

Senedd Cross Party Group on Housing

17th October 2022

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Mabon ap Gywnfor MS	Senedd Cymru (Chair of CPG)
Carolyn Thomas MS	Senedd Cymru
Atlaf Hussain MS	Senedd Cymru
Ruth Power	Shelter Cymru
Jennie Bibbings	Shelter Cymru
Dewi John	Shelter Cymru
Wendy Dearden	Shelter Cymru
Ross Thomas	Tai Pawb
David Rowlands	Tai Pawb
Matthew Dicks	CIH Cymru
Cerys Clark	CIH Cymru
Sean Bibby	Flintshire Council
Alun Llewelyn	Neath Port Talbot Council
Ryland Doyle	Office of Mike Hedges MS
Robert Smith	Cardiff University
Tim Thomas	Property Mark
Hayley Grist	Housing Justice
Kathryn Jenkinson	Carmarthenshire Council
Tim Crahart	Homeshare Wales
Rhys Thomas	Denbighshire Council
Lyndon Puddy	Torfaen Council
Becky Ricketts	Care and Repair Wales
Matthew Dorrance	Powys Council
Joshua Lovell	NRLA
Joy Williams	Carmarthenshire Council
Matthew Vaux	Ceredigion Council
Ned Michael	Cyngor Ynys Mon
Rhys Goode	Bridgend Council
David Kirby	CIOB
Katie Dalton	Cymorth Cymru
Manon Roberts	Public Health Wales
Dauida Bithell	Wrexham Council
Andy Thompson	Powys Council
Michelle Aspey	Newport Council
Zak Weaver	Office of Sam Rowlands MS
Emily Owen	Conwy Council
Helen Cunningham	Blaenau Gwent Council
Ewa Lewinska-Owen	Goleudy
Steve Porter	Swansea Council
Jasmine Harris	Crisis
Bill Rowlands	EYHC
Mandy Powell	Cymorth Cymru
Sara Burch	Monmouthshire Council
Amy Lee Pierce	Walliach
James Radcliffe	Platfform

John Morgan	Blaenau Gwent Council
Casey Edwards	Cwmpas
Carol McKinlay	RNIB
Jane Oates	Monmouthshire Council
Carys Fon Williams	Gwynedd Council
Shayne Williams	Caerphilly Council
Paul Thompson	CHC
Richard Hauxwell-Baldwin	MCS Charitable Foundation
Lynda Thorne	Cardiff Council
Andrea Lewis	Swansea Council
Ellie Richards	From the office of Luke Fletcher MS

Apologies

Name	Role
James Clarke	Newport Council

Agenda Item	Notes
Chair's Welcome	Mabon ap Gwynfor MS welcomed attendees to the meeting, outlined the agenda for the session and handed over to Dave Rowlands and Ross Thomas to present the first item.
We envision a Wales where everyone has the right to a safe and suitable home	<p>Ross Thomas opened his presentation by explaining the background to the Back the Bill Coalition and cost-benefit analysis report. Ross explained that his presentation is quite timely considering the announcement of a forthcoming green paper by the government on rent controls and the right to adequate housing in addition to their commitment to a white paper on the issue.</p> <p>Ross pointed to the first report by Simon Hoffman at Swansea University, which highlights international examples of states implementing the right to adequate housing across the globe, such as Canada and Finland. Ross explained that this issue is an equality one as we saw during the pandemic that a good meant the difference being safe or being exposed to a deadly virus. For Tai Pawb that the phase one report and draft bill are important as it will tackle some of the longstanding equality issues within housing such as overcrowding and housing adaptations.</p> <p>He explained that this shift would mark a fundamental shift in policy and before people have a legal right to housing the system will be an invest to save model. Ross also explained that the Welsh Government has made some welcome steps, which are in line with the bill such as changes to priority need and changes through the Renting Homes (Wales) Act.</p> <p>David Rowlands highlighted the importance of having a cost-benefit analysis but also pointed to a poll that introducing the right to adequate housing would not be a hard sell. A poll conducted at Cardiff University on behalf of CIH found that three quarters of the population supports the right.</p> <p>David explained that the obvious challenge is financial as it will take spending on every level of government in Wales. He also explained that the cost-benefit analysis was conducted by Alma Economics, which is an</p>

independent group recognised by the government and Welsh Treasury. The cost-benefit analysis spans over 30 years, which is a standard time frame and identifies tangible impacts. David pointed to the key figures from the report, which demonstrate that the right would generate socio-economic benefits that out way costs as the right costs £5bn over 10 years to realise right to adequate housing but generates £11.5bn saved in 30 in years with the key costs being housebuilding, rents, maintenance and adaptations.

David highlighted that social homes will be the main focus and identified that Wales needs an additional 20,000 social homes on top of the Welsh Government's target and also explained that homelessness prevention will still be a tenant with the system focusing on-going support for people who are made homeless and will continue to use a rapid rehousing model.

David also pointed to the other key savings the right to adequate housing will deliver, such as;

- £5.5bn for wellbeing
- £2bn for local authorities
- £1bn for the NHS
- £1bn for the criminal justice system
- £1bn in additional economic activity
- £1bn in value of new housing

David warned that these estimates are cautious and explained that this can be realised shorter or quicker depending on how much available resources are spent on it.

Ross drew the presentation to a close by highlighting that it was not the first time a radical and ambitious plan for housing has been proposed and pointed to the housing plans following the post-war period as an example.

Matthew Dicks also highlighted the policy in the post war period and its aims to create a healthier and wealthier population and argued that we can achieve this for right to adequate housing.

Ruth Power explained from a Shelter Cymru perspective that this right would be a key enabler for ending homelessness and providing everyone in Wales with a good home and provides a framework and direction for travel for this goal.

Lyndon Puddy asked if the report considered the availability of land across all public and private availability.

David Rowlands explained that the bill would create a framework for how to do it and would ensure that the homes are built in areas where people want to live and where it is needed.

Matt Dicks pointed that land value would be captured by the 20,000 additional homes on the target but that this would not happen overnight.

Lyndon added that silo ways of working need to end if this policy is going to succeed.

	<p>Ross Thomas said that he does not want silo thinking and argued that we need to build homes where people want to live and suitable to what communities live.</p> <p>Sara Birch asked if the policy would end up being another stick to beat local authorities with because of the nature of the housing market in Wales?</p> <p>David Rowlands said that the report identifies a number of housing needed on top of the existing commitment on social homes and explained that the target can be met slower or quicker dependent on how much funding is issued towards the goal and it's up to us.</p> <p>Ruth said the right provides a framework for creating a policy environment, which gives a scope on making it more deliverable and allows for critical thinking.</p> <p>Alun Llewellyn asked how unintended consequences will be avoided as a result of this policy?</p> <p>Ruth Power explained that the report outlines that because the right will be utilising maximum resource available it is fit for the long term as funding can change and the interpretation of maximum resources is flexible for future issues.</p> <p>Andy Thompson argued that everyone should have a secure tenancy and people should have a place to call home and house buyers should also have social safety net with that, which is available to tenants.</p> <p>Carolyn Thomas pointed to the issue of a brain drain and issue within the planning system as a potential barrier to this policy. She also highlighted the negative impact that the current crisis is having on the Welsh budget.</p> <p>David Daniels asked if how we get to the point of realising the right when we already have so many households threatened with homelessness.</p> <p>Matt Dicks said that it's easy to lose hope in this situation but argued that implementing this right will go a long way to solving our issues and pointed to the 1947 social housing goals to show it is possible to deliver something as radical as this.</p> <p>Ruth Power said we have hit the cost-of-living crisis on the back foot with housing after years of under-investment and said now is the time to implement action on this as we can't afford to have more people exposed to this kind of instability again.</p> <p>Ross and David both echoed that the bill is very much in draft form and asked for contributions as they are happy to consider any comments or concerns to help deliver the right to adequate in Wales.</p>
Close of Meeting	Mabon ap Gwynfor MS thanks attendees and speakers and reminds attendees that minutes as well as a recording will be made available by Shelter Cymru in due course and closes the meeting.
Date of the Next Meeting	6 th of February 2023