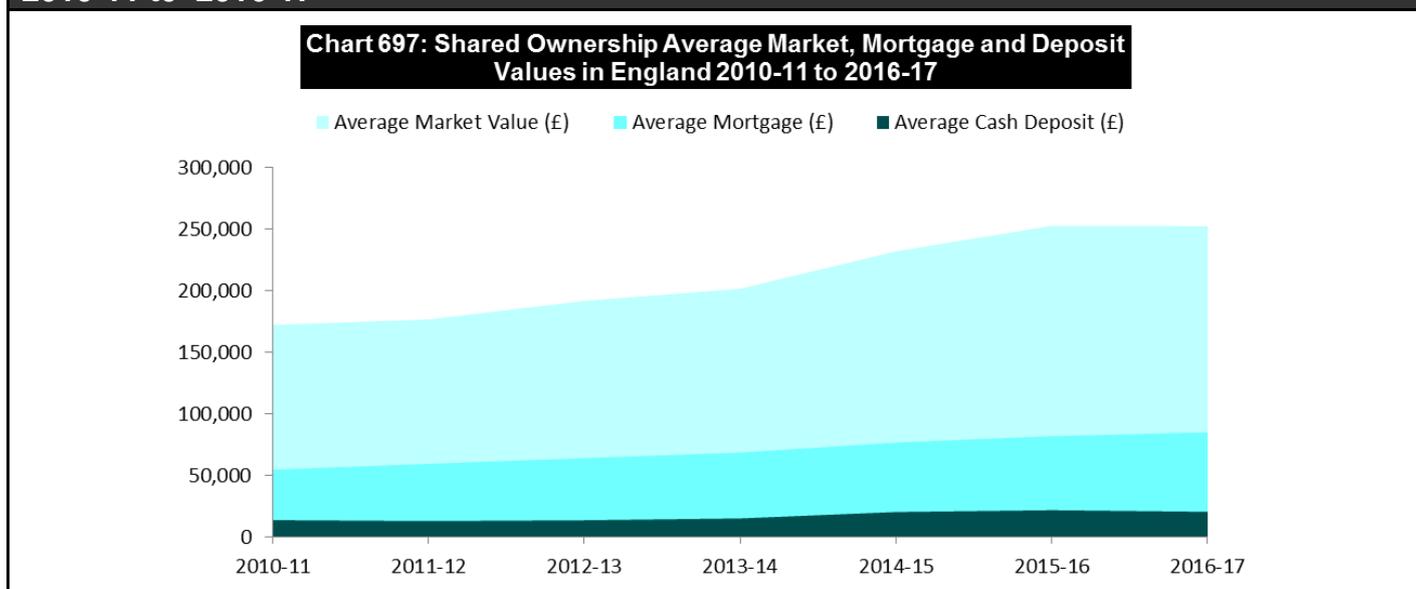
Source: Local Authority Housing Statistics Return (DCLG) and CORE data collection (DCLG)

Further detail on Right to Buy Financial statistics is available in the Department's Live Tables. They can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>. The table covering this topic in particular is 682.

# Shared Ownership sales – Financial Information

This section contains figures on the financial information retained on the COntinuous REcording (CORE) system. The completion of these fields in CORE is not mandatory so only sales that have no missing data in market value, initial equity stake, mortgage value and deposit were included. This totalled 8,667 shared ownership sales in 2016-17. CORE only captures data from certain Private Registered Providers and similar data on Local Authority sales is not available. As such these figures have limitations and should be treated with caution. To see the full detail behind these figures please refer to Live Table 697.

**Chart 4.1 Average Shared Ownership market value, mortgage and deposit in England 2010-11 to 2016-17**



Source: CORE data collection (DCLG)

- The average market value for Shared Ownership sales was £252,500 in 2016-17, which is a 47 per cent increase from the £ 172,100 value in 2010-11.
- The value of the initial equity stake purchased has increase from £67,200 in 2010-11 to £104,900 in 2016-17, with the average initial equity stake increasing from 40 to 43 per cent.
- The proportion of the average equity stake paid as a cash deposit has stayed similar from 2010-11 to 2016-17.

