

## Senedd Cross Party Group on Housing

8<sup>th</sup> November 2021

### Attendees



Homes for all Cymru  
Cartrefi i Gymru Gyfan

Name	Organisation
Mabon ap Gwynfor MS	Senedd Cymru (Chair of CPG)
James Evans MS	Senedd Cymru
Altaf Hussein MS	Senedd Cymru
Alun Davies MS	Senedd Cymru
Sioned Williams MS	Senedd Cymru
Peredur Owen Griffiths MS	Senedd Cymru
Mark Isherwood MS	Senedd Cymru
Cllr Rhys Taylor	Office of Jane Dodds MS
Cllr Ryland Doyle	Office of Mike Hedges MS
Sam Swash	Office of Carolyn Thomas MS
Ryan Ellis	Office of Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Elin Hywel	Office of Mabon ap Gwynfor MS
Cllr David Daniels	Torfaen CBC
Cllr Tony Thomas	Denbighshire County Council
Cllr Lynda Thorne	Cardiff Council
Cllr Dai Davies	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Cllr Goronwy Edwards	Conwy CBC
Cllr Iain McIntosh	Powys County Council
Cllr Craig ab Iago	Cyngor Gwynedd
Steve Porter	Swansea Council
Sandra Canham	Cardiff Council
Ned Michael	Isle of Anglesey CC
Julie Francis	Wrexham Council
Natalee Jones	Cyngor Gwynedd
Nina Davies	Powys County Council
Colleen Pritchard	Cyngor Gwynedd
Mark Congreve	Blaenau Gwent CBC
Ruth Power	Shelter Cymru
Jennie Bibbings	Shelter Cymru
Rob Simkins	Shelter Cymru
Emily Church	CLA Wales
Ceri Cryer	Age Cymru
Bob Smith	Cardiff University (CACHE)
Ross Thomas	Tai Pawb
Katie Dalton	Cymorth Cymru
Mandy Powell	Cymorth Cymru
Catherine May	CIH Cymru
Rhea Stevens	Community Housing Cymru
Amy Lee Pierce	The Wallich
Steffan Evans	The Bevan Foundation
Hugh Kocan	The Bevan Foundation
Mark Harris	Home Builders Federation
Bill Rowlands	End Youth Homelessness Cymru

Tim Thomas	NRLA
Hugh Russell	Wales Co-operative Centre
Elizabeth Taylor	TPAS Cymru
Jordan Brewer	Welsh Women's Aid
Nick Morris	Crisis

### Apologies

Name	Role
John Griffiths MS	Senedd Cymru
Lesley Griffiths MS	Senedd Cymru
Sam Kurtz MS	Senedd Cymru
Luke Fletcher MS	Senedd Cymru
Sarah Murphy MS	Senedd Cymru
Buffy Williams MS	Senedd Cymru
Cefin Campbell MS	Senedd Cymru
Paul Davies MS	Senedd Cymru
Russell George MS	Senedd Cymru
Delyth Jewell MS	Senedd Cymru
Huw Irranca-Davies MS	Senedd Cymru
Cllr Rob Jones	Neath Port Talbot CBC
Cllr Alun Mummery	Isle of Anglesey CC
Cllr Dafydd Edwards	Ceredigion CC
Cllr Lisa Phipps	Caerphilly CBC
Cllr Rhys Lewis	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC
Cllr Andrea Lewis	Swansea Council/WLGA
Cllr Kevin Gibbs	Merthyr Tydfil CBC

Agenda Item	Notes
<b>Chair's Welcome + Our CPG and the 6<sup>th</sup> Senedd</b>	<b>Mabon ap Gwynfor MS</b> welcomes members to the group. Opens by setting the scene on our shared housing emergency and the importance this group has in terms of driving the response to challenges relating to housing.
<b>Building a Picture on Affordability</b>	<p><b>Jennie Bibbings</b> presents (slides attached) a plan of work for the CPG to better understand the affordability crisis in Wales and how this is driving our shared housing emergency. The work will include regular briefing sessions for stakeholders, as well as unpicking the current evidence gaps and addressing these with evidence sessions from experts in Wales, the UK and further afield.</p> <p><b>Nick Morris</b> broadly welcome the outlined priorities, suggesting that exploring possible solutions should be done sooner where possible. Noted also that not all of the levers for change rest with the Senedd and Welsh Government.</p> <p><b>Rhea Stevens</b> suggested that the draft programme would be complemented by hearing from delivery partners in Wales, such as</p>

	<p>local government and social landlords. Bringing these bodies in may help to remove some of the barriers identified in the presentation.</p> <p><b>Katie Dalton</b> noted our shared opportunity recovering from the pandemic. Thousands of people are accessing housing and homelessness support who have been failed by the system in the past, including accessing support from other services such as health. It is important that we don't let these people down. There are many competing priorities for Welsh Government and local authorities, but we need to work together across party lines to ensure that housing is treated as the foundational part of the system that it is.</p> <p><b>Cllr Goronwy Edwards</b> spoke of the "massive" housing need in Conwy which has been exacerbated as a result of Covid-19. Says it is vital that the Welsh Government gives local authorities the tools to tackle housing issues, such as second homes, empty homes and many councils are waiting for them to bring forward legislation to help tackle these issues.</p>
<p><b>Empty Homes in Wales; Good Practice and Next Steps</b></p>	<p><b>Catherine May</b> presents (slides attached) to the group, outlining some of the barriers faced in tackling empty homes in Wales, such as a lack of advice and support, to financial restraints and enforcement capacity. The presentation explored examples of good practice in community-led solutions to empty homes, as part of the Tyfu Tai Cymru project within CIH Cymru and spoke of the interlinked issue of Rightsizing across Wales.</p> <p><b>Cllr Tony Thomas</b> noted that empty homes are an emotive issue and that from his local authority's perspective, lots of good work can be undone by complexities and delays relating to one or two properties, masking wider progress.</p> <p><b>Steffan Evans</b> highlighted similarities between loans providing barriers, citing the Bevan Foundation's recent work on Local Housing Allowance. Notes that there may be join-up between the Tyfu Tai Cymru work and some of the findings in relation to the PRS Leasing Scheme announced by the Welsh Government.</p> <p><b>Mark Isherwood MS</b> reminded the group that enforcement was an area that the Welsh Local Government Association have been referring to since 2004, simplifying this area to enable it to work will be important. Noted that previous ministers promoted the cooperative housing model and encouraged people to look at what currently works well and what we need to do differently, citing that in the past incentivising action has proven more fruitful than enforcement action.</p> <p><b>Hugh Russell</b> agreed with points raised by Mark Isherwood MS and notes that the Wales Coop Centre are currently working on promoting community-led housing. Identifies that working in a top-down fashion doesn't work on community-led areas and that supporting communities' vision is key to progress. The Welsh Government can</p>

	and should be doing more to support financially, in terms of mortgages and land purchase.
<b>Close of Meeting</b>	<b>Mabon ap Gwynfor MS</b> thanks attendees and closes the meeting.
<b>Date of the Next Meeting</b>	The date for the next Cross Party Group on Housing will be circulated ASAP.