



Comisiynydd y
Gymraeg
Welsh Language
Commissioner

HB 14
National Assembly for Wales
Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee
Housing (Wales) Bill : Stage 1
Response from : Welsh Language Commissioner

increase the number of Welsh speakers. It is unclear on what evidence this is based or how dependable it is. All possible sites will have to be considered individually depending on the specific community that would be affected.

○ **Council Tax on empty homes**

The Bill permits local authorities to charge a higher rate of council tax on property that remains empty for 12 months or more. Although this will be a discretionary power, the intention is that it will help make the best possible use of existing homes and that it will, again, help to keep people in their communities and help the sustainability of the Welsh language. The Government will need to consider the implications and side effects of this development on the numbers of new dwellings that will be needed and which are determined via local development plans.

I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to provide comments on your consultation. We ask that you give full consideration to the observations made above.

Yours faithfully,

Meri Huws
Welsh Language Commissioner