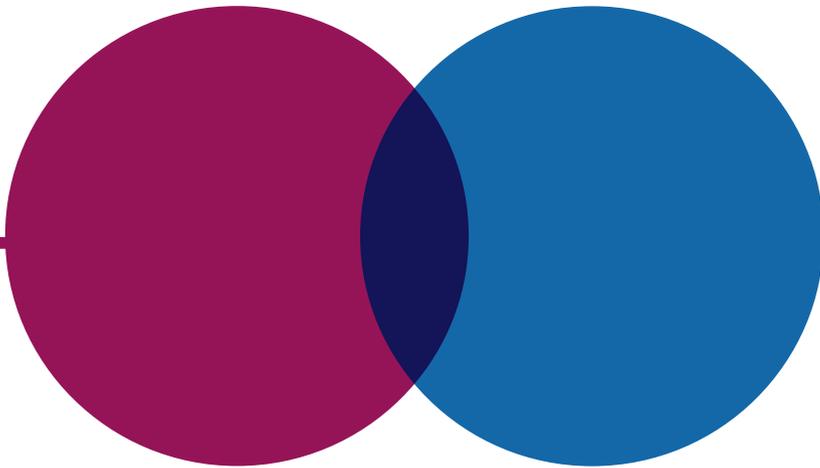




National Audit Office



REPORT

Investigation into shared ownership

Ministry of Housing, Communities &
Local Government

SESSION 2024–2026
25 MARCH 2026
HC 1742



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National Audit Office

Investigation into shared ownership

**Ministry of Housing, Communities &
Local Government**

Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General

Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed on 23 March 2026

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National Audit Act 1983 for presentation to the House
of Commons in accordance with Section 9 of the Act

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office

17 March 2026

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What this investigation is about

- 1** Shared ownership is a government-backed affordable housing model, introduced through the 1980 Housing Act. It offers a route into home ownership for eligible buyers who cannot afford to purchase a home on the open market. Shared owners purchase an initial share (between 10% and 75%) and pay rent on the remaining share to a shared ownership provider (usually a registered provider or housing association, though it can be a local authority or private provider). Over time, shared owners can buy more of a share of the property through a process known as ‘staircasing’.
- 2** Shared owners have a long lease, with all associated leasehold obligations – including a rental charge that reflects the fact that the shared owner has acquired the lease at less than full market value – and service charges. Service charges are variable charges payable by tenants and leaseholders to cover the costs of maintenance, management, and services in communal areas in buildings and estates. Shared owners are responsible for paying all service charge costs, not a proportion based on their ownership share.
- 3** The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) is responsible for the stewardship of the housing sector and for schemes to support home ownership, and it sets the policy direction for shared ownership. Homes England (or the Greater London Authority in London) is the delivery partner for the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), supplying grant funding for new shared ownership properties. New shared ownership homes made up approximately 11% of the supply of all new build homes in 2024-25.
- 4** This report sets out the facts on how the shared ownership model in England works, the challenges that affect shared ownership, redress (routes for complaints and resolution) for shared owners, and improvements made to the model by MHCLG and Homes England. It outlines:

 - the key bodies involved in the model, how it is delivered, and the impact of legislation on the model (Part One);
 - challenges for the shared ownership model including accessibility of information, affordability issues and broader housing challenges that impact shared owners (Part Two); and
 - government monitoring of the model, redress for shared owners and the government’s current and proposed actions to improve shared ownership (Part Three).

5 This report does not examine in detail the new Social and Affordable Homes Programme or look at the quality of shared ownership housing. This report does not examine the value for money of shared ownership or make recommendations. A summary of our findings from our work is in **Figure 1** on pages 5 and 6.

Figure 1

Summary of findings on the shared ownership model

How shared ownership works (see paragraphs 1.2 to 1.6)

- Shared ownership is a government-backed affordable housing model and supports home ownership for those who would not otherwise be able to afford to buy a home on the open market.
- Shared owners are part-owner and part-renter, with all the associated obligations of having a lease, including service charges.
- There are different forms of shared ownership schemes, with different eligibility rules and conditions.

Roles and responsibilities (see paragraphs 1.7 to 1.8)

- The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) sets the policy direction for shared ownership.
- Homes England provides grant funding, through the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) for new shared ownership properties in England (excluding London), while the Greater London Authority (GLA) does so in London.
- The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) oversees all registered providers of social housing in England and the Housing Ombudsman can resolve disputes between shared owners and shared ownership providers.

Delivery of shared ownership homes (see paragraphs 1.9 to 1.11)

- Shared ownership homes are primarily acquired by shared ownership providers via grant funding (the AHP) or developer contributions (Section 106 planning obligations).
- The annual delivery of new shared ownership homes has increased in number over the last decade from 11,128 homes in 2014-15 to 20,353 homes in 2024-25.

The impact of changes to the AHP and legislation (see paragraphs 1.12 to 1.20)

- Shared ownership has evolved through multiple reforms, shaped by successive legislative changes and related housing schemes.
- The government sets out to strengthen leaseholders' rights in the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 and increase security of tenure for shared owners in the Renters' Rights Act 2025. MHCLG has not yet fully implemented either Act but told us that measures will be introduced in phases during this Parliament.
- The new Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036 will give greater consideration to long-term customer affordability, increasing transparency and fairness on costs.

Accessibility of information (see paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5)

- Shared owners are well informed about initial affordability, but the longer-term financial risks when buying their initial share may not be obvious. Stakeholders have told us there are still 'understanding gaps' surrounding costs.
 - MHCLG, Homes England and the GLA require shared ownership providers to produce Key Information Documents to inform prospective shared owners. These documents have been updated to standardise the service charge information.
 - The shared ownership code is a voluntary, industry-led initiative to help improve accessibility of, and standardise information about, processes and costs for shared owners.
-

Figure 1 *continued*

Summary of findings on the shared ownership model

Affordability over time (see paragraphs 2.6 to 2.13)

- Service charge increases can create affordability pressures over time for shared owners, as they can for any leaseholder.
 - There are transaction costs that apply each time shared owners want to buy a bigger portion of their property.
 - MHCLG told us that full ownership of the property is not the only positive outcome as a shared owner that buys a share and stays at a certain level of ownership still gains stability, builds equity, and is typically financially better off than remaining in the private rented sector.
-

Shared ownership and wider issues (see paragraphs 2.14 to 2.18)

- All shared ownership is leasehold, so leasehold issues and shared ownership issues often overlap.
 - Leasehold terms differ depending on the iteration of the AHP the home was purchased under.
 - The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 introduced changes to assist with issues such as lease extensions and information on service charges. While there is no clear timetable for implementation, MHCLG told us that measures will continue to be introduced in phases.
-

Data quality and collection (see paragraphs 3.2 to 3.8)

- MHCLG requires private registered providers to submit data on shared ownership, but complete data is often not submitted, and MHCLG does not routinely escalate or enforce cases of non-compliance.
 - Historically, the data on shared ownership has been incomplete, although improvements have been made. This means MHCLG does not fully understand customer journeys and experience.
-

Redress and complaint routes (see paragraphs 3.9 to 3.13)

- The redress process for shared ownership is complex, and shared owners may not know all the routes of redress and advice available to them.
 - Legal complaints are normally dealt with by the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) and service complaints are normally resolved via the Housing Ombudsman.
-

Improvements to the model (see paragraphs 3.14 to 3.17)

- Each iteration of the AHP has made improvements to the shared ownership model.
 - Recent amendments to data collection forms will assist MHCLG's understanding of the customer journey.
 - Changes to Homes England's affordability assessment has included more consumer safeguards.
-

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government documents and data and interviews with stakeholders as set out in the methodology appendix

Part One

About shared ownership

1.1 This section of the report provides an overview of how shared ownership works, accountability for the model and the history of shared ownership, including the impact recent changes to housing legislation have had.

How shared ownership works

1.2 Shared ownership is a government-backed affordable housing model. The shared ownership model enables eligible buyers to purchase a property in portions over time. The purpose is to support into home ownership those who are unable to buy a property outright on the open market. As such, there are eligibility criteria for the scheme, including a household income cap of £80,000 (or £90,000 in London), and being unable to afford the deposit and mortgage payments for a home that meets their needs.

1.3 The initial ownership share is between 10% and 75% for which the shared owner will typically have a mortgage. They pay rent on the remaining share to a shared ownership provider, who is usually a registered provider.¹ Over time, shared owners can buy more of a share of the property through a process known as 'staircasing'. On reaching 100% ownership, properties are converted to freehold or regular leasehold, depending on the type of property.

1.4 Shared owners have a long lease, with all associated obligations including paying service charges. The lease includes terms – such as a subsidised rent to reflect that the shared owner has acquired the lease at less than full market value. Service charges are variable fees payable by tenants and leaseholders to cover expenses for maintaining, managing, and servicing communal areas of buildings and estates, such as building insurance, cleaning shared spaces and cutting grass. Regardless of the ownership share, shared owners are responsible for paying all service charge costs.

1.5 There are different shared ownership schemes for different groups of consumers, with different eligibility rules and conditions (**Figure 2** overleaf).

¹ A registered provider is an organisation officially registered and regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) to offer social housing.

Figure 2

Shared ownership schemes available in England, as at February 2026

There are several shared ownership schemes with different eligibility rules and conditions

	Purpose	Eligibility	Conditions
Current core shared ownership	To help people who would not be able to purchase a home on the open market that meets their needs.	You can buy a home through shared ownership if both of the following are true: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your household income is £80,000 a year or less (£90,000 a year or less in London); and You cannot afford all of the deposit and mortgage payments for a home that meets your needs. 	One of the following must also be true: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You are a first-time buyer; You used to own a home but cannot afford to buy one now; You are forming a new household – for example, after a relationship breakdown; You are an existing shared owner, and you want to move; and You own a home and want to move but cannot afford a new home that meets your needs.
Rural shared ownership	To help people who would not be able to purchase a home on the open market which meets their needs, and to prevent the loss of affordable housing in rural areas.	Usual shared ownership eligibility and often a local area connection.	Staircasing is restricted to 80%, or landlords are required to repurchase homes if 100% staircasing is allowed. The rent is payable on the remaining share, including the remaining 20% if the shared owner has staircased to 80%.
Home Ownership for People with Long-term Disabilities (HOLD)	For people with accessibility needs who cannot find a suitable standard shared ownership property.	The usual shared ownership eligibility and other criteria including a long-term disability as defined under the Equality Act 2010 and inability to find a suitable shared ownership property.	Homes are purchased by shared ownership providers and sold on as shared ownership. These are typically second hand, rather than newly built.
The Right to Shared Ownership (RtSO)	Enables qualifying tenants in most social and affordable rental homes to purchase their homes on shared ownership terms.	Renters in social and affordable rental homes funded via the 2021–2026 Affordable Homes Programme.	RtSO is not a contractual requirement for capital funding under the 2026–2036 Social and Affordable Homes Programme however, providers may offer it voluntarily.
Older Persons Shared Ownership (OPSO)	To enable older people who are first-time buyers, or who have previously owned a home but cannot afford to buy one now, to buy a home.	For people aged 55 and over.	Staircasing is restricted to 75%. Rent is payable on the remainder if ownership is less than 75%, but no rent is paid if the shared owner staircases to 75%.

Notes

- The Affordable Homes Programme 2021 to 2026 is a government scheme to provide grant funding to support the capital costs of developing affordable housing in England. The National Planning Policy Framework defines affordable housing as housing that is for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market.
- 'Staircasing' is the process by which shared owners can buy more of a share of the property over time. The initial ownership share is between 10% and 75% for which the shared owner has a mortgage.
- The Right to Shared Ownership Scheme (RtSO) enables qualifying tenants in most social and affordable rented homes funded via the Affordable Homes Programme 2021 to 2026 to purchase their home on shared ownership terms e.g. partial shares with the option to staircase to 100% ownership.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government documents and publicly available information

1.6 Shared ownership plays an important part in shared ownership providers' business models as it enables them to create mixed tenure developments and provides income to support the financial viability of their housing schemes. Shared ownership providers and other stakeholders told us the model is popular with consumers.

Responsibilities

1.7 The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) is responsible for the stewardship of the housing sector and for schemes to support home ownership. As a result, it sets the policy direction for shared ownership.

1.8 Several other bodies play a role in the system:

- **Homes England:** An executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by MHCLG. It is the delivery partner for the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), supplying grant funding for new shared ownership properties and stating requirements for shared ownership providers to access grant funding.
- **The Greater London Authority (GLA):** The devolved regional governing body for Greater London, made up of the Mayor of London and the London Assembly. The GLA is responsible for delivering the AHP and shared ownership properties in London.
- **The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH):** An executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by MHCLG. It oversees all registered providers of social housing in England including setting and enforcing standards, ensuring their financial sustainability, and intervening if providers fail to meet standards.² The RSH does not regulate shared ownership homes directly, only the shared ownership providers.
- **The Housing Ombudsman:** An executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by MHCLG. It makes the final decision on disputes between residents and landlords that are registered members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.³ All social landlords (including registered providers) must be members of the Scheme and others may join on a voluntary basis.

² Registered providers that are providing social housing must be registered with the RSH; however, some shared ownership providers that provide shared ownership, but not social housing may not be registered.

³ The purpose of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme is to enable tenants and other individuals to have complaints about members investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.

Delivery of shared ownership homes

1.9 Shared ownership homes are primarily acquired by shared ownership providers via grant funding (primarily the AHP) or developer contributions (Section 106 planning obligations).⁴ Shared ownership providers bid for grant funding from the AHP, administered by Homes England or the GLA, to build or acquire shared ownership homes. They sell initial shares to buyers, manage the lease, rent and service charge on a shared ownership property, and administer staircasing. Housing developers can build shared ownership properties as part of legal obligations to provide affordable housing as part of housing developments. Local authorities negotiate these Section 106 homes, ensuring homes meet their local housing needs.

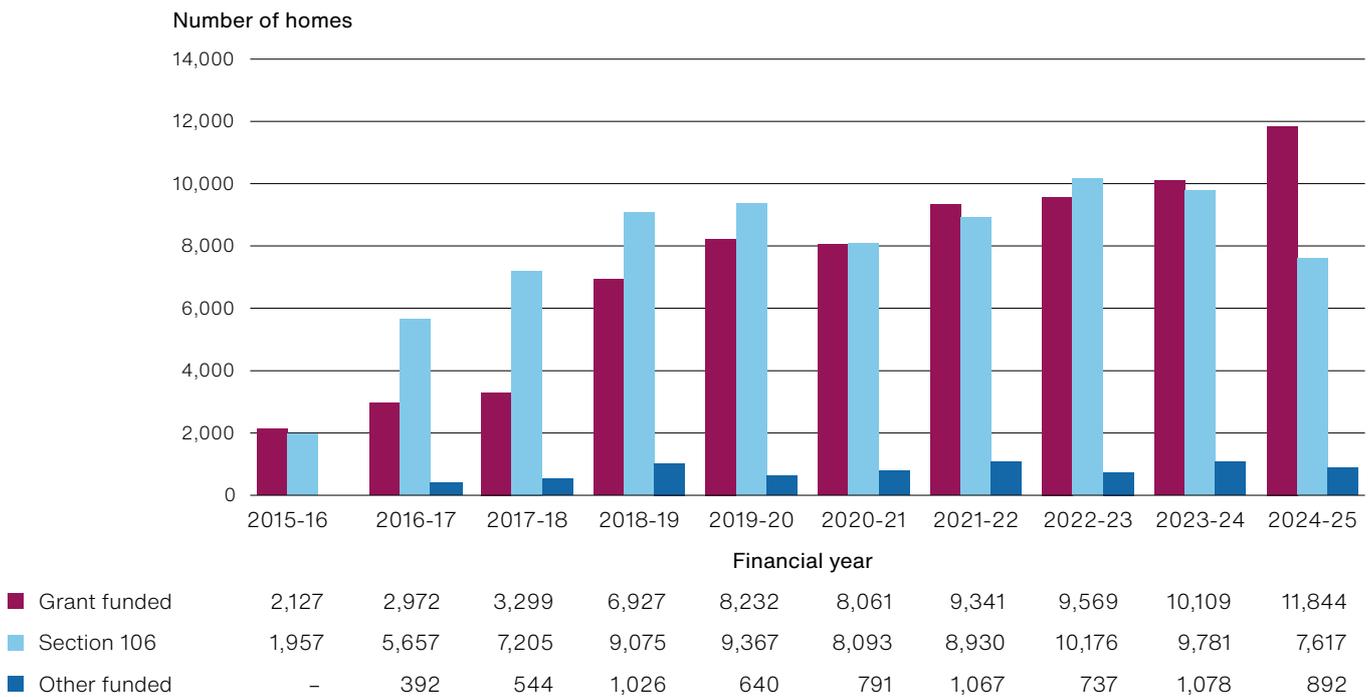
1.10 Annual delivery of shared ownership homes has increased in number over the last decade from 11,128 homes in 2014-15 to 20,353 homes in 2024-25. The increase in building is due to an increased focus on shared ownership through affordable housing grant funding since 2016. There were 11,674 shared ownership homes built using grant funding in 2024-25 and 7,617 via developer contributions (**Figure 3**).

1.11 Most shared ownership homes since 2015-16 have been built in London and the South East (**Figure 4** on page 12). In most local authorities less than 500 shared ownership homes have been built but some areas have higher numbers with at least 2,000 shared ownership homes built in 12 local authorities since 2014-15 (**Figure 5** on page 13). Shared ownership providers deliver most shared ownership homes in London as flats. In 2023-24, shared ownership sales in England were made up of 65% houses and 33% flats and maisonettes, while the remaining 2% were bungalows, bedsits and other property types.

⁴ Section 106 planning obligations are bespoke agreements, negotiated between developers and local authorities through the planning system to make a development acceptable in planning terms. This enables the local authority to secure contributions from developers towards affordable housing or infrastructure to support new housing.

Figure 3

The funding sources for shared ownership homes built in England, 2015-16 to 2024-25

Grant funding and Section 106 developer contributions fund most new shared ownership properties**Notes**

- Quantities by financial year, 2015-16 to 2024-25.
- The source of grant funding is primarily from the Affordable Homes Programme.
- 'Grant funded' refers to grant funding from Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to shared ownership providers and local authorities; grant funding from Homes England to non-registered providers; and funding from the Affordable Homes Guarantee scheme which provides loans to help registered providers of affordable housing access finance to build and improve homes.
- Local planning authorities negotiate Section 106 agreements with developers during the planning process, to ensure appropriate contributions from the developer to mitigate the impacts of the development. This can include requiring the developer to provide a certain level of affordable housing. 'Section 106' includes homes fully funded by Section 106 contributions and where the government has provided grant funding alongside the developers' contribution.
- 'Other funded' consists of all other sources, such as funding to private registered providers and local authorities from sources other than Homes England and the GLA.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government published affordable housing supply data

Figure 4

Regional breakdown of new shared ownership homes built in England, between 2015-16 and 2024-25

The South East has the highest number of new shared ownership home, followed by London

Region	New shared ownership homes	Percentage of total built
North East	4,600	2.92
North West	18,100	11.49
Yorkshire and The Humber	9,000	5.71
East Midlands	12,300	7.81
West Midlands	13,000	8.25
East of England	19,500	12.38
London	32,000	20.32
South West	16,400	10.41
South East	32,700	20.76
Total	157,500	

Notes

- 1 Numbers in the table are rounded to the nearest hundred.
- 2 Percentages are rounded to two decimal places and may not sum to exactly 100%.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Affordable Homes Supply data which are a combination of Homes England, Greater London Authority and Local Authority housing data

The impact of changes to the Affordable Homes Programme

1.12 Shared ownership was first introduced through the 1980 Housing Act and has undergone numerous reforms over time (**Figure 6** on pages 14 to 15 and **Figure 7** on page 16). Before 2016, local authorities outside of London used their own, locally defined eligibility criteria to determine priority applicants based on a wide range of factors including salary, profession and location. In London, the London Plan set an income threshold for eligibility. The introduction of the 2016 Affordable Homes Programme (AHP),⁵ brought significant changes to the shared ownership model, including opening it up to anyone who met standardised eligibility criteria. Most notably, the household income caps were raised from £60,000 to £90,000 in London and £80,000 elsewhere.

5 The 2016 Affordable Homes Programme refers to the 2016-2021 Affordable Homes Programme which subsequently was extended to 2023.

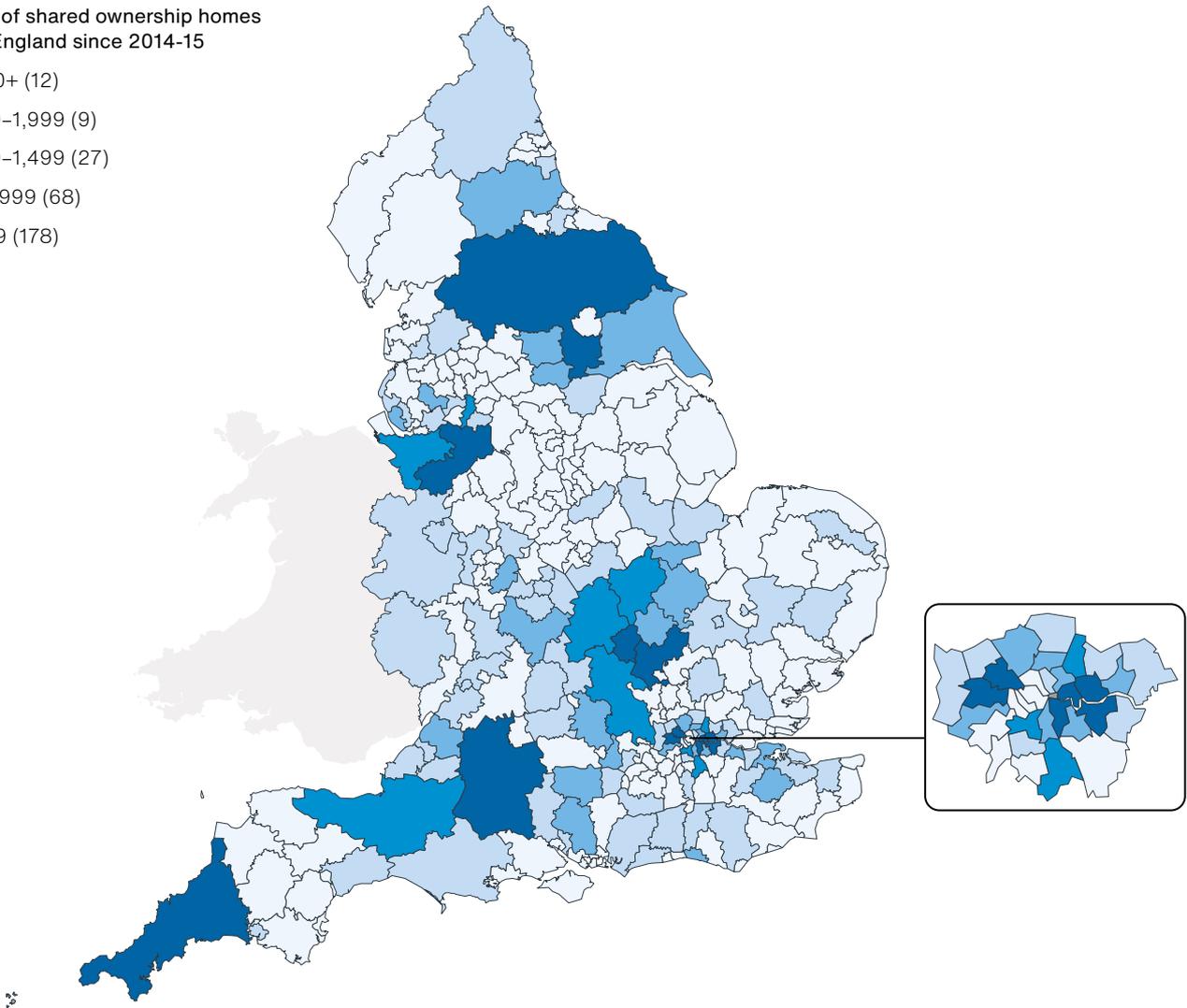
Figure 5

Distribution of shared ownership homes built across local authorities in England, since 2014-15

In most local authorities less than 500 shared ownership homes have been built but some have higher numbers with at least 2,000 shared ownership homes built in 12 local authorities

Number of shared ownership homes built in England since 2014-15

- 2,000+ (12)
- 1,500–1,999 (9)
- 1,000–1,499 (27)
- 500–999 (68)
- 1–499 (178)
- 0 (2)



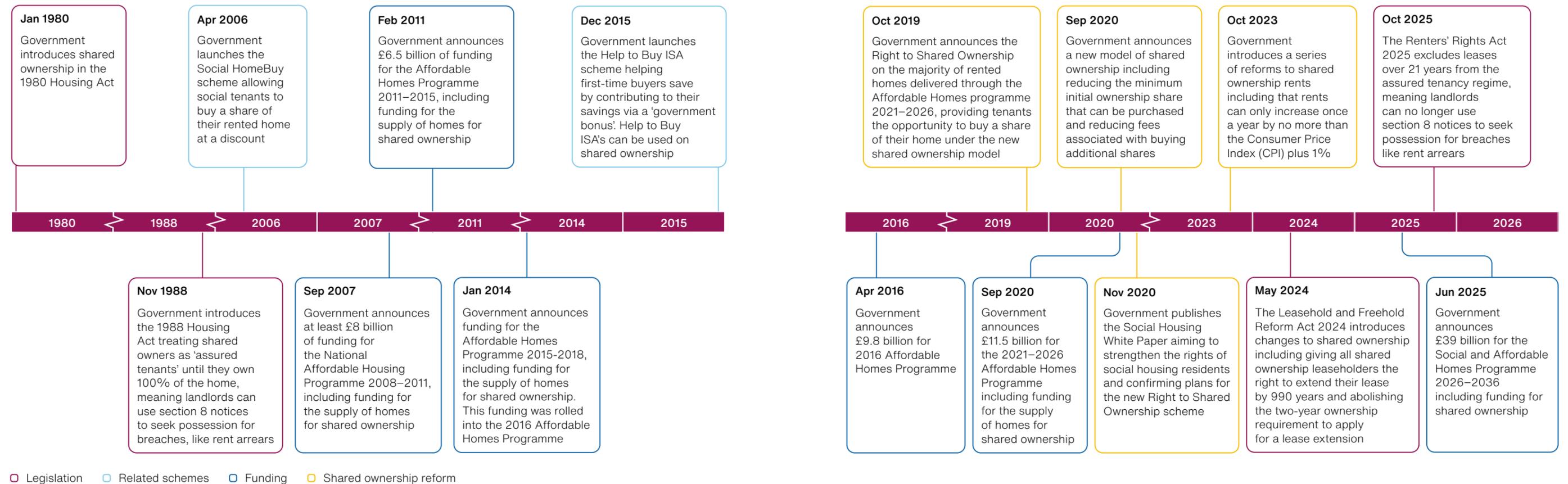
Notes

- 1 Data on shared ownership delivery in Wales is not included in this figure.
- 2 The brackets next to each category in the legend show the number of local authorities falling in that category.
- 3 Tower Hamlets reported the most shared ownership homes built at 2,807 between 2014-15 and 2024-25. The City of London and Isles of Scilly reported no shared ownership homes during the same period.
- 4 The figure includes homes built from both grant funding and Section 106 contributions.
- 5 Grant funding is money provided by the government to help housing providers build shared ownership homes. The funding is typically delivered through the Affordable Homes Programme.
- 6 Section 106 planning obligations are bespoke agreements, negotiated between developers and local authorities through the planning system to make a development acceptable in planning terms. This enables the local authority to secure contributions from developers towards affordable housing or infrastructure to support new housing.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government's Affordable Homes Supply data which are a combination of Homes England, Greater London Authority and Local Authority housing data and map boundaries from the Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2025

Figure 6
Reforms that have affected shared ownership in England, between 1980 and 2026

Shared ownership has evolved through multiple reforms, shaped by successive legislative changes and related housing schemes



- Notes**
- In September 2020, the government reformed shared ownership by reducing the minimum initial share from 25% to 10%, allowing buyers to purchase additional shares in 1% instalments with greatly reduced fees, and introducing a 10 year period for new shared owners where the landlord will cover the cost of essential external or structural repairs and maintenance and contribute to some internal repairs.
 - The government's Help to Buy ISA scheme gives first-time buyers the opportunity to save up to £200 a month, with the government topping up their contributions by 25%, up to a maximum of £3,000. It can be used to purchase homes up to £250,000 (£450,000 in London). The scheme closed to new first-time buyers in 2019, with existing account holders able to continue saving until November 2029. Government announced a Lifetime ISA in 2016 which also helps first-time buyers save, which can be used on shared ownership. The Lifetime ISA became available in 2017.
 - Before the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024, only shared owners who have staircased to 100% ownership could apply for a statutory lease extension however, many providers do offer voluntary lease extensions. Although the Act received Royal Assent in May 2024, many of the legislated changes will not commence before further government action.
 - The reforms introduced by the government to shared ownership rents in 2023 apply to new shared owners who purchased homes through the Affordable Homes Programme and through the planning system via Section 106 developer contributions.
 - The Right to Shared Ownership will not be a grant funding condition under the Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036.
 - The Renters' Rights Act 2025 gained Royal Assent in October 2025 and is being implemented in stages. The measures that exclude long leases from the assured tenancy regime were brought into force in December 2025. This means that long leases are fully protected from being treated like short-term rental tenancies, giving greater security to leaseholders.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government documents and publicly available information

Figure 7

Changes to the shared ownership model in the different iterations of the Affordable Homes Programme in England, between 2015 and 2026

The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has improved the shared ownership model through its different iterations of the Affordable Homes Programme

	Older leases prior to the Affordable Homes Programme 2015–2018 (funding combined into the 2016 Affordable Homes Programme)	Standard model leases under the Affordable Homes Programme 2015–2018 and the 2016 Affordable Homes Programme	New model lease under the Affordable Homes Programme 2021–2026 and the Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036
Focus	Continuation of traditional shared ownership model offered by local authorities	Introduction of formalised shared ownership through grant funding, and Key Information Documents	New shared ownership model introduced, including 10% minimum share and landlord responsibility for repairs
Minimum initial share	25%	25%	10%
Lease length	Typically, 99 years	Minimum of 99 years, typically, 125 years	Minimum 990 years
Minimum purchase of additional shares	10% or 25% depending on individual scheme	10%	5%
1% gradual staircasing option	No	No	Yes, with reduced fees
Initial repair period (costs of repairs covered by landlord)	No	No	Ten-year initial repair period – costs of essential and structural repairs covered, and up to £500 per annum for specified internal repairs

Notes

- 1 Shared ownership policy in the upcoming Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036 will operate in line with the Affordable Homes Programme 2021–2026.
- 2 Changes to each subsequent Affordable Homes Programme apply prospectively and do not alter the lease terms of homes delivered under earlier programmes.
- 3 The minimum initial share is the smallest percentage of a home that a buyer is allowed to purchase when they first enter shared ownership.
- 4 The minimum quantity of additional shares is the smallest extra portion of the home that an owner is allowed to buy each time they staircase.
- 5 ‘Staircasing’ is the process by which shared owners can buy more of a share of the property over time.
- 6 Shared owners currently pay all costs (their own and the landlords) when extending their lease. Changes under the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 mean that in the future, shared owners will only pay for their own costs. Although the Act received Royal Assent in May 2024, many of the legislated changes will not commence before further government action.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and Homes England’s Affordable Homes Programme prospectus

1.13 The 2021-2026 iteration of the AHP addressed some of the criticisms of the shared ownership model. This included:

- reducing the minimum initial share of the property that someone could buy from 25% to 10%;
- lowering the minimum amount for staircasing that can be done in one go from 10% to 5% and giving the option for gradual staircasing at 1% annually;⁶
- increasing minimum lease-terms from 99 years to 990 years; and
- including a 10 year Initial Repairs Period, where the landlord is responsible for the cost of essential external and structural repairs and provides a repairs allowance (up to £500 a year) for essential internal repairs on new builds (Figure 7).

