

Right to Buy suspended in Cardiff

The move comes as Welsh Government legislation to abolish the Right to Buy across the whole of Wales is proceeding through the Assembly.

The Right to Buy allows eligible social housing tenants to buy their council or housing association property at a discount. The proposed legislation will end these rights, protecting social housing stock from further reduction.

Over the past 30 years, the Right to Buy has resulted in a significant reduction in social housing stock. Between 1981 and 2014, 138,709 council homes were sold – this is a 45% reduction in the social housing available since the policy was first introduced.

Research also indicates that many of these homes end up in the private rented sector and, as a result, cost local people more to rent and, in some cases, the public purse more in housing benefit.

The Cabinet Secretary said:

“I have agreed to Cardiff Council’s application to suspend the Right to Buy to help them deal with the pressure their social housing is facing and to ensure that homes are available to those who need them.

“While this will help one area for a short period of time, we also need to address this issue for the long term. This is why we are legislating to abolish the Right to Buy in Wales.

“The Right to Buy is depleting our social housing stock. This damaging policy is further increasing the pressure on our social housing supply and is forcing many vulnerable people to wait longer for a home.

“Legislating to end the Right to Buy is the only sure way to prevent this and give social landlords the confidence to invest in building more of the affordable homes Wales needs.”

Cardiff Council Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Cllr Lynda Thorne said:

“I am very pleased that Welsh Government has granted the Council permission to suspend the Right to Buy scheme in Cardiff for five years. Local authorities are able to do this in areas of housing pressure and that is certainly the case in Cardiff.

“Cardiff is one of the UK’s fastest growing cities and with over 8,000 people currently on the waiting list for social housing, we

have to do everything we can to ensure we are providing good quality housing for those most in need, both now and into the future.

“In 1985, the Council had 23,000 properties but largely through the right to buy, that figure has reduced to our current stock in the region of 13,400 properties. This decision enables us to safeguard our much needed housing provision for current and future generations.”