



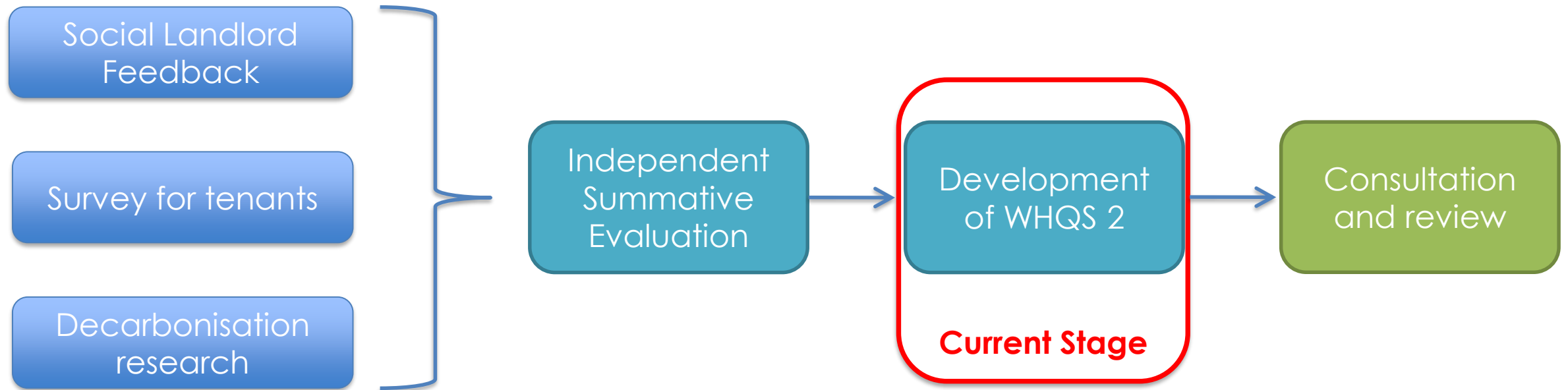
Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# **WHQS and Decarbonisation Update**

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

## WHQS 2 and Decarbonisation

# Progress and Plans



# WHQS 2 and Decarbonisation

## Progress up to Autumn 2020

### Social Landlord Feedback

- WG held a series of workshops with representation from all social landlords over May and June 2020.
- The aim was to listen to the practitioners and to benefit from their experience of working with the standard.
- We asked:
  - What works well
  - What should we add?
  - What could we take away or update?
  - Reporting
- These sessions were really well attended, really interesting and with great range of views and issues discussed.
- We captured 286 comments
- We summarised and presented this back to the participants in a joint session to give the opportunity to comment on whether we'd got it right.
- The hot topics were predictably decarb and reporting.
- But there was also a lot of really positive feedback about the successes of WHQS and all that it has delivered over its long history.
- We asked for volunteers to work with us and now have a Go-To group with a cross section of organisations in size, type and location.

### Tenant Survey

- WG ran a survey for tenants in Autumn 2020 aiming to
  - investigate tenants' views and knowledge of the WHQS;
  - Gain understanding about views on decarbonisation work to homes;
  - Explore how tenants views about their homes and surrounding environments were impacted by Covid-19
- Our Go-To group and TPAS Cymru helped us develop the survey and to distribute it to tenants (online only).
- Total of 1,016 responses
- Headlines:
  - 44% of survey respondents reported that they had not heard of the WHQS.
  - All of the seven WHQS criteria were rated by a large majority of respondents as being very important.
  - Most respondents agreed that their homes are meeting WHQS criteria
  - A large majority of respondents reported that they would be happy for work to be done in their home to improve fuel efficiency.
- The full report was issued on 28<sup>th</sup> January and can be accessed here: [Welsh Housing Quality Standard: tenants' survey | GOV.WALES](#)

### Decarbonisation Research

Independent Review on Decarbonising Welsh Homes:

<https://gov.wales/independent-review-decarbonising-welsh-homes-report>

WSA Report – Stage 1:

<https://gov.wales/decarbonising-welsh-homes-stage-1-report>

WSA Report – Stage 2:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-07/decarbonising-welsh-homes-stage-2-report.pdf>

WSA Report – stage 3:

<http://orca.cf.ac.uk/135187/>

## Independent Summative Evaluation

**Title:** Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS): Summative Evaluation

**Authors:** Three Dragons, Cyngor Da and Ulster University - Built Environment Research Institute (BERI)

**Link to full report:** [Summative evaluation of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard | GOV.WALES](#)

### Why was the report commissioned?

- WHQS has been around since 2002 but has never been formally evaluated by Welsh Government.
- A new standard is being developed now as the existing standard draws to a close.
- We wanted to learn the lessons from the first programme and take recommendations for WHQS

### What did we ask for?

The objectives for the research were:

1. Assess the extent to which the WHQS has been achieved;
2. Reflect the outputs of delivering the standard (including social, economic and well-being, as well as physical improvement to housing stock);
3. Apply the findings from the Summative Evaluation to producing recommendations for the development of the revised standard.

## WHQS 2 and Decarbonisation

# Headlines – WG Summary



**Has WHQS been achieved?:** Yes – the stats show us that the stock has improved significantly. WHQS is never ‘finished’ and we don’t have the most up to date stats due to Covid-19 but we’re nearly there.



### Outcomes:

- WHQS has provided much more than an improvement in assets – WHQS homes are healthier homes and the programme has provided training and employment in communities all across Wales.
- We need to make sure we capture the information to evidence this better next time round so WHQS can get the recognition it deserves.



### Recommendations:

- Tenants and social landlords agreed that WHQS includes the right areas.
- A two stage approach is suggested for decarbonisation and affordable warmth (the first stage focusing on planning and preparing before implementation in the second)
- Flooring and broadband were also mentioned specifically
- We also need to reassess how we measure and report data to allow our monitoring and support to be more data driven.

V2.0

### **RH Environmental Limited (RHE) WHQS2 and Technical Guidance**

- We have commissioned RHE to work with us to develop WHQS 2, the technical guidance and the statistical framework we need to measure progress.
- Engagement with the sector on the technical aspects of the standard is underway now.
- RHE will support us through the development of the standard and the consultation process.

### **Engagement and Consultation**

- There will be a 12 week consultation on WHQS2
- As well as the opportunity to formally respond to the consultation, we are planning engagement sessions to run during the consultation.
- Our aim is to raise the profile of WHQS2 and ensure we get a strong response to the consultation.
- It will also help us to gauge opinion, understand the responses better and provide information and explanation around the proposed changes.

### Challenges

- Lot to like in WHQS – not throwing the baby out with the bath water
- No-one's got an answer to decarb conundrum – it's a big judgement call
- Many headed beast
- Personnel – taking good counsel
- Timelines and sector capacity

### Optimised retrofit Programme

- It's the test and learn path way for WHQS. Its all about Proof of Concepts
- Funding wont be forever
- Government doing what its supposed to – pump priming and de risking
- Mainstreaming approaches is the goal like IHP
- We are in this together, and the vanguard of stepping up to the challenges of a global wicked problem

## Summary

- Its coming, steadily, but high quality flagship policy making is taking time. We will get there. In the meantime, engage with us as much as you can, shape and influence – we don't want to break you
- ORP 2 is coming and will be the test and learn pathway for WHQS in the longer term. Make the most of our money to help you get your approach right for you
- We will set out a timeline for the consultation asap, but until then business as usual, don't let us stop you doing, what you need to do



WHQS 2 and Decarbonisation

## For Discussion - Key Decisions

Decarbonisation

Flooring

Broadband

Environmentals

Prescriptive /  
interpretive

Dates and  
deadlines