

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru / National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Cyfrifon Cyhoeddus / Public Accounts Committee

Ymchwiliad i drefn reoleiddio Cymdeithasau Tai / Inquiry into Regulatory oversight of Housing Associations

Ymateb gan Cymdeithas Landlordiaid Preswyl / Evidence from the Residential Landlords Association

ABOUT THE RESIDENTIAL LANDLORDS ASSOCIATION

The Residential Landlords Association (RLA) represents 40,000 small and medium-sized landlords in the private rented sector (PRS) who manage over 1,000,000 properties across the UK. It seeks to promote and maintain standards in the sector, provide training for its members, promote the implementation of local landlord accreditation schemes and drive out those landlords who bring the sector into disrepute. Members also include letting and managing agents.

Please find below the RLA response to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the regulatory oversight of housing associations.

Housing Associations play a vital role in providing accommodation and building new homes right across Wales, sometimes in areas of the country that would not, at first, seem beneficial for private builders to consider a large-scale development. They also provide multiple additional support services above and beyond their primary function of providing homes. The value of these supplementary services in fulfilling other functions beyond the provision of housing cannot be overstated.

Although the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and Housing Associations are very different beasts, they both have an important role to play in solving the housing crisis in Wales. Housing Associations house some of the most vulnerable in society that only a minority of private sector landlords would

feel comfortable supporting through a tenancy, due largely to a lack of support services for PRS landlords. Many private landlords who do offer accommodation to these groups have benefited significantly from the practice and have attained a shared experience with landlords in the social sector. It is and has been an opportunity for mutual learning and the development of best practice across housing tenures. The PRS routinely scores better than the social sector for overall satisfaction (including standards) and tenants' satisfaction with repairs. Housing Associations across the UK have, collectively, had billions of pounds spent on the sector specifically to bring properties to a higher standard, yet the PRS, with little to no public investment, scores higher for satisfaction and repairs.

Over the past few years, landlord organisations like the RLA have worked closely with representatives from Housing Associations to share practices that benefit our members and ultimately tenants. This has taken place through a series of different conferences designed to share practices across sectors, and with individual landlords who have worked with housing associations to provide better support to tenants.

Working with housing associations has also led to the formation of the Homes for Wales coalition, which encompasses the whole housing sector to look at ways in which we can solve the housing crisis together. It is only by working collaboratively across sectors that we can find practical solutions to many of the day-to-day issues faced by tenants and landlords in all sectors.

Sincerely

Douglas Haig
Vice Chair and Director for Wales
Residential Landlords Association