

Working together to end homelessness from social housing



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Shelter Cymru

Our vision

- People have **good, affordable and secure homes** that provide the foundation for their health and wellbeing, and their personal, social and economic lives.
- **Homelessness is rare**, brief and non-recurrent.
- A progressive realisation of **ending evictions into homelessness** from all tenures – starting with social housing.

Social landlords – key players

- **Major landlords:** RSLs own almost two thirds of the social housing stock in Wales.
- **Vulnerable tenants:**
 - 45% of people in social housing are in poverty
 - 20% of social tenants in Wales have a long term health problem or disability that limits their day to day activities a lot
 - 80,000 children in social housing in Wales live in relative income poverty.
- **Avoidable evictions:** main reason for evictions is rent arrears, followed by ASB; prolonged non-contact with tenants is a significant issue.

How do we end homelessness from social housing?

- **Guiding principles** from our Oak Foundation funded [Ending Evictions into Homelessness](#) research report:
 1. Create the right culture
 2. Prevention and early intervention
 3. Person centred, not process driven
 4. Work in partnership – internally and externally
 5. Fully utilise homelessness prevention initiatives
 6. Persevere and continue trying to help

- **Put simply:** get allocations right; invest in relationships with tenants and partner agencies to sustain tenancies and minimise evictions; and end evictions into homelessness.

Where are we now?

- **Cross-party support** for HAG's recommendations to end evictions into homelessness; and an expectation of progress by social landlords as part of the **rent settlement** with WG for 2020/25.
- **Examples of early adopters:**
 - ClwydAlyn (stock 6,000): evictions fell by 85% over 1yr (2019/20) to 4 evictions; with no evictions into homelessness.
 - Wales and West (stock 12,500): evictions in the region of 45 p.a. (2006-08) fell consistently below 20 p.a. in the 7yrs to 2019.
 - Valleys to Coast (stock 5,800+): a fall in evictions over 3yrs from 28 to 7 in 2019/20.
- **Growing appetite for change across Wales:**
 - Nr 40% reduction in possession actions by social landlords in the year to Mar 2019
 - More social landlords adopting holistic models of tenant engagement, based on psychologically / trauma informed and systems thinking approaches.
 - 31 social landlords (24 HAs) engaged with Shelter Cymru's recent Ending Evictions from Social Housing webinar.

Creating the right culture

- **Leadership:** translating your HA's social purpose into strategic priorities and organisational values; shaping culture.
 - Is striving to maintain people in homes a priority, and eviction a failure?
 - Is ending evictions into homelessness a priority?

'..the buy in of the board is essential.' HA Senior Manager.

- **Culture:** 'how we do things around here'
 - Values, assumptions, beliefs and ways of interacting
 - Systems and processes; the use of flexibility and discretion
 - How often are NoSPs served, and in what circumstances?
 - What types of performance or attributes are valued in a housing officer?

'Our absolute primary objective is to manage and sustain tenancies. Nothing is out of bounds to preserve a tenancy.' HA Manager.

- **Tenant voice:** would your tenants come to you if they were in difficulty?

What can you do?

- **Reflect** on whether your KPIs and measures of success are supporting your executive and frontline staff to end evictions into homelessness.
- **Read** our [report](#): consider where your HA is on the journey to end evictions into homelessness from social housing; provide feedback on our tentative models for change.
- **Drive culture change** from the top / continue to drive such change.
- **Share with, and learn from, others** on the journey to end evictions into homelessness from social housing.

For more information

Ending Evictions into Homelessness Report (March 2021, hyperlinked within this slide set)

https://sheltercymru.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Working-together-to-end-homelessness-from-social-housing_Report-1.pdf

A second Ending Evictions in Homelessness Webinar (March 2021) will be uploaded to the Shelter Cymru website shortly.

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