

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-357
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/05102/12
William Powell AM
Chair Petition's Committee
Ty Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

31 January 2012

Dear William

Thank you for your letter of 13 January about the 115 signature petition requesting a five year residency qualification with limited exceptions before people can qualify for social housing in Wales.

I recognise the Petition Committee's concern about this matter. As stated in my previous letter, local authorities are statutorily responsible for meeting the housing needs of the local population. Therefore, it is local authorities rather than the Welsh Government which are better placed to address local housing need.

The Welsh Government report entitled '*The effects of recent migration on local authorities' allocation of housing and actions under homelessness legislation*' (2009) revealed that the net pressures created by migration on access to social housing were not as great as public perceptions would suggest.

I appreciate the concerns felt by many people about the difficulties in accessing social housing. However, I note the Committee's concerns about the effect of a five year residency qualification on vulnerable people and others such as key workers. I also have concerns that such a proposal could contravene legislation intended to combat discrimination as well as causing complications for people crossing the border to take up employment opportunities. It is for this reason that the Welsh Government has no plans to introduce a provision along the lines of that suggested in the petition.

Regards
Huw

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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