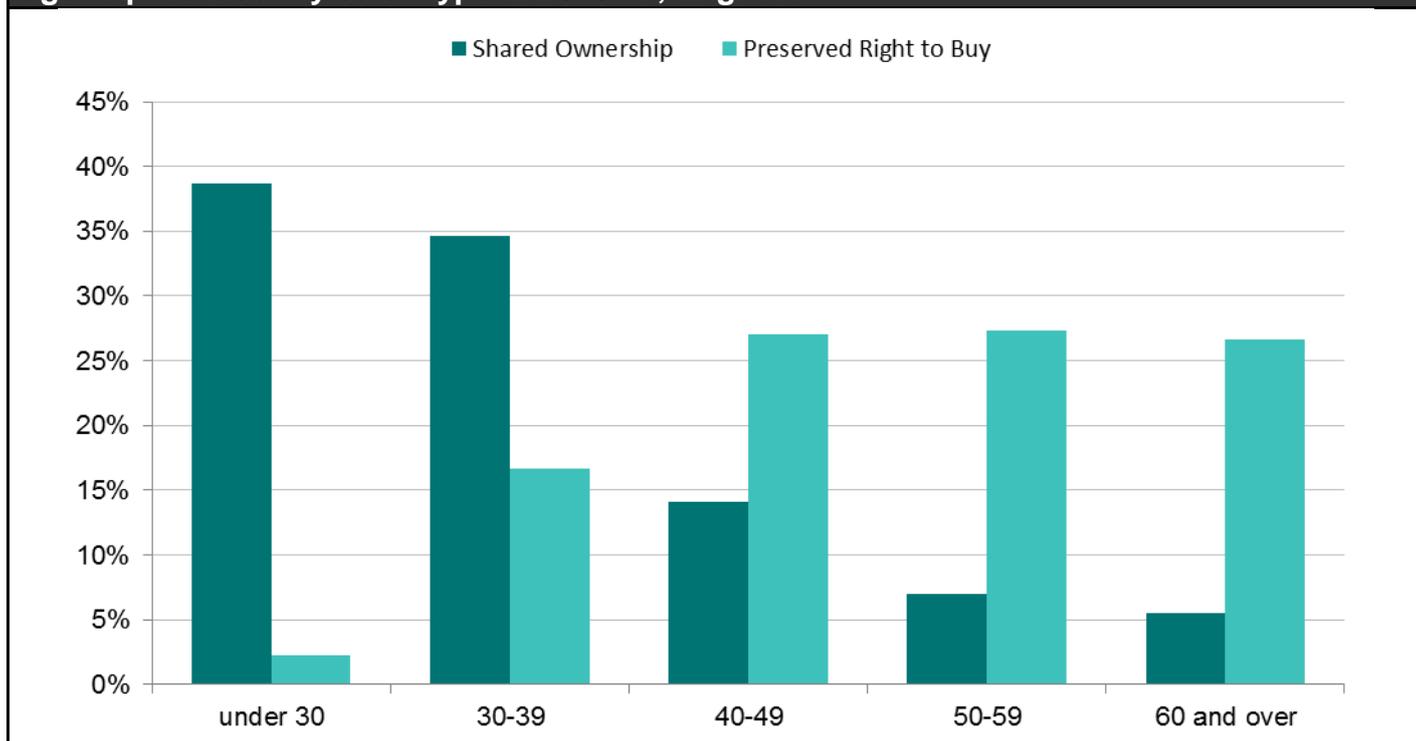
Further detail on Right to Buy Financial statistics is available in the Department's Live Tables. They can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales> The table covering this topic in particular is 697.

# Household characteristics of Private Registered Provider stock buyers

This section presents information on the household characteristics of both preserved Right to Buy and Shared Ownership sales. Similar data for those buying local authority dwellings are not collected. The information in this section comes from the COntinuous REcording (CORE) data collection - for details on how CORE and Statistical Data Return (SDR) collection criteria compare please see [Data Collection](#). Some of the data is estimated while some questions have missing data, i.e. where respondents have not answered that question, meaning the figures have limitations and should be treated with caution. To see the full detail behind these figures, please refer to the Live Tables 694, 695 and 696.

The charts in this section are now separated by preserved Right to Buy and Shared Ownership sales. This has been done as the distribution of characteristics varies between different sales types. All other sales types such as right to Acquire or rent to Home Buy have been excluded.

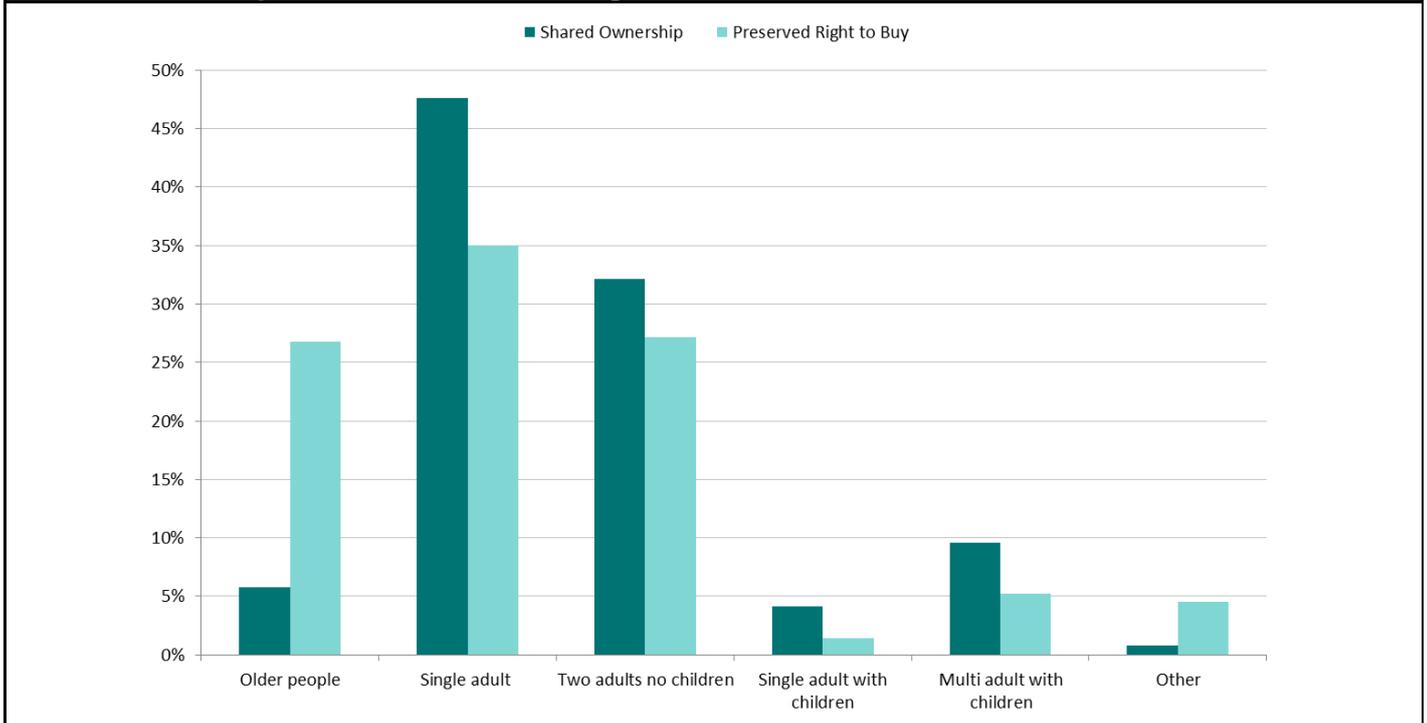
**Chart 5.1 The percentage of social housing buyers of private registered provider stock by age of purchaser by sales type in 2016-17, England**



Source: CORE data collection (DCLG)

- There is a difference in age distribution between preserved Right to Buy and Shared Ownership sales. People buying Shared Ownership properties tend to be younger, being on average 35 years of age, than people buying preserved Right to Buy properties who are on average 52 years of age.

**Chart 5.2 The percentage of social housing buyers of private registered provider stock by household composition in 2016-17, England**



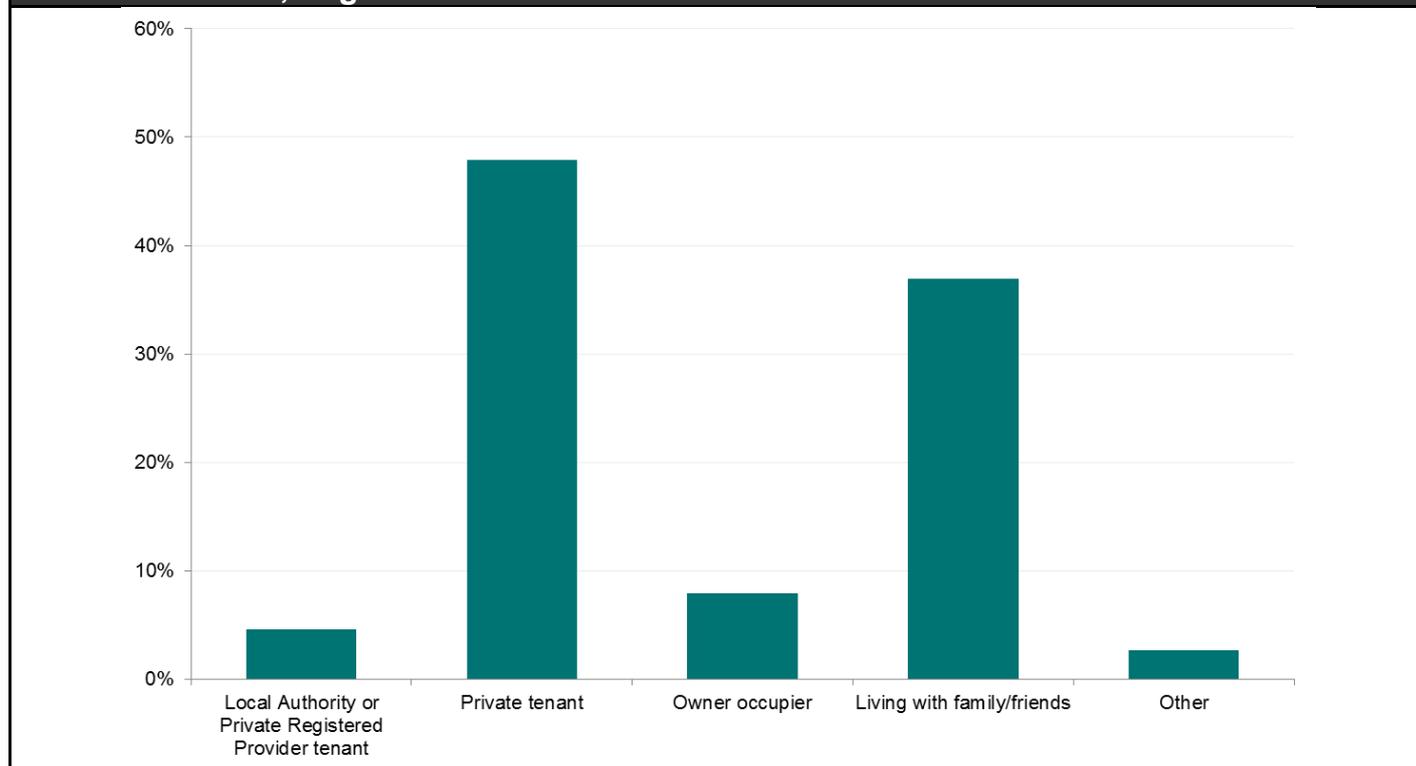
Source: CORE data collection (DCLG)

- Single adults are the most common household composition to buy either a Shared Ownership or, preserved Right to Buy property.
- Older people<sup>2</sup> are less common in Shared Ownership sales than preserved Right to Buy sales.

<sup>2</sup> Older people are defined as any household where either the main occupier or their partner is aged 60 years or over.

For previous tenure only Shared Ownership is shown in chart 5.3. This is because to be eligible for Right to Buy the purchaser would need to be a tenant of either Local Authority or Private Registered Provider Housing.

**Chart 5.3 Previous accommodation of buyers immediately before shared ownership purchase in 2016-17, England**



Source: CORE data collection (DCLG)

- 85 per cent of purchasers come from either the private rental sector or living with family or friends immediately before buying a Shared Ownership property.

Further detail on Right to Buy Financial statistics is available in the Department's Live Tables. They can be found here- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>. The tables covering this topic in particular is 694, 695 and 696.

# Accompanying tables

Accompanying tables are available to download alongside this release. These are:

<b>Table 671</b>	Right to Buy sales: Annual Right to Buy sales for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 677</b>	Other Schemes: Annual Right to Acquire sales for England
<b>Table 678</b>	Social Housing Sales: Annual social housing sales by scheme for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 681</b>	Right to Buy Sales: Annual Right to Buy sales that were flats for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 682</b>	Right to Buy Sales: Financial data on Right to Buy sales for England
<b>Table 683</b>	Other Schemes: Annual Social HomeBuy sales for England
<b>Table 684</b>	Other Schemes: Annual demolitions of social housing stock for England
<b>Table 685</b>	Right to Buy: Annual Right to Buy sales by local authority
<b>Table 688</b>	Annual Right to Buy Sales: Sales per 1000 dwellings of existing local authority stock by Local Authority
<b>Table 691</b>	Right to Buy: Quarterly Right to Buy sales, by local authority
<b>Table 692</b>	Right to Buy: Quarterly Right to Buy receipts, by local authority
<b>Table 693</b>	Right to Buy: Quarterly Right to Buy starts on site, by local authority
<b>Table 694</b>	Shared Ownership Sales: Previous tenure of buyers immediately before purchase (private registered providers only) for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 695</b>	Shared Ownership and Right to Buy Sales: Age of purchaser (private registered providers only) for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 696</b>	Shared Ownership and Right to Buy Sales: Household composition of social housing buyers (private registered providers only) for England (includes chart)
<b>Table 697</b>	Shared Ownership Sales: Financial data on Shared Ownership for England

These tables can be accessed at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-social-housing-sales>

## Related DCLG statistical releases are available at:

Local Authority Stock data can be found in Live Table 100 here-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

Changes to stock can also arise due to the transfer of stock from local authorities to private registered providers (through Large Scale Voluntary Transfers, LSVTs) and between registered providers. Information on local authority LSVTs is reported by the Homes and Communities Agency at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistical-data-return-statistical-releases>.

Transfers between registered providers are also published by the Homes and Communities Agency in their supporting tables for the Statistical Data Return

# Definitions

## Total Social Housing Sales

Figures on social housing sales include only sales which result in existing stock leaving the social sector. These include sales under Right to Buy (RTB), Preserved Right to Buy (PRTB), Voluntary Right to Buy (VRTB), Right to Acquire (RTA), Social HomeBuy (SHB), Voluntary Purchase Grant (VPG), other outright or shared equity sales to tenants and disposals of existing stock to the private sector.

Sales of other kinds, such as shared ownership sales of newly built social stock or of private sector stock, stock transfers to Registered Providers, either from Local Authorities or other PRPs, and demolitions are **not included** in the total social housing sales figures.

The figures do not include sales and transfers between local authorities and private registered providers (PRPs). Large Scale Voluntary Transfers (LSVTs) of local authority stock to PRPs and sales and transfers between PRPs for social housing purposes are not included in these figures. Further information on Large Scale Voluntary Transfers (LSVTs) of local authority stock to PRPs can be found in DCLG's Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) and the HCA's Statistical Data Return (SDR).

