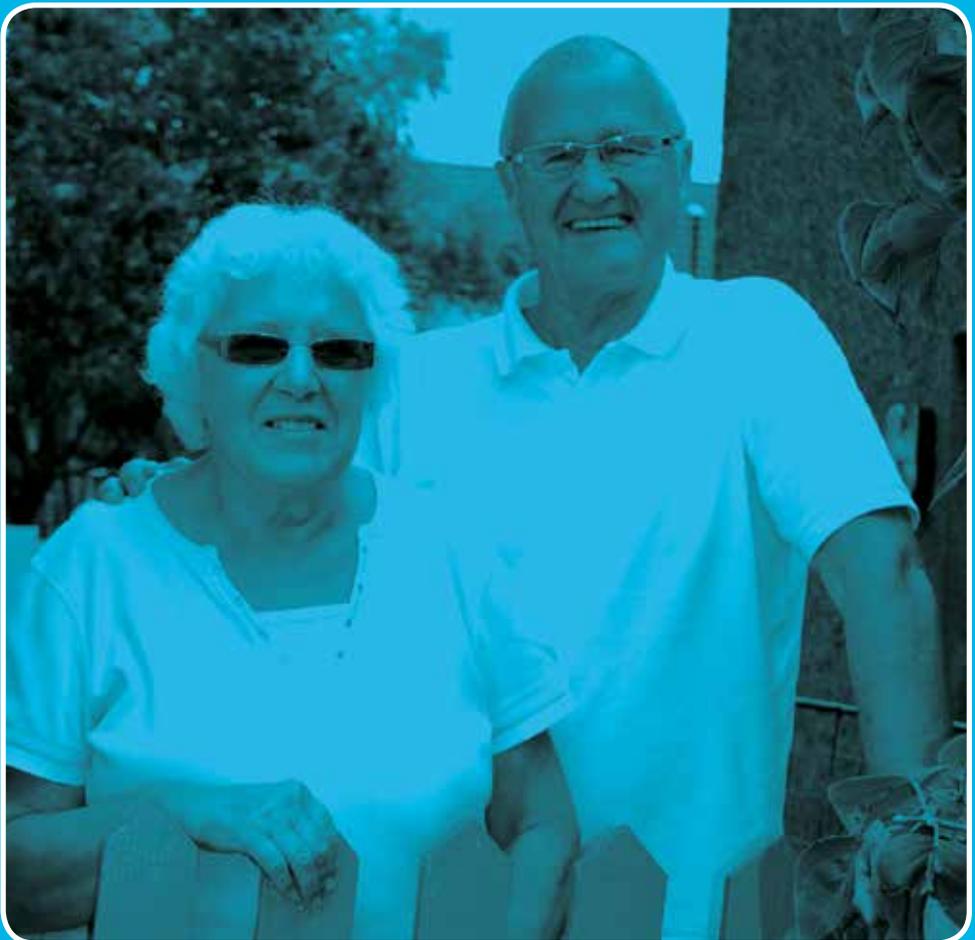


# Buying your home

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Information about 'Right to Buy' and 'Right to Acquire'



**PROUD TO BE HERE. Trivallis.**

The schemes are open to eligible secure or assured tenants who can afford to buy their home.

If you were a secure tenant of Rhondda Cynon Taf Council who transferred to Trivallis (previously RCT Homes) you have the 'Preserved Right to Buy' with Trivallis and can apply to purchase your property.

The 'Right to Acquire' scheme gives eligible tenants of Trivallis the legal right to buy the home they currently rent.

### **Who has the Right to Buy/ Acquire?**

You must be a qualifying secure or assured tenant.

If your tenancy began BEFORE 18th January 2005 you must have spent two years as a public sector tenant or tenant of a registered social landlord, e.g. with a local authority (Council) or housing association.

OR if your tenancy began ON or AFTER 18th January 2005 you must have spent five years as a secure tenant.

The time spent as an Introductory Tenant counts towards this qualifying time.

### **Who can't apply?**

There are circumstances in which a Right to Buy or Right to Acquire application may not be accepted.

As a tenant your application may be refused if:

- ◆ you're an Introductory Tenant
- ◆ you're in breach of a court order against you for rent arrears
- ◆ you're an undischarged bankrupt or have a bankruptcy case pending
- ◆ you're not using your home as a principal place of residency
- ◆ you've been served with an Initial or Final Demolition Notice

- ◆ you've a current suspended court order against you for Anti Social Behaviour
- ◆ your tenancy has been secured as a homeless person under Section 193 of the Housing Act 1996

### **We may also refuse your application due to the type of property you live in**

- ◆ A property which is suitable for occupation by elderly persons, taking into account its location, size, design, heating system and other features.
- ◆ A property, which was let to you, or the previous tenant, for occupation by a person aged over 60.
- ◆ Sheltered Housing for the elderly.
- ◆ Houses and flats on land bought for development and used as temporary housing.

### **How do you apply?**

Our Home Ownership Team can guide you through the process and tell you if you are eligible to qualify for the scheme.

If you qualify you then complete an application form, Notice Claiming the Right to Buy, also called a RTB 1.

This form is available on request.

### **What happens after you apply?**

When we receive your application we'll confirm the dates of your tenancy or tenancies held.

We'll do this by checking our housing records or contacting another landlord where you held a tenancy.

We'll then write to you either confirming or denying that you have the Right to Buy. A reason will always be given for denying your application.

## Valuations

The next stage of the application is to value your property. If you're unhappy with the initial valuation when you receive your Offer Notice, you may request a redetermination of value carried out by the District Valuer, whose decision is final.

Please note that we're unable to discuss individual concerns regarding an increase in property valuations. These are carried out by professional external valuers, whose valuations are based on the performance of the housing market in your area at the time of valuation.

## The Offer Notice

We'll send you the relevant notice with the offer price for your property. It will also contain the initial valuation, the discount allowed and the amount of years built up as a secure tenant. If you're purchasing a flat, it will also include service charges, insurance costs and possible maintenance or improvement works added.

The Notice may also state the type of construction of your property if it is of a non-traditional type.

## Discounts

The Right to Buy discount for those tenants who must have spent two years as a secure tenant is calculated by using an initial discount percentage of 32% for houses, and 44% for flats. The number of qualifying years of tenancy is then added to the discount.

For example, a tenant who has held a secure tenancy for 10 years will have a discount of 32% + 8%. (*The 2 year qualifying period is discounted*).

For Right to Acquire, the discount is 25% of the valuation, up to a maximum of £8,000. The discount for tenants who must have spent five years as a secure tenant, i.e., their tenancy commenced on or after 18th January 2005, will be based on 35% for houses and 50% for flats.

Please note that whatever the percentage figures, the maximum discount allowed will be £8,000

## Purchasing your flat

For tenants wishing to purchase their flat there are additional costs to consider.

### **Service Charges:**

These are annual charges and must be paid by all leaseholders. They normally consist of:

### **Ground Rent:**

This is a fixed cost of £10, unless otherwise stated in the lease, a rent for the ground on which the block is situated.

### **Management Charge:**

This is a cost to cover all aspects of managing leaseholders and the block in which they live. For example, sending out service charge and insurance invoices, dealing with repairs and account enquiries.

### **Repair Costs:**

On your Offer Notice we may have itemised future works to be carried out in the first five-year period of your lease. You must pay for these works annually by instalments over the five years. In addition to the works identified on your Offer Notice, we may need to carry out emergency or non-itemised works, for which we are able to charge up to a maximum of £200 annually.

### **Insurance Costs:**

All leaseholders of flats must take out buildings insurance with our insurer. This is an annual payment.

An Insurance Schedule will be provided, which will itemise the areas covered and circumstances when a claim may be made.

## Delays

Delays may occur with your application for many reasons.

### **Delays by us:**

If there are delays in your application, you may serve the following notices on us:

An Initial Delay Notice, an RTB 6, which gives us one month to respond with a reason for the delay.

An Operational Notice of Delay, RTB 8, which could, if you receive no response within one month, result in a reduction in the sale price, calculated by the amount of rent you have paid for the whole or part of the process.

The notices are available from your Solicitor, Welsh Government Office or from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

### **Delays by you:**

You have three months to respond to your Offer Notice. If, after this period, you've not responded, we'll send you a Notice of Intention, requesting a reply, and giving you a further month to respond. If you've still not responded, we may cancel your application.

### **Delays with the sale:**

After you've accepted the offer, your details are passed to our solicitors to complete the sale process. If we've not heard from you for some time, they will send the following notices:

#### **1st Notice to Complete:**

If you have not responded within 3 months, the notice gives 60 days to reply.

#### **2nd Notice to Complete:**

If after 60 days we've not heard from you, a second notice will be sent giving you 56 days to complete. If we've not heard from you after this time your application will be cancelled.

### **Things to consider**

When you apply to buy a property you should be aware of the costs involved with, and on-going costs of, home ownership.

#### **The mortgage:**

This is a major expenditure and commitment and it is important at this stage to seek specialist financial advice. You may also have to pay mortgage protection to cover payments for illness or inability to work.

#### **Stamp Duty:**

A tax currently levied on properties valued over £125,000.

**Legal Fees:**

Solicitors' fees to pay for land searches, conveyancing, title transfers, etc.

**Survey Fees:**

Usually carried out by a qualified surveyor, you may have to pay for a full structural survey to ensure that the property is structurally sound. It may also be a requirement of the purchase.

**Insurance:**

Most mortgage companies require that you have buildings insurance. In addition, depending on the type of mortgage, life insurance is also required.

**On-going costs**

As a homeowner, remember there will be regular financial commitments to consider such as:

**Mortgage repayments:**

Also may include mortgage protection.

**Insurance:**

Buildings, contents and possibly life insurance.

**Utilities:**

Such as gas, electric, water, sewerage.

**Council Tax****Service Charges:**

For purchasers of flats, which may also include repair costs.

Please remember to seek independent financial and legal advice before deciding to buy.

Failure to keep up with your mortgage repayments could result in you losing your home.

**Repairs**

When you apply to buy your property, from the date we receive your application only certain repairs will be carried out: We must keep the building wind and water-tight and carry out repairs

affecting the health and safety of the occupants. We won't carry out day-to-day repairs and may cancel any works that have not been issued or issued and not completed. We're not able to carry out any repairs that will increase the value of your property, e.g. re-roofing.

If you have any repairs waiting to be completed, or a repair you have not yet reported, please remember that you have the option to wait until they have been completed before you apply to purchase your home.

### Be aware

Someone may approach you from a finance organisation stating that the 'Right to Buy' is ending, or advising how easy it would be if they represented you with your application.

Be suspicious if anyone approaches you and DO NOT feel pressurised to agree or sign any documents until you have had time to think and fully understand the implications and costs involved.

For further information, contact our **Home Ownership** Team.



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