

Registered Social Landlords Bill gains Royal Assent

Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Rebecca Evans, who attended the sealing ceremony at the Welsh Government offices in Cathays Park, said:

“Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) play a vital role in helping us to meet our commitment to create 20,000 new affordable homes by 2021. They, in turn, require the sector to continue to have the freedom to use private sector borrowing to supplement the Welsh Government’s social housing grant and other funding programmes.

“This Act will help secure much needed affordable homes and more options for Welsh Government to maximise the positive contributions RSLs make to the communities in which they work. It also provides certainty for private sector partners who have made long term commitments to funding an independent RSL sector.

Stuart Ropke, Chief Executive of Community Housing Cymru, said:

“We are pleased that Welsh Government has acted decisively to pass this legislation to ensure the independence of housing associations in Wales. The Act will ensure that housing associations can continue to attract private investment and build the affordable homes Wales needs as we work towards the target of 20,000 affordable homes in this Assembly term.”

The Act amends and removes powers which are deemed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to demonstrate central and local government control over Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). It also introduces new powers to reduce local authority influence on RSL Boards.

Without reclassification back to private sector organisations, funding for RSLs to build and improve social housing would have to compete with other Welsh Government capital project priorities.