



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Affordable Housing Supply Review: Standards and Modern Methods of Construction

Sarah Laing Gibbens

November 2018

Standards

Two meetings held.

Discussions around:

- Discussion about the impact building homes to higher standards and cost could have on the delivery of affordable homes.
- Discussion about extending standards to all homes in Wales using building regulations and planning powers to deliver.

Emerging Recommendations for consideration by Panel:

- General agreement that it is time to review and simplify standards - focussing on important issues of space, adaptability, security, etc
- Majority agreed that as there are no space standards in the Building Regulations that additional standards to Building Regulations are needed
- Suggestion that the findings of the last DQR review and the results of the following consultation could be used as a basis for developing revised standards
- Agreed on the need to get tenants views – higher standards may increase rents. May result in reduced energy bills that could be used to offset rent increases but is this important to tenants?
- Agreed we must set standards for social housing that includes the external environment to help foster pride and create communities

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Held two meetings to with a further one planned in December.

Discussions around: Increasing the scale and pace of new social and affordable house building in Wales in the next term of government. How can Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) support the Welsh supply chain to deliver wide benefits to the welsh economy and support job creation.

Emerging Recommendations for consideration by Panel:

- General positive tone about MMC and the opportunity it could deliver
- RSLs/LHAs are nervous about the risk of building with MMC and need it de-risked by WG. The legacy of previous MMC approaches to building are still in play with low quality homes and high maintenance costs
- Tenant's main concern are around using the most vulnerable groups to test untested technology. The term "guinea pigs" was used
- More appetite for collaboration models – JVs, consortia – but no mergers
- The development process end to end needs addressing, including ground works, supply chain, skills, planning policy, land readiness

Modern Methods of Construction

Emerging Recommendations for consideration by Panel cont:

- Appetite for standardisation in design, pattern books, and modernising our standards such as DQR and SbD

- The space the group wish WG to play in includes;
 - Innovative Housing Programme - de-risking and testing approaches
 - