

WESTMINSTER AND HOMES IN WALES



Registered Charity Number: 515902



ABOUT SHELTER CYMRU

Shelter Cymru exist to defend the right to a safe home in Wales and fight the devastating impact of the housing emergency on people and society. Last year, we helped over 22,000 people in housing need – including almost 7,000 dependent children – through our advice and support services.

WESTMINSTER AND HOMES IN WALES

Although housing is devolved in Wales, the UK Government has a clear role to play in ending the housing emergency here. Decisions taken at Westminster continue to impact homes and homelessness in Wales.

Here are three things that any Welsh MP should consider when it comes to the risk of homelessness their constituents face:

1. LOCAL HOUSING ALLOWANCE

At a time when rents in Wales are increasing faster than in any other GB nation, and when many parts of Wales are seeing double digit annual rises, it is essential that adequate financial support is provided to renters who need it. The UK Government must ensure adherence to the policy for LHA, that it is linked to the 30th percentile of private rents, by guaranteeing the annual uplift.

Shelter Cymru's analysis shows that the April 2025 LHA freeze will be hitting families with children the hardest as the shortfall between the actual lowest 30% of rents and what LHA will cover is starkest for three and four bedroom homes. For example, a family privately renting a four-bedroom home in Newport will currently be facing an annual shortfall of £3,000.¹

Right now, many of those who live in the PRS do so not by choice but due to a lack of alternative options. For those households this is a case of tenure of last resort, an only option to avoid homelessness. Underinvestment in social homes and a lack of support for first-time buyers has pushed thousands more households into private renting over the last two decades. LHA remains an necessary safety net that needs to be uprated each year to protect people from poverty and homelessness.

¹ Shelter Cymru, Peer Research Report on LHA 2025

2. THE “BEDROOM TAX”

The Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy, “Bedroom Tax”, is forcing people in Wales into longer stays in unsettling and uncertain temporary accommodation despite existing social homes being available.

In our conversations with local authorities, they have shared with us the extent to which the “Bedroom Tax” restricts their ability to make best use of vacant social homes locally. Local authorities are unable to allocate social homes with multiple bedrooms to single person households as those homes would be unaffordable due to the impact of the “Bedroom Tax”.

This means lengthy stays in temporary accommodation for single homeless people in Wales, negatively affecting their health and wellbeing whilst also inflating the cost of temporary accommodation for our stretched local authorities.²

3. THE RENTERS’ RIGHTS BILL

It is important for Welsh MPs to understand that the high-profile changes set out in this new Westminster bill do not apply in Wales. Renters in Wales will be left as the only people at risk of a no fault, no reason eviction anywhere in Great Britain.

The Welsh Government must do more to similarly protect private renters in Wales and Welsh MPs can advocate for this on behalf of their constituents.

Wales has a proud recent history of being at the forefront of change for renters, but with the cost of renting spiralling and the largest portion of Shelter Cymru casework being from the private rented sector it’s clear more change is needed.

CONTACT

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² Shelter Cymru, “The Cost of Crisis: The Impact of Wales’ Reliance on Temporary Accommodation”

THE WELSH HOUSING EMERGENCY

Home is everything. Our homes give us the stable foundations we need to build happy, healthy lives. But as rent and mortgage costs continue to rise, thousands of people are experiencing homelessness in Wales right now. This doesn't need to be the case and the Welsh Government can provide solutions.

Join Shelter Cymru as we fight for safe, secure and affordable homes for everyone in Wales.

NUMBER OF NEW HOMES BUILT IN 23/24:

4,771

of which 22% were social homes (1,035)*

IN 2024:

94,000

households were waiting for a social home.
37% were families with children.

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS
RENTING PRIVATELY:

2001: **89,832**

2021: **228,642**

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION:

11,339

including 2,860 children.

8.5% INCREASE IN PRS RENTS IN A YEAR



693 PCM August 2023

752 PCM August 2024

22%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE
SLEEPING ROUGH IN A YEAR

August 2023: 167 | August 2024: 204

AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES IN WALES:



£137,00

August 2014



£223,000

August 2024

OVER

£99 MILLION

SPENT ON TEMPORARY
ACCOMMODATION IN A YEAR
WITH LARGE SUMS GOING
TO PRIVATE BUSINESS
AND LANDLORDS