



**Consultation Response**  
**Private rented sector**  
**Local Government and Housing Committee**  
**May 2023**

Age Cymru is the leading charity working to improve the lives of all older people in Wales. We believe older people should be able to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, have adequate income, access to high quality services and the opportunity to shape their own future. We seek to provide a strong voice for all older people in Wales and to raise awareness of the issues of importance to them.

We are pleased to respond to the Local Government and Housing Committee's inquiry into the Private rented sector. The housing needs of people may change as they get older, so it is important that older people have access to a range of good quality housing options and services that meet their needs. People must be able to live safe, independent and active lives in the setting most appropriate to them. With fewer people able to own their own home, renting privately may be the only option.

Age Cymru is currently analysing the results of their pan-Wales 'Tell us what matters to you – a national survey of the current experiences of people aged 50 or over in Wales'. Preliminary survey results indicate that many older people found housing to be a challenging experience in the last 12 months. In relation to rented accommodation, we were concerned about comments received from older people over the affordability and high costs of renting. Some older people are unable to retire and need to continue to work to pay rent:

I worry about paying my rent as I live in a private rented bungalow and my rent has gone up by £95.

Rents are so high that it is impossible just to live on a state pension without working to supplement it.

I have no idea when I will be able to retire, if I do, I will not be able to afford to pay the rent.

Still need to work to pay my rent at 73.

Age Cymru is a member of Homes For All Cymru (HFAC) and we would reiterate a recent call made by HFAC for Welsh Government to continue to call on the UK Government to end the freeze on the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), and to uplift the LHA.

In terms of the quality of rented accommodation, some comments received in Age Cymru's survey (as above) highlighted issues over repairs to rented properties:

Living in very old rural accommodation which needs a lot of work doing to it but the rent is cheap

Had no water for two weeks before Christmas because landlord had employed workers who installed pipe work too close to ground surface. Pipes froze and broke. Four foot trench had to be dug. I had to park my car 150 metres away and walk down a 1 in 10 gradient track. Final bit was an 18 inch path with no handrail and a four foot drop one side with no rail. If I had fallen there are no near neighbours and no mobile signal.

The Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) has led to improvements in social housing, and we believe the commitment to achieving the WHQS should also be extended to the private rented sector and to all new homes being built in Wales. We welcome the intention by Welsh Government that 'In time, it is anticipated that the Standard will apply to other types and tenures of housing, and this will be kept under regular review,'<sup>1</sup> and we would urge the Committee to seek a timescale for this.

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<sup>1</sup> [Welsh Housing Quality Standard: draft \(gov.wales\)](#)