1.14 Shared ownership policy has evolved over time to address issues, but some changes to the AHP have had unintended consequences. Most notably, shared ownership providers told us that the decreased initial share a household can buy is intended to enable those with less money to invest upfront to become a shared owner. However, it means that shared ownership providers receive less upfront capital and are paying more interest on loans taken out to cover the cost of the unsold portion of the property. This can affect shared ownership providers' financial sustainability and their ability to provide affordable homes. MHCLG and Homes England have addressed this through the new Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) by allowing shared ownership providers to set a target average size share for initial sales on new developments. This lets providers balance the income they receive across a housing scheme, reducing financial risk, while still giving shared owners the option to buy a smaller share size than previously.

The Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036

1.15 The new Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) for 2026 to 2036 was announced during the 2025 Spending Review and opened for grant funding bids for new homes, including shared ownership homes, in February 2026. The SAHP is making changes to shared ownership by ending the Right to Shared Ownership scheme (RtSO) as a contractual requirement of grant funding, and introducing new expectations for shared ownership providers to improve the customer experience.⁷ This includes giving greater consideration to long-term customer affordability, increasing transparency and fairness on costs, and giving customers the ability to opt out of fees for services that are optional.

⁶ Gradual staircasing allows shared owners to buy an additional 1% of their home each year, with reduced fees, for up to 15 years. This applies to homes funded through the Affordable Homes Programme 2021–2026 and the Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026–2036.

⁷ The Right to Shared Ownership Scheme (RtSO) enables qualifying tenants in most social and affordable rented homes funded via the 2021-2026 Affordable Homes Programme to purchase their home on shared ownership terms, for example partial shares with the option to staircase to 100%.

1.16 MHCLG states that the strategic objective of the SAHP is to maximise supply, particularly of social rent homes, with a target to deliver at least 60% of the homes under the programme as social rent and the remainder as other tenures, including shared ownership and affordable rent.⁸ However, there will be no targets for new shared ownership properties. MHCLG told us that, since the closure of the Help to Buy ISA scheme, and following changes to Right to Buy eligibility, shared ownership is now the largest government supported home ownership scheme for new owners.

Recent changes to housing legislation

1.17 Recent changes to housing legislation in England, primarily through the Building Safety Act 2022, the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 (LFRA) and the Renters' Rights Act 2025, have had a significant impact on shared ownership, and leasehold more generally. The LFRA received Royal Assent on 24 May 2024, but the majority of the changes are not yet in force. Implementation requires additional legislation to be in place and consultation on details. MHCLG told us that measures will be introduced in phases during this Parliament.

1.18 The LFRA sets out to strengthen leaseholders' rights. As a result, shared owners will have the right to extend their lease by 990 years on payment of a premium. Currently, shared owners do not have this right and can only extend their lease via a voluntary lease extension, subject to agreement from their landlord. Reforms will make it easier and cheaper for leaseholders to extend their lease. As a result of reforms, ground rent on the owned part of the property would reduce to a nominal amount; however, rent on the rented share will continue to be payable. Each party will pay their own 'process' costs, such as conveyancing. The LFRA also intends to improve the accessibility of information about service and administration charges, and to give all leaseholders, including shared owners, a new right to apply to claim the legal costs of challenging poor practice from their landlord. While stakeholders we spoke to told us they welcomed the LFRA, some shared ownership providers expressed concern about the additional work that this may create for them in a challenging financial environment.

1.19 The Renters' Rights Act 2025 introduces reform of the private rented sector including the abolition of section 21 'no fault' evictions and the introduction of the Decent Homes Standard. Shared owners who have not staircased to 100% will benefit from increased security of tenure, as the Act ends mandatory re-possession under the Assured Tenancy regime by landlords for rent arrears. This is because the Act excludes leases over 21 years in length from being Assured Tenancies, meaning that long leases are fully protected from being treated as short-term rental tenancies. This exclusion came into force in December 2025. The government will publish information for tenants on how the changes made by the Act will affect any subtenancies.

⁸ Social rent is low-cost rent that is set by government formula – on average around 50% of market rent. It is paid by tenants to registered providers or local authorities. It is significantly lower than the rent a tenant would pay on the open market. Affordable rent is set at no more than 80% of market rent and is paid by the tenant to a registered provider or local authority.

1.20 The Building Safety Act 2022 made it illegal for building owners to pass on the costs of cladding remediation work to qualifying leaseholders. However, in some cases shared owners are still experiencing difficulties in selling their properties as a result of being affected by building safety concerns. In December 2023, MHCLG wrote to shared ownership providers highlighting changes to the Capital Funding Guide, which include enabling shared ownership providers to relax rules on subletting of shared ownership properties and allow shared ownership providers to use the Recycled Capital Grant Fund to buy back properties that shared owners are unable to sell.⁹ In a joint plan to accelerate social housing remediation, published in July 2025, MHCLG and social housing providers committed to continuing sub-letting flexibilities after remediation where efforts are being made to sell the property. This recognises that selling affected homes can remain challenging even after remediation. Shared ownership providers have also committed to publishing this guidance on their websites.

⁹ The Recycled Capital Fund Grant allows registered providers to retain and reinvest funding it has previously received from Homes England or the Greater London Authority (GLA) but is no longer using. This means shared ownership providers can recycle funding into new or other affordable homes rather than paying it back to Homes England or the GLA.

Part Two

Challenges with the shared ownership model

2.1 This part sets out the main challenges associated with shared ownership as it operates in practice. These challenges relate primarily to the accessibility of information and affordability over time. Many of these issues overlap with wider leasehold challenges, but shared ownership can exacerbate them.

Accessibility of information

2.2 Shared ownership is a complex financial and legal product for consumers. There have been criticisms from stakeholder groups about the information given to prospective and current shared owners in the past. These criticisms included a lack of information and concerns about increasing costs relating to service charges, complex lease arrangements and routes of redress.

2.3 The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) have taken steps in recent years to improve the transparency of the model through iterations of the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP). This included requiring shared ownership providers to produce Key Information Documents for new shared owners and improving information at the point of sale. However, stakeholders told us that prospective shared owners may still have an 'understanding gap' about costs. This includes how rent and service charge costs can vary over time.

2.4 There is currently no standardised format or terminology for service charges. When charges are unclear, it can be difficult for shared owners to contest them. Additionally, if shared owners wish to dispute service charges, the avenues for redress are complex (see paragraph 3.10). However, Homes England have recently published updated Key Information Documents, which expand and standardise the service charge information which shared ownership providers are required to provide to prospective shared owners prior to purchase.

2.5 A group of housing associations, lenders, legal specialists and other stakeholders have created a shared ownership code. This is a voluntary, industry-led initiative to help improve accessibility of, and standardise information for shared owners about processes and costs. As of November 2025, providers can choose whether to adopt the code, though it is not statutory and is not endorsed by MHCLG. The GLA expects shared ownership providers who have received funding from the AHP 2021 to 2026 and Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) 2026 to 2036, to sign up to the Mayor's shared ownership service charges charter.

Affordability over time

2.6 All leaseholders, including shared owners, can face affordability challenges over time. While they are often well informed about initial affordability, the longer-term financial risks when buying their initial share may not be obvious. Factors such as rental increases (capped at Consumer Price Index + 1% annually for leases issued post October 2023, and Retail Price Index + 0.5% for those issued prior to that date), service charge increases, including building insurance increases, lease extensions, potential costs relating to fire safety in flats, and maintenance of the building, particularly major components like roof and lift replacement, can all increase costs significantly over time. Example rental cost increases are modelled in the Key Information Documents that prospective shared owners receive.

Service charges

2.7 Service charge increases can create affordability pressures over time for shared owners, as they can for any leaseholder. Costs may rise and future expenses may not be fully understood at the outset. Landlords, or the managing agent, set the service charge, which must be 'reasonable' under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985. According to the Act, a landlord can only recover costs to the extent that the costs are reasonably incurred and works and services are of a reasonable standard. Homes England's and the GLA's Key Information Documents provide estimated service charges for potential buyers, but actual charges can vary. This variability poses the greatest risk to households whose initial affordability assessments leave them with limited financial headroom.

2.8 The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee (LUHC) published a report on shared ownership in March 2024 and highlighted examples of increasing service charges:

- Michelle Furber, who experienced increases in the service charge and administration fees to the point that they were “extremely high [...] 140% – 170% increase”, in the two years from moving into the property in August 2021 to submitting her written evidence in August 2023.
- Rosie Hall, whose service charge increased by 39% in two years and reached £4,589, per year.

2.9 The Housing Ombudsman cannot consider complaints about the level of any service charge or the amount of any increase. However, it can consider the openness and transparency of information provided, communication and consultation, as well as the quality of service provided. Additionally, all leaseholders including shared owners have the right to challenge the ‘reasonableness’ of their service charges at a First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) see paragraph 3.10.

Staircasing costs

2.10 Shared owners can face barriers to staircasing – buying an additional share of the property – due to the additional costs, on top of their mortgage and rent, and complexity. Shared owners pay the cost of the additional share of the property, including related transaction costs. In most instances, each time a shared owner staircases, they are required to not only fund the additional equity purchase but also a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors property valuation, additional legal fees and a landlord administration fee. Increases in service charge costs can also act as a barrier to staircasing, as they can reduce the income available to fund greater home equity.

2.11 Transaction costs apply each time shared owners want to increase their equity stake by 5% or more. As such, shared owners may opt to staircase less frequently and with larger equity portions in each transaction (**Figure 8**).

2.12 Shared owners’ abilities to staircase are also linked to house price changes and therefore to what is happening in the wider housing market. The cost of staircasing may vary from when shared owners purchased their initial share. MHCLG has made improvements to staircasing in the new model for shared ownership, through the 2021–2026 iteration of the AHP (Figure 7 on page 16). The improvements include enabling shared owners to purchase shares in smaller increments – although doing so repeatedly may lead to larger cumulative transaction costs.

Figure 8

Example costs associated with ‘staircasing’, the process by which shared owners can buy more of a share of their home over time, as of February 2026

Typical costs for staircasing vary from £800 to £2,568, on top of the price of the additional share bought

Type of cost	Estimated cost (£)
Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) valuation	250 – 360
Shared ownership provider administration fee	180 – 420
Solicitor fee	350 – 649
Mortgage fees	0 – 999
Land registration fee	20 – 140
Mortgage costs	–
Price of additional share(s)	–
Stamp Duty Land Tax	–
Total	800 – 2,568

Notes

- 1 Most of the costs in the above figure must be paid when a shared owner staircases 5% or more (purchases 5% or more share of the property). See exception in note 6.
- 2 ‘Staircasing’ is the process by which shared owners can buy more of a share of the property over time.
- 3 If the shared owner purchased their property within the 2021-2026 Affordable Homes Programme or does so in the upcoming 2026–2036 Social and Affordable Homes Programme, they have the option to staircase 1% annually for the first 15 years. In this case, the current property price is adjusted in line with the House Price Index (HPI) rather than a Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) valuation. Costs such as shared ownership provider administration fee, solicitor fees and RICS valuation fees are typically not required. However, the landlord or the shared owner can opt to use a RICS valuation instead of the HPI valuation. The shared owner can pay to appoint a solicitor if they require legal advice.
- 4 Administrative costs when selling the property are estimated at £600. These costs are higher when selling and fully staircasing than when partially staircasing, because the process triggers additional legal, tax, and administrative steps.
- 5 Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) can be paid in two ways: all upfront at the first point in purchase, or in stages, with any SDLT paid on the initial share purchased and further SDLT only payable after the shared owner staircases above 80%.
- 6 Mortgage costs, price of additional share(s) and Stamp Duty Land Tax are variable costs that are dependent on the size of the additional share purchased.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of shared ownership providers’ staircasing information provided online and information from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors provided online

2.13 MHCLG told us that staircasing to 100% is not the only positive outcome of the shared ownership model, and that a shared owner who buys a share and stays at a certain level of ownership still gains stability, builds equity, and is typically financially better off than remaining in the private rented sector. A 2025 Leeds Building Society study reported that shared ownership is forecast to be cheaper than private rent in 93% of areas across England over 10 years. The study also estimated that, by year 10, shared owners are on average £29,000 better off than private renters, rising to £42,000 in London over the same period.¹⁰ Stakeholders note that this may not necessarily be true as the study is reliant on an optimistic interpretation of service charge costs and does not take into account changes to service charges over time.

Shared ownership and wider issues

2.14 It can be difficult to distinguish between specific issues with the shared ownership model and general issues that impact other housing tenures, particularly leasehold. Shared ownership homes are always sold as leasehold, which means that shared owners are subjected to all the standard issues of leasehold ownership such as uncapped service charges and complex management, as well as having specific challenges that are unique to shared ownership, such as staircasing.

2.15 The model puts owners in the unique position of being part-owners and part-renters while still being responsible for repairs and maintenance costs. Additionally, shared owners from different iterations of the AHP have different rules regarding repair liability. Most shared owners hold leases issued in the earlier AHP (pre 2021), and therefore do not benefit from the 10 year initial repair period. This means that shared owners who bought their initial share before 2021 can face higher maintenance costs over the first 10 years than those who entered shared ownership later.

2.16 The delivery model of shared ownership means there may be third parties involved aside from the shared owner and shared ownership provider, for example, a freeholder or developer who owns the property and is different from the shared ownership provider. This can further complicate the picture for shared owners. It may also bring financial disbenefits, as more costs (such as additional management fees) may be passed on from the freeholder through the shared ownership provider and on to the shared owner. Stakeholders have told us that it can be difficult for shared owners to extend their leases in this situation as the shared ownership provider does not have the legal right to extend the lease.

¹⁰ Leeds Building Society, *Taking the Longer View: Shared ownership, costs and opportunities – an independent assessment*, February 2025.

2.17 MHCLG and other stakeholders we interviewed highlighted the challenges in separating the issues relating to leasehold in general and shared ownership in particular, making it difficult to highlight where the model is working and where improvements can be made. The issues with leasehold and shared ownership can be further exacerbated when the property is a flat, particularly in a high-rise development, because these properties can face all the issues already set out, alongside building safety concerns.¹¹

2.18 The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 (LFRA) aims to address some of the issues that all leaseholders – including shared owners – face, such as transparency over service charges and ability to extend leases. While the LFRA received Royal Assent in May 2024, MHCLG has not yet outlined all aspects of its implementation, as it requires additional legislation to be in place and consultation on details about how it will work in practice. MHCLG told us that measures will continue to be introduced in phases during this Parliament.

¹¹ On 14 June 2017, a fire at Grenfell Tower, a 24-storey residential block in London, resulted in the deaths of 72 people. The subsequent inquiry report concluded that the principal reason for the fire's severity was the aluminium composite material (ACM) panels that encased the building. The report said it was essential that ACM cladding be removed from the exterior of high-risk buildings as quickly as possible. Building safety costs extend beyond remediation of ACM cladding to include wider remediation, such as other cladding, compartmentation, and sprinklers and also the costs of complying with the new building safety regulatory regime.

Part Three

Monitoring and improving shared ownership

3.1 This part of the report outlines how the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) is monitoring the shared ownership model through data collection, routes of redress for shared owners and improvements it is making to the model.

Data

3.2 Data is available about shared ownership from different sources. Data on new supply of affordable homes comes from MHCLG's Affordable Housing Supply statistics. Data on first tranche sales and staircasing (from local authorities only), and data on 100% staircasing for local authorities and shared ownership providers are available from MHCLG's Local Authority Housing Statistics data collection and the Regulator of Social Housing's Social Housing Statistical Data Return. MHCLG collects and publishes data from shared ownership providers and local authorities about affordable housing and shared ownership annually through the CORE (Continuous Recording of Lettings and Sales in Social Housing in England) dataset. CORE data allow MHCLG to understand the trends in social housing sales transactions over time. CORE is the primary source of data for shared ownership transactions, including financial information and some characteristics of shared owners.

3.3 MHCLG requires private registered providers that provide shared ownership homes to submit CORE data and it is voluntary for local authorities. Compliance with reporting is a requirement of Homes England's capital grant funding for the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP). However, MHCLG does not routinely escalate or enforce cases of non-compliance. CORE does not have a full response rate and has historically incomplete data returns. CORE records returns from shared ownership providers which may be incomplete, but MHCLG cannot see if the provider had more sales that it did not report in its return. If a shared ownership provider does not submit a return, MHCLG cannot tell if the provider had no sales or did not complete the form. As a result, CORE cannot provide a complete picture of shared ownership, limiting MHCLG's ability to track shared ownership outcomes and identify where the model works most effectively.

3.4 CORE data on shared ownership records the characteristics of households when they enter the scheme including how people enter shared ownership, such as moves from the private rental sector or from living with family. Exits are recorded when households staircase to 100% ownership, which ends their shared ownership lease and transfers them into full ownership with either a freehold or regular leasehold. Because historically CORE did not record partial staircasing without reaching 100% ownership, MHCLG cannot currently determine the rate at which households increase their equity holdings over time, or the likelihood of doing so. Since 2023-24, MHCLG has included additional questions in CORE about partial staircasing, with the aim to gain a deeper understanding of the journey of shared owners, as they increase the share they own over time. However, MHCLG told us that there are issues with response rates, and therefore data quality.

3.5 The data do not capture households' reasons for leaving shared ownership or whether any exits occur through distressed sales because those in the property can no longer afford it. More detailed data in these areas would increase MHCLG's ability to monitor whether the model is affordable over time for shared owners, assess risks across the shared ownership lifecycle, and design future schemes that work more effectively.

3.6 MHCLG amended the information required in the CORE returns from 2023-24, to better monitor how shared ownership is operating. The changes include monitoring staircasing behaviour annually. Other changes to the 2025-26 survey are in paragraph 3.15.

3.7 The English Housing Survey (EHS) is an annual cross sectional sample survey commissioned and managed by MHCLG. It collects data on people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England. Due to the relatively small numbers of shared owner households in England, it can provide limited insights on shared ownership. The EHS currently covers around 13,000 households annually, and MHCLG estimates only 130 of those are in shared ownership. The survey recently increased its sample size, so it can capture a higher number of shared owners annually and, as a result, MHCLG has plans to publish more data on shared owners in the future. The data are made publicly available on the UK Data Archive, though the small sample size will impact the certainty with which it can provide insight into the circumstances of shared owners.

3.8 Data on consumers' experience of shared ownership are captured via the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), which were introduced by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) in April 2023 to standardise reporting on tenant experience in social housing. The aim of the TSMs is to assess how landlords are performing in providing good quality homes and services. The RSH reported that shared owners report lower satisfaction with their landlord compared with that of social renters. In the 2024-25 TSM data, 48% of low-cost home owners (the majority of which are shared owners) said they were satisfied with their provider, compared with 71% of respondents in low-cost rental accommodation. The RSH told us it plans to follow up these scores and can perform inspections to understand the drivers behind low scores.

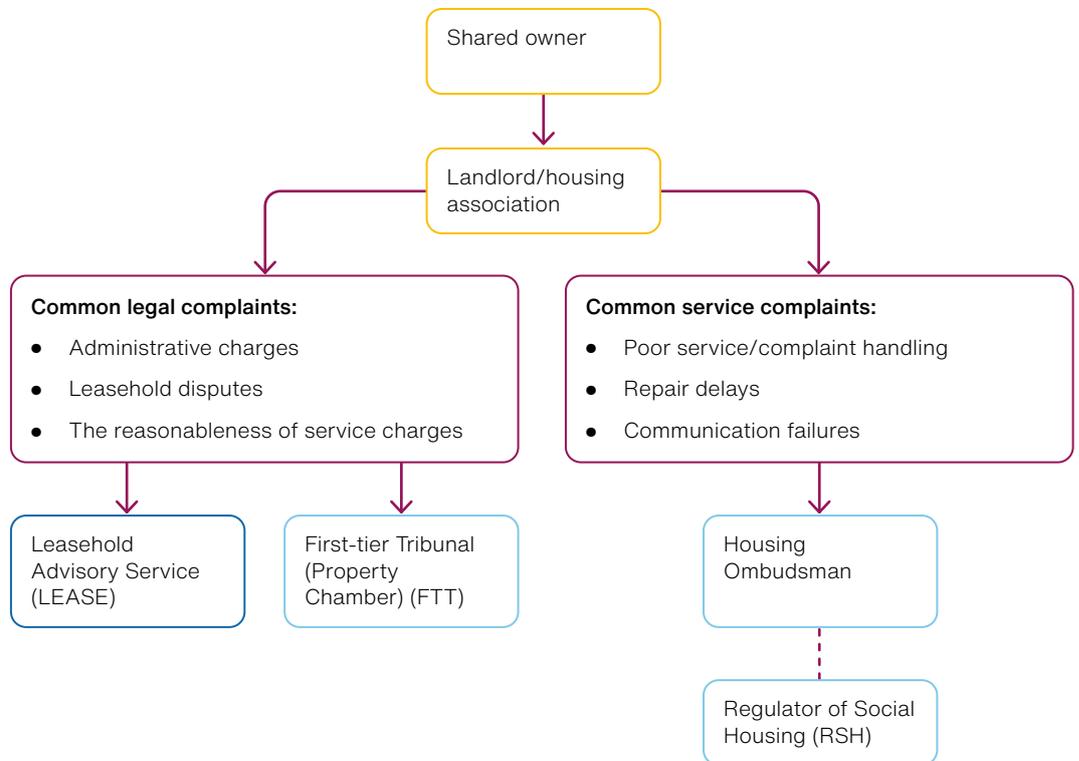
Redress and complaints

3.9 The redress process for shared ownership is complex, and shared owners may not know all the routes of redress and advice available to them. The redress landscape is split between different bodies, and shared owners must choose the correct route depending on the issue (**Figure 9**).

Figure 9

Routes of redress for shared owners

Shared owners must choose the appropriate route of redress depending on their complaint



- Common complaints → Escalation route
- Redress bodies -- Signposting where necessary
- Advisory services
- Parties involved

Notes

- 1 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) oversees compliance of housing associations but does not provide individual complaint resolution.
- 2 The Housing Ombudsman can flag wider systemic housing issues to the RSH.
- 3 This figure excludes sources of wider shared ownership guidance and informal sources of information.
- 4 Citizens Advice also provides independent guidance and support to shared owners.
- 5 The Housing Ombudsman makes the final decision on disputes between residents and landlords that are registered members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.

Source: National Audit Office analysis of interviews and correspondence with the Regulator of Social Housing and publicly available information from the Leasehold Advisory Service, First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) and Housing Ombudsman websites

3.10 Avenues of redress and information include the following:

- **First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) (FTT):** the FTT is part of the HM Courts and Tribunals Service, which is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice. Shared owners can approach the FTT to resolve disputes about rent increases, changes to lease terms and service charges. The FTT application process is complex and requires shared owners to have tried to resolve the issues directly with the landlord first, followed by gathering evidence and applying to the FTT, which involves an associated fee. Due to the complexity of shared ownership and leasehold issues, there may be additional costs, such as paying for professional legal advice. Landlords will typically be represented by a legal team, particularly if they are a registered provider.
- **The Leasehold Advisory Service (LEASE):** An executive non-departmental public body sponsored by MHCLG that gives free legal advice to leaseholders on the law affecting residential leasehold in England and Wales. LEASE provides information on shared ownership leases on its website and can answer leasehold queries. Leaseholders can submit up to 10 enquiries a year per person. Historically, there has been a lack of awareness among shared owners of the advice and guidance available to them from LEASE. However, LEASE is currently leading a sector-wide programme of work to improve how leaseholders (including shared owners) experience the redress sector, and is also refreshing and expanding its advice offer to shared owners.
- **The Housing Ombudsman:** An executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by MHCLG. It makes the final decision on disputes between social housing residents and landlords that are registered members of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme.¹² The Ombudsman's orders are legally enforceable through Schedule 2 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Ombudsman can share information on a landlord with the RSH and landlord governing bodies. The RSH has enforcement powers and can issue performance improvement plans and impose penalties. The Ombudsman can investigate complaints between shared owners and registered providers. Its remit covers property condition and repairs, how charges are managed, complaint handling, and antisocial behaviour affecting residents in their home.

¹² The purpose of the Housing Ombudsman Scheme is to enable tenants and other individuals to have complaints about members investigated by the Housing Ombudsman.

3.11 The Housing Ombudsman reported in September 2024 that a greater proportion of complaints about shared ownership led to results in favour of the shared owner than complaints across other tenures – 13.5% compared with 8.6%. In 2023-24, the Ombudsman handled 848 complaints from shared owners. The most common issues raised by shared owners are property condition and complaint handling, followed by service charges.¹³

3.12 The First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) (FTT) settles disputes between leaseholders and registered providers via a tribunal. The FTT can determine disputes about administration charges, the reasonableness of service charges, and lease extensions. The FTT issues legally binding decisions on issues that are escalated.

3.13 The Key Information Documents that Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) require shared ownership providers to give to shared owners at the point of purchase include information about redress. MHCLG told us it is considering whether it can provide clearer information on its website and signpost shared owners to the correct route of redress depending on the problem they have.

Improvements to the shared ownership model

3.14 MHCLG, Homes England and the GLA have made improvements to the shared ownership model for consumers over time (see paragraph 1.13 and Figure 7 on page 16). The new 990 year minimum lease length provides long-term security and removes the need for costly future lease extensions, while the introduction of a 10 year initial repair period reduces early financial pressure on households by keeping essential repair responsibilities with the shared ownership provider. Lowering the minimum staircasing share from 10% to 5% and enabling 1% incremental purchases allow households to increase ownership at a pace that suits their financial circumstances (Figure 7 on page 16). The new Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) for 2026 to 2036 introduces new expectations for shared ownership providers to improve customer experience. This includes giving greater consideration to long-term customer affordability, increasing transparency and fairness on costs, and giving customers the ability to opt out of fees for services that are optional (see paragraph 1.15).

3.15 MHCLG revised the 2025-26 CORE survey so it will now capture additional information about the consumer journey. It will establish the number of staircasing events a shared owner has completed on their property and the date of the previous increase in equity. It will also track the increments between staircasing transactions and the initial purchase of the property. These updates will generate more insights and will enable MHCLG to assess the effectiveness of policy changes. This should allow it to strengthen future policy design through a more thorough understanding of how shared owners progress from initial purchase to full ownership.

13 Housing Ombudsman Service, *Insight on data and individual cases relating to shared ownership*, August 2024.

3.16 Homes England revised the shared ownership affordability assessment from 1 August 2024, to include more consumer safeguards. Homes England requires shared ownership providers to give standardised information to applicants for a shared ownership home, covering the application and assessment process, before they can be referred for a mortgage. It also requires a regulated mortgage advisor to carry out a financial assessment of the applicant free of charge. The financial assessment is a budget-planner methodology that uses the applicant's income and expenditure to test whether the purchase will leave the applicant with a minimum monthly surplus after housing costs and other essential spending. The guidance also requires the affordability assessment takes into account five years of projected rental increases for applicants (the maximum annual increase for new leases is currently set at Consumer Price Index + 1%). The GLA also sets requirements for assessing affordability that are intended to ensure that shared ownership homes are only sold to households who can afford them.

3.17 The Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 (LFRA) will address some of the issues that all leaseholders, including shared owners, are experiencing. Improvements for all leaseholders because of the LFRA will include new rights and reduced costs for extending leases and will improve transparency of service charge information. Implementation of the LFRA requires additional legislation to be in place and consultation on details about how it will work in practice. MHCLG told us that measures will continue to be introduced in phases during this Parliament.

Appendix One

Our investigative approach

Scope

1 This investigation sets out the facts on how the shared ownership model in England works and the government's oversight of the model. The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) oversees the shared ownership model, and Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) are the delivery partners for new shared ownership properties. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) Service and the Housing Ombudsman are responsible for aspects of regulation and redress. Shared ownership providers, including registered providers, and other housing providers bid for grant funding from Homes England or the GLA and acquire shared ownership properties. Housing developers can build shared ownership properties to fulfil their legal obligations to provide affordable housing as part of housing developments, and local authorities negotiate these Section 106 homes.

2 This investigation does not focus in detail on the delivery of the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP). Nor does it look at issues relating to the quality of shared ownership housing. This report does not seek to examine and report on the value for money of shared ownership, nor does it make any recommendations.

Methods

3 In examining these issues, we drew on a variety of evidence sources, as described in the paragraphs below. We undertook our fieldwork between December 2025 and February 2026.

Teach-ins

4 In December 2025, we received two teach-ins from officials at MHCLG, to develop our general understanding of the shared ownership model and data, and to inform our document review and interview areas.

Literature review

5 We reviewed published research, reports and other materials relating to shared ownership. We used the intelligence that we gathered to refine our approach to several of our other methods – most notably the document review, interviews with officials from government departments and associated bodies, and other stakeholders.

Document review

6 We reviewed published and unpublished documents from MHCLG, Homes England and other government bodies and stakeholders. We used this information to understand issues such as:

- how MHCLG oversees the shared ownership model;
- how Homes England oversees the delivery of shared ownership homes;
- the regulation and redress landscape for shared owners;
- the objectives behind the new Social and Affordable Homes Programme (SAHP) 2026–2036; and
- changes to shared ownership through legislation.

7 These documents included:

- *New model for Shared Ownership: technical consultation*;
- business cases for multiple iterations of the AHP;
- Key Information Documents that shared owners receive when they enter the scheme;
- the SAHP 2026–2036 prospectus;
- written statements and consultations regarding the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024; and
- The Affordable Homes Ownership search portal.

Interviews

8 We conducted eight online interviews with officials from MHCLG, Homes England and the GLA to gain insight into:

- the landscape, oversight and regulation of shared ownership;
- the roles of each organisation involved;
- available data and management information;
- delivery and funding of shared ownership homes; and
- work to improve shared ownership.

9 We spoke to stakeholders and received written submissions from key regulatory bodies involved in shared ownership, including the RSH, the First-tier Tribunal (Property Chamber) Service and the Housing Ombudsman. We used these interviews to understand the regulation of shared ownership, available data, and the forms of redress available to shared owners.

10 We interviewed – and in some cases received written material from – other selected stakeholder bodies, including the Local Government Association (LGA), the National Housing Federation, Social Finance, Shared Ownership Resources, the Shared Owners' Network, and the New Homes Quality Board. We invited them to provide their views on how shared ownership is operated and delivered, consumer experience and transparency of the model.

11 We held an online roundtable discussion, organised by the National Housing Federation, in which we asked representatives from shared ownership providers their views on how the shared ownership model works, data and management information and transparency for shared owners. We met with representatives from: Aster, LiveWest, Platform HG, Plusdane and Yorkshire Housing.

Data analysis and review

12 We reviewed sources of publicly available data, including the Continuous Recording of Lettings and Sales in Social Housing in England (CORE) data published by MHCLG, and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures data published by the RSH.

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