

SSP 43

Ymgynghoriad ar flaenoriaethau'r Pwyllgor Llywodraeth Leol a Thai ar gyfer y
Chweched Senedd

Consultation on the Local Government and Housing Committee's priorities for the
Sixth Senedd

Ymateb gan: Rhentu Doeth Cymru

Response from: Rent Smart Wales

As you are aware, in 2015 Cardiff Council was designated as the Single Licensing Authority for Wales to implement the new registration and licensing system for landlords and managing agents in Wales. Since that time we have registered 108,045 landlords, trained 54,693 people involved in managing and letting and issued 55,012 licences. The advantage of having the service is increasingly well recognised by many organisations and even by those who were initially sceptical. There are two significant enhancements to the scheme which would potentially make the scheme even more effective.

1. As part of the regulatory regime to monitor compliance with licence conditions, we are currently undertaking audits of commercial letting and managing agent companies. The duty to comply with the audit request is built into the licence conditions we issue to commercial agents. The audits are revealing real concerns about the practices currently in place but also how keen letting and managing agents are to improve once action plans have been issued. To conclude the audit, certificates are issued indicating the grade awarded to the agent at the time. Currently, display of this grade is optional. However, there are strong similarities here to the framework for food hygiene inspections, where massive strides forward have been made as a result of the legal requirement to publicly display the food hygiene rating. Customer information is really powerful in motivating businesses to improve.

2. Registration requires that landlords provide contact details and specified information about the rental properties. But there is no requirement to provide evidence that property condition meets minimum legal standards. There is an opportunity here to require landlords to provide evidence in the form of a property MOT certificate, at registration or registration renewal stage. This will introduce further protection for tenants at tenancy commencement and potentially reduce the burden on local authorities to inspect and respond to complaints from the sector. These MOT certificates could be provided by a range of appropriately approved bodies.