

Housing Research Programme

Published research reports:

- *A Housing Research Audit for Wales, **December 1999***
- *Rough Sleeping in Wales, **February 2000***

Ongoing Research Programme

For the 2000/2001 financial year £225,000 has been allocated to commissioned research projects. The results of each project are published as part of the housing research report series.

- *A feasibility Study to Establish a System for Monitoring the Supply and Re-use of Previously Developed Land* (Hyder Consulting and Landmark Information). The final report will be presented in the New Year.
- *The Changing Demand for Social Housing – Tenants’ Views on Public Rented Housing* (University of Birmingham & MORI). The researchers have held focus groups in seven localities, mostly in areas which have been identified as suffering from low demand. The project is nearing completion and subsequent to a workshop with the social landlords on the case study areas a report will be compiled and presented.
- *The Changing Demand for Social Rented Housing – A Case Study in Newport County Borough* (Cardiff University & Opinion Research Services Ltd). The aim of this study, started in June 2000, is to gain insight into the perceptions of those enquiring about, applying for and taking up tenancies in one local authority area and the processes involved. The findings will be reported in January 2001.

Forthcoming Projects

- *A project to develop a Home Energy Conservation Act reporting methodology for use by Welsh Local Authorities*. Out to tender in late September. This project will develop guidance for local authorities so that progress achieved towards meeting Home Energy Conservation Act obligations to improve domestic energy efficiency are measured and reported in a consistent and accurate way.

- *An interim evaluation of the People in Communities programme.* Commencing in the Autumn. This project will evaluate the initial effects of People in Communities in the first set of eight selected localities.

Future Programme

The members of the Housing and Community Regeneration Research Advisory Panel were asked to consider and prioritise a number of the research recommendations of the task groups in its inaugural meeting of July 2000.

The initial consideration gave priority to the following recommendations, to be actioned in this financial year and the next:

- Investigating the potential of "energy clubs" to negotiate reduced energy bills and cheaper white goods for tenants of social landlords, including looking at the links with established credit unions and the energy efficiency loan scheme for Wales being developed by the Energy Savings Trust (Task Group 1, Recommendation 32)

This is being carried out through an internal review by staff in Housing and Community Renewal Division.

- A desk based study of the private rented sector in Wales in order to understand better the scale and significance of the sector and what might be done to improve and extend it, examining both the landlords, the types of tenancies most likely to attract tenants and investment, and the role of housing benefit. (Task Group 2, Recommendation 16).

A review of the sector has been specified and will be commissioned as part of the Housing and Community Regeneration Research Programme.

- Literature review to establish best practice on deposit management schemes. (Task Group 2, Recommendation 18)

A review of best practice in this field will be specified and considered as part of the Housing and Community Renewal Research Programme.

- Research into the effectiveness of introductory tenancies in Wales for both landlords and tenants. (Task Group 3, Recommendation 26)

This will be carried out by staff in Housing Performance and Finance Division in the form of a topic audit.

- Research on the use and impact of alternative and existing approaches to letting. (Task Group 3, Recommendation 29)

This will be carried out by staff in Housing Performance and Finance Division through a process of consultation and review.

- Exploit the data available from the Welsh Health Survey to illustrate the relationship between health and housing and the effects of other variables measured within the survey. (Task Group 4, recommendation 59)

It is proposed that Statistical Directorate will progress this.

- Undertake a regular national assessment of housing need (which might form part of a national household survey, similar to that undertaken in England). (Task Group 1, recommendation 14).

Consideration is being given to the development of a Welsh Household Interview Survey, allied to a smaller Welsh Stock Condition Survey, which, among other things, would provide information on some aspects of housing need).