## History of the Right to Buy Scheme

The Right to Buy scheme was introduced in 1980 and gives qualifying social tenants the opportunity to buy their rented home at a discount. The scheme is open to secure tenants of local authorities and non-charitable PRPs, and to those assured tenants of PRPs who have transferred with their homes from a local authority as part of a stock transfer. In order to qualify for the Right to Buy scheme, a social tenant must have accrued at least three years social housing sector tenancy. This does not need to be continuous, nor does it need to have been accrued whilst living in the tenant's current property.

In 1998 and 2003, Discount Orders reduced Right to Buy discounts across England to maximums ranging from £16,000 to £38,000 (depending on the local authority where the property was located). Prior to that, the discount cap had been £50,000 across England.

In April 2012, the Government changed the maximum cash discount available for Right to Buy sales to a new higher level of £75,000 across England. In March 2013, in recognition of the increasing property prices in London, the Government further increased the maximum discount available for tenants living in London boroughs to £100,000. In July 2014, there was a further change to maximum cash discount available for the Right to Buy in order for it to increase annually in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate of inflation. The discount is currently £78,600 in England and £104,900 in London.

The Government's aim is that for every additional property sold under Right to Buy, a new affordable home for rent will be built nationally under the one-for-one replacement policy. Under the reinvigorated Right to Buy, local authorities are now able to keep a portion of the receipts from

additional Right to Buy sales to fund replacement affordable housing.

In 2016-17, a small-scale pilot of the voluntary Right to Buy was run with five housing associations.

## Technical notes

### Data collection

The statistics in this publication are based on six sources-

1. The Local Authority Housing Statistics (LAHS) form administered by DCLG
2. The LOGASNet return administered by DCLG
3. The Statistical Data Return (SDR) from the HCA
4. The COntinuous REcording (CORE) data collection run by DCLG
5. The Investment Management System (IMS) administration system run by the HCA
6. The Greater London Affordable Housing Statistics from the GLA

Sales of local authority stock are collected through the LOGASNet returns supplied to DCLG by Local Authorities. This provides information at district level for all local authority council house sales as well as housing capital expenditure and other information for other statistical releases. This is a quarterly return and is reconciled annually against LAHS values.

The HCA collects stock sale information from private registered providers through the SDR. The figures in the SDR do not include new build dwellings built for Local Cost Home Ownership, Shared Ownership, acquisitions from the private sector for Affordable Home Ownership or transfers between social housing providers.

Sections [Total Social Housing Sales](#), [Type of Social Housing Sale](#) and [Financial Information regarding Right to Buy](#) use LOGASNet, LAHS and the SDR to compile social housing sales totals. These sections include sales under the Right to Buy, Preserved Right to Buy, Voluntary Right to Buy, Right to Acquire, Social HomeBuy, other outright or shared equity sales to tenants, and sales of existing stock to the private sector. Shared equity sales to tenants are recorded at the point of initial sale. The figures exclude sales through low cost home ownership schemes where these do not relate to existing social stock, i.e. sales of newly built homes for shared ownership or acquisitions of private sector homes for affordable home ownership. Intra-tenure transfers between social housing providers are also excluded.

Private registered providers are required by the Social Housing Regulator to complete CORE Sales logs. Social landlords that are not registered with the Social Housing Regulator but affiliated to the National Housing Federation are invited to complete CORE Sales logs.

CORE captures information on each individual sale, including the demographic characteristics of the purchaser (see [Household Characteristics of those buying Private Registered Provider stock](#)). These demographic questions are voluntary however and not reported for all sales. CORE

is also used to calculate the proportion of flats sold and financial details by private registered providers. CORE records information on Shared Ownership, this year they have been included in the characteristics section and a new Shared Ownership financial section. However they have been excluded from the analysis on the total and type of sales, as they are not sales of social housing stock.

The IMS, a HCA system for administering grants and the GLA Affordable Housing Statistics, provides data on private registered provider Right to Acquire and Social HomeBuy sales.

## Data quality

### **Local Authority returns (Local Authority Housing Statistics form)**

Some Local Authorities do not own any stock and so cannot make any social housing sales. As at 1 April 2017 there were 169 authorities stock holding authorities (i.e. those with a Housing Revenue Account), all but one made a return, although some had not answered all questions and others had not finalised their return. The questions required for this release, on the whole, had a good response rate.

### **Local Authority return (LOGASNet)**

The LOGASNet figures on local authority Right to Buy sales and receipts are audited annually by local authorities and continuously quality assured by DCLG, both of which can result in revisions. The figures are compared against those supplied through the annual LAHS return for consistency, which again can result in revisions. Every effort is made to collect data from every local authority but on occasion estimates may be used. Care should be taken using data at a local authority level as the totals are low and therefore can be volatile.

### **Private Registered Provider returns**

All social landlords that are registered with the Homes and Communities Agency complete a Statistical Data Return (SDR) which includes data on all their sales. The SDR sales data does not include information on property type. Instead, data on the types of properties sold by PRP is taken from Continuous Recording (CORE) returns. This method assumes that the property type distribution of any sales not reported on CORE, such as those by small PRPs, is the same as those for larger PRPs.

The SDR does not ask PRPs to provide financial information on their sales of stock. However, CORE returns do include financial data on social housing sales. The financial information from CORE is shown as simple average values for the reported sales.

The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Investment Management System (IMS) contains information provided by PRPs that have applied to receive grant and this shows the number of Right to Acquire and PRP Social HomeBuy figures. These are also reported through the SDR but the IMS figures are used here because they are based on grant funded completions.

The HCA's Statistical Data Return (SDR) is used to compile figures for sales by private registered providers for sections [Total Social Housing Sales](#), [Type of Social Housing Sale](#) and [Financial](#)

[Information regarding Right to Buy](#). An alternative source, using a wider definition of 'sales', is Continuous REcording (CORE). More information on both can be found in the [Data Collection](#) section of this release.

The Greater London Authority produces affordable housing statistics which can be found at <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/housing-and-land/increasing-housing-supply/affordable-housing-statistics>.

## Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>).

There are two types of revisions that the policy covers:

### **Non-Scheduled Revisions**

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release, live tables and other accompanying releases will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical.

### **Scheduled Revisions**

Revisions to previous annual data are generally incorporated in the next release. Figures are not published in these statistics with a provisional status (but imputed estimates may be used). Revised figures are highlighted in the live tables.

## Uses of the data

These statistics are used to monitor social housing sales including Right to Buy sales and analyse the effectiveness of policy changes around Right to Buy and the housing sector.

## User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

The Department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>

## Devolved administration statistics

### Data for Wales

The Welsh Government publishes information on social housing sales, which does include information on Right to Buy sales. The latest release can be found at the following link:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/social-housing-sales/?lang=en>

### Data for Scotland

The Scottish Government publish information on social housing sales, however, from 1 August 2016 the 'Right to Buy' will be repealed for all council and housing association tenants. The latest release can be found at the following link:

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

### Data for Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland social tenants have the right to a statutory house sale, which is similar to a "Right to Buy". The latest release can be found at the following link:

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

## Official Statistics

This Statistical Release is published at 9.30am on a date which has been pre-announced on the DCLG Statistics Release Calendar

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?utf8=%E2%9C%93&organisations%5B%5D=department-for-communities-and-local-government>).

A list of officials who have received pre-release access to this Statistical Release up to 24 hours in advance of publication is available on the Department's website

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>)

## Next Publication

The next release, Social Housing Sales, England: 2017-18, will be released in Autumn 2018.

The related publication, Right to Buy sales in England: July to September 2016-17, will be released on 13 December 2017.

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?utf8=%E2%9C%93&organisations%5B%5D=department-for-communities-and-local-government>).

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Information on Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements>

Information about statistics at DCLG is available via the Department's website:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics)

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