

Urgent Support for Hirwaun, Wales, Homeowners Affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 08 Rhagfyr 2025
Petitions Committee | 08 December 2025

Reference: RS2512525-3

Petition Number: P-06-1549

Petition title: Urgent Support for Hirwaun, Wales, Homeowners Affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Text of petition: In February 2024, RAAC was discovered in 77 homes on Hirwaun's Gower Estate, 14 of which are privately owned through the Right to Buy scheme. Residents now face average costs of £23,000 for a temporary fix, while contending with invalid insurance policies and unfair mortgage terms. RAAC is unstable and deteriorates rapidly, posing serious safety risks—yet neither Trivallis nor Rhondda Cynon Taf Council have offered realistic support. We urge the Welsh Government to intervene, providing financial assistance and long-term solutions for affected homeowners.

Hirwaun residents come from deprived communities. Many have become mortgage prisoners—trapped with lenders unwilling to refinance, while alternative providers refuse applications. “These homeowners are financially exposed, paying for home insurance that excludes RAAC-related issues, all while living under the threat of roof collapse. These properties were cheaply built by the local council, sold to Trivallis, and then passed to unsuspecting residents through the flawed Right to Buy scheme—without any disclosure of the structural risks posed by RAAC.

The Welsh Government must establish a national remediation fund—using devolved powers or by pressing the UK Government for support—and initiate



a public inquiry into historic failings. Warnings were ignored: over 400 RAAC-related demolitions took place in Basildon in the 1990s, and 86 homes were condemned in West Lothian in 2004.

The Welsh Government must act now—by redefining building regulations and housing standards to mandate 50-year guarantees on defective materials, and by creating a Welsh high-risk property register to prevent future scandals.

1. Background

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) is a form of concrete with a bubbly structure. It was used between the mid-1950s and mid-1990s for roof planks, wall panels, and floor planks. In the summer of 2023, multiple sudden failures of RAAC planks which had been graded as ‘non-critical’ led to increased safety concerns about buildings with RAAC.

2. Welsh Government action

In September 2023, the Welsh Government said it had written to stock-holding local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) requesting an assessment of their stock to identify the presence of RAAC in homes in Wales. Community Housing Cymru (the membership body for housing associations in Wales) said in March 2024 that “the information we have received from our members does not suggest there is a widespread issue across Wales”.

However, RAAC was identified in a small number of properties in Wales. In March 2024, Trivallis said it had identified RAAC in 77 homes on the Gower estate in Hirwaun, of which 60 are owned by Trivallis and 17 are in private ownership. Trivallis has stated that the homes on the Gower estate in Hirwaun are the only buildings of this type that they own.

Trivallis has developed a remediation programme for social homes they are responsible for, which is due to take place between October 2024 and April 2027. Trivallis has reportedly also offered affected owner-occupiers and private landlords access to their contractors to carry out building safety works on other properties.

3. Welsh Parliament action

In May 2024, the then Minister for Climate Change was questioned in the Senedd on support for private homeowners in Hirwaun. She said:

...we are calling for a four-nations approach across the UK now to what is an increasingly obvious problem that much predates devolution and will require some substantial funding to put right.

In June 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government was asked to provide an update on support for homeowners in Hirwaun. She stated that the Welsh Government was not able to directly offer interest-free loans to cover the costs of works required for homeowners in Wales, but noted that financial support may available through the local authority.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC) has stated that it can offer grants of up to £6500 to private owners on the Hirwaun estate. However, during a meeting of the council on 25 June 2025, it was suggested that only 2 homeowners on the Hirwaun estate meet the eligibility criteria to receive the grant.

The minutes show that Councillors agreed to liaise with the Welsh Government about providing additional funding to address issues with RAAC.

RCTCBC also offers interest-free loans, to help contribute towards the cost of remediation and home improvement works. It has also stated that it is offering other support to residents, including a dedicated Support Worker as a point of contact to offer advice and assistance as required, and support through Public Health officers.

4. Response in other areas of the UK

The UK Government has assessed that the prevalence of RAAC is low in housing, and has stated that responsibility for funding and managing RAAC remediation lies with individual property owners.

In Scotland, RAAC has been identified in around 2445 social homes. The Scottish Parliament's research service has noted that nearly 700 privately owned homes have RAAC elements, and that there may be more which have not yet been identified.

The Scottish Government has said that it is up to local authorities to decide what support is appropriate for affected homeowners. It has convened a RAAC in Housing Leadership Group which held its inaugural meeting in September 2025. According to the minutes for the Group, the Scottish Government has re-stated it will not create a specific RAAC remediation fund, but will consider funding flexibilities within existing budgets.

The Scottish Government has reportedly agreed a £10 million funding deal with Aberdeen City Council by providing additional funding through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme, to enable the Council to meet the costs of remediation through its own budget. The funding would reportedly enable the voluntary acquisition of private homes at pre-RAAC market value. Over 500 homes in Aberdeen are affected by RAAC.

The Scottish Government has said it is continuing to press the UK Government to create a UK-wide RAAC remediation fund.

5. Response to the petition

In her response to the Committee on 14 November, the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government said she understood some affected homeowners may need support to carry out repairs or access funding.

She noted that Trivallis has offered access to their contractors, and suggests this could help homeowners to reduce costs. She said:

Additionally, there are potential funding options, grants and loans that may be available through Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, subject to eligibility criteria.

The Cabinet Secretary said there are no current plans to amend building regulations to require a guarantee for material. She said that the Welsh Government is working with the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) and devolved governments to keep under review the safety and standards of all buildings.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.

