

# [Press release: James Brokenshire launches £200 million pilot to boost social home ownership](#)

Thousands of social housing association tenants are being given the opportunity to realise their dream of home ownership, as the Midlands Voluntary Right to Buy Pilot launches today (16 August 2018).

Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said this is the first step in helping housing association tenants get a foot on the property ladder.

This follows measures announced in this week's [social housing green paper](#), to make it easier for residents to progress into home ownership. The existing Right to Buy programme for council tenants backs families who have worked hard, paid their rent and have a sense of pride in their home.

Government is providing £200 million for this Voluntary Right to Buy pilot, with places allocated via a ballot to ensure fairness for applicants.

After working closely with the National Housing Federation to make this launch a reality, money from the discounted sales will then be used to fund replacement homes.

Speaking at the launch, Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

This government is committed to providing opportunities for people to get a foot on the property ladder and to have a place they can call their own.

Our £200 million investment into the Midlands Voluntary Right to Buy Pilot is the first step in helping housing association tenants realise their dream of home ownership.

Chief Executive of the National Housing Federation David Orr said:

Over the past 3 years, we have worked closely with the government on its proposal to extend the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. Of course, this pilot is not the finished product. We want to take the time to get this major endeavour right.

It will be a success for everyone involved only if every home that is sold is replaced with a new affordable home, and if the application process is as smooth as possible for tenants.

Now, we are looking forward to working with tenants, with housing

associations and with the government to make this pilot a resounding success. This scheme must empower social housing tenants and meet our own ambitions to deliver the homes the country needs.

This is the latest step by government to make the housing market work, with opportunities available to realise the dream of home ownership whether you rent in the private or social sectors. Council housing tenants are already able to buy their home at a discount and since 2010 Right to Buy has helped almost 94,000 households

Earlier in June, a £1.67 billion government grant was announced from the £9 billion Affordable Homes programme that will deliver 23,000 new affordable homes, including 12,500 for social rent.

Places will be allocated via a ballot to ensure fairness and manage interest within the funding available. The ballot will close a month from today's launch (16 September 2018), with the pilot running until spring 2020 giving successful candidates adequate time to complete the purchase.

The government will assess the impact of the pilot before deciding on the next steps for this policy.

The [National Housing Federation \(NHF\)](#) is a trade association, which represents social landlords and housing associations in England.

Since 2010 we have delivered over 378,000 new affordable homes through our £9 billion Affordable Homes Programme.

£200 million of government funding is being provided for the Midlands Voluntary Right to Buy pilot, as announced in the 2017 Autumn Budget.

The government will fully fund the discounts, and housing associations will use the receipts from the sales to fund replacement homes.

Registration website for the [Voluntary Right To Buy pilot](#).

Since 2010 Right to Buy has helped almost 94,000 households get onto the housing ladder.

We are using a ballot because we believe this is the fairest way of managing interest within the funding available to the pilot project. The alternative would have been to allocate spaces on a first come, first served basis. This would have disadvantaged residents with accessibility issues, or those who could not get onto the internet in the first few days of opening.

The ballot will be open for a period of one month, after which no further registrations will be accepted. Shortly after the ballot has closed, the ballot will randomly allocate places on the pilot.

Tenants who are successful in the ballot will not be guaranteed that they can purchase under the scheme – they will still need to meet the eligibility criteria and complete the application process in full.

Housing associations will have discretion over which properties they sell. Where the home is exempt from the pilot, the housing association will give the tenant the opportunity to use their Right to Buy discount to buy another housing association property. This is known as the portable discount, and is being tested through the pilot.

A list of participating housing associations and local authorities is available on request.