

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the chance to respond to the recent letter from Jayne Bryant AS/MS regarding the petition to reintroduce the Right to Buy scheme in Wales. While I appreciate the thought given to the current housing challenges, I feel the response doesn't fully address the concerns raised or the need for social housing tenants in Wales to have a renewed pathway to homeownership.

The letter focuses on the high demand for social housing and the potential strain that reintroducing Right to Buy could put on housing stock. While I understand these challenges, I believe a balanced approach could allow tenants the chance to own their homes without compromising the stability of social housing. Right to Buy has, in the past, offered people the opportunity to invest more fully in their homes and communities. With targeted protections, I believe it could again be a tool for empowerment rather than a threat to social housing resources.

Although the letter explains the decision to keep Right to Buy out of policy, it doesn't address the limitations this places on tenants' long-term options and goals. Many tenants are deeply committed to their communities and would love the chance to take ownership of the homes they already cherish. The existing homeownership assistance programs mentioned don't fully address this aspiration, as they don't allow tenants to buy the homes they've built a life in. I believe reintroducing Right to Buy, with reasonable conditions, could give tenants a path to homeownership without depleting essential social housing resources.

The experience of Right to Buy in England shows how powerful this policy can be for individuals and communities. In England, many social housing tenants have successfully transitioned to

homeownership, which has fostered greater pride and investment in local areas. While this did reduce social housing stock, recent policies have used proceeds from Right to Buy to fund new social housing, replenishing the supply. This shows that, with the right structure and reinvestment plan, Right to Buy can be a path to homeownership without harming future social housing availability. I believe Wales could adopt a similar approach to give tenants this opportunity while safeguarding the housing supply.

To find a balance between maintaining social housing stock and giving tenants a chance at ownership, I'd like to suggest a more conditional approach to reintroducing Right to Buy. Some possible ideas include:

Testing a Pilot Program: Could we try a pilot version of Right to Buy to see its effects in action? For example, the program could focus on long-term tenants or properties that are costly to maintain or upgrade. This would allow us to gather insights while limiting impact on the housing stock.

Reinvesting Sale Proceeds into New Social Housing: Could proceeds from Right to Buy sales be dedicated to building new social housing? This would let tenants achieve ownership while ensuring that the broader social housing demand is still met.

Setting Conditional Discounts or Capped Pricing: Reintroducing Right to Buy with capped discounts or conditional pricing could make homes affordable without diminishing social housing resources. Such measures would strike a fair balance between affordability and supply.

Long-Term Economic Benefits of Homeownership: Owning a home provides families with financial stability and reduces

long-term reliance on social housing. I encourage the Committee to consider how homeownership might help Welsh families achieve greater financial security while alleviating long-term demands on social housing.

I respectfully ask that the Committee consider these suggestions and explore ways to reintroduce a flexible, conditional Right to Buy scheme that meets the immediate and future needs of Welsh tenants. With careful planning, I believe we could bring back Right to Buy in a way that preserves social housing while helping tenants achieve the goal of homeownership.

Thank you for considering these additional perspectives. I look forward to further discussions on how best to address housing needs for all residents in Wales.

Sincerely,
Ryan Hamill