

PRS 23

Ymgynghoriad ar y sector rhentu preifat

Consultation on the private rented sector

Ymateb gan: Yr Athro Edith England ac Yr Athro Josie Henley

Response from: Dr Edith England and Dr Josie Henley

Welsh Parliament Consultation: Private rented sector.

Recommendation 1: End 'no fault eviction' in order to address long term trauma/ adverse childhood experiences exacerbated by housing insecurity.

1. Homelessness, especially where complicated by domestic abuse, is highly traumatic.
2. Secure, stable housing is crucial to rebuilding wellbeing. Local community links, educational stability and stable access to healthcare are enabled by long term tenure stability.
3. The current six month notice period for tenants is an improvement on the previous two months, but still does not offer the level of security needed to provide security to families.

Recommendation 2: Explore options for increasing affordable housing stock suitable for families (i.e. 3+ bedrooms), including raising the Local Housing Allowance.

1. At present, in many areas across Wales, accommodation suitable for families is scarce and expensive.
2. The Local Housing Allowance is inadequate to cover private sector rents in most parts of Wales.
3. One targeted option to increase affordability would be to offer an enhanced LHA in cases of domestic abuse, to enable access to the private rented sector.

Recommendation 3: Provide targeted financial support to facilitate access to the private rented sector for those who have experienced domestic abuse.

1. Financial checks are part of the process of securing a private rented tenancy.
2. Domestic abuse frequently includes financial control. Individuals may be at elevated risk of rent and mortgage arrears and other debts. They may also not have their own bank accounts or have built up a credit history.
3. While some financial support may be available under homelessness legislation (Housing (Wales) Act 2014) our research indicates that this needs clearer targeting to those experiencing domestic abuse.

About the contributors

1. Dr Edith England is a Senior Lecturer in Social Policy and Practice at Cardiff Metropolitan University.
2. Dr Josie Henley is a Lecturer in Social Psychology at Cardiff University.

About the evidence

This response draws upon a number of studies conducted by the contributors, jointly and individually, over the past five years. These include:

1. *Workforce survey of domestic abuse workers (2021-2023, Dr Edith England and Dr Josie Henley. Funders: Cardiff Metropolitan University Global Academies)*

Detailed survey of 110 frontline workers in the domestic abuse sector, including psychometric tests of burnout, empowerment and autonomy; interviews with a further 56 workers.

2. *Implementation of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 (2017-2020, Dr Edith England. Funders: UK Centre for Collaborative Housing Evidence)*

Interviews with 52 frontline workers and 44 applicants in the Welsh homelessness system.

3. *Homelessness among trans people in Wales (2017-2019, Dr Edith England. Shelter Cymru/ End Youth Homelessness Wales. Funders: LGBTQ+ Aware)*

Interviews with 28 trans people with experience of homelessness, and 12 frontline workers