

A GUIDE TO THE RIGHT TO BUY

What is the Right to Buy?

The Right to Buy enables eligible secure tenants to buy their own home at a discount.

One of the qualifications is that the secure tenant has spent at least three years as a public sector tenant.

You may be able to buy jointly with members of your family who have lived with you for at least 12 months or with someone who is a joint tenant. Your home must be their only/principal home. Proof of residency will be required for anyone looking to share the right to buy with you.

If you qualify and your property is eligible you can buy your home at a price lower than the full market value.

Buying your home is probably the biggest financial decision you will ever make, so take some time to consider whether it is the right choice for you. We would therefore recommend that you consider seeking independent financial advice based on your individual circumstances before proceeding.

Once you have bought your home you are responsible for its repair and upkeep and you will not be able to claim Housing Benefit.

Discounts available

Subject to certain exceptions, if you've been a tenant for between three and five years, then your discount from the full market value of the property could be 35% for a house and 50% for a flat or a maisonette.

If you've been a public sector tenant for periods in excess of 5 years, subject to the caps on amounts detailed below, the discount usually rises by:

- 1% for each full year you have been a tenant in a house.
- 2% for each full year you have been a tenant in a flat or maisonette.

The time you have spent as a tenant with other housing associations or councils, as well as any time spent in armed forces accommodation may also count as qualifying time for calculation of the discount

The maximum discount is 70% of the market value of a house or a flat, but this is capped at £77,900 in 2016/17. The cap on the maximum discount will increase by the rate of inflation every year.

The tables below show examples of discount percentages and purchase prices based on properties valued at £100,000. The value of your home will probably differ from this.

Discounts while living in a house

Period in house	Percentage discount	Discount	Purchase price
3 to 5 years	35%	£35,000	£65,000
10 years	40%	£40,000	£60,000
20 years	50%	£50,000	£50,000
30 years	60%	£60,000	£40,000
40 years	70%	£70,000	£30,000

Discounts while living in a flat/maisonette

Period in house	Percentage discount	Discount	Purchase price
3 to 5 years	50%	£50,000	£50,000
10 years	60%	£60,000	£40,000
20 years	70%	£70,000	£30,000
30 years	70%	£70,000	£30,000
40 years	70%	£70,000	£30,000

Making an application

Remember, buying your home is probably the biggest financial decision you will ever make, so take some time to consider whether it is the right choice for you. Even though it can have advantages, you should think carefully about the responsibilities, costs and financial commitments of home ownership.

We would therefore recommend that you consider seeking independent financial advice based on your individual circumstances before proceeding.

Also before making an application you should also read the [Government's Right to Buy Guide](#).

You can apply to buy your home by completing the [Right to Buy application form](#).

You can apply to buy your home together with:

- A joint tenant.
- Your spouse or civil partner.
- Up to three family members who have lived with you for the past 12 months. They do not need to be on your tenancy agreement, but the property must be their main home.

Once we receive your Right to Buy application form, if you have been a Hartlepool Borough Council tenant for the qualifying period we will respond to you within 4 weeks otherwise we will respond to you within 8 weeks.

Additional information

If you decide that home ownership is right for you, the government's Right to Buy Agent service offers free and impartial advice to help you through the process of buying your home. You can find out more about the [Right to Buy Agent Service](#).