

February 9th 2012

Rhodri Wyn Jones,
Petitions Committee,
National Assembly for Wales.

Dear Mr. Jones,

After receiving your e-mail today, and reading the attached letter from Huw Lewis, Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage, to William Powell AM, your Chairman, I have the following observations and comments to make.

The second paragraph of Mr Lewis' letter mentions local authorities but not housing associations. Seeing as the latter are now responsible for a larger total housing stock than the former did the Minister really mean to mention only local authorities?

My suggested five-year residency qualification could of course allow for genuine key workers and others, that is not really the issue. Nor is it lack of social housing.

The problem, as everyone who has looked at social housing in Wales can see, is that too many social housing providers are bringing into Wales criminals, indigents and others who have overstayed their welcome where they lived before. Many of the 'homeless' being housed in Wales now are people who are homeless because they have been evicted from social housing and other accommodation in England. These are, effectively, being dumped in Wales.

The issue is therefore not about the "vulnerable" or key workers, or genuinely and non-criminal homeless, it is about protecting Welsh communities from those currently being forced on them by irresponsible social housing providers who are almost certainly being paid extra for taking in these high-risk tenants.

It boils down to this: Why does a homeless criminal in England, with no Welsh connections, automatically qualify for social housing in Wales? Mr Lewis may choose to pretend it's about other issues, but those living in communities blighted by the irresponsible behaviour of social housing providers know the truth. And it won't go away.



Royston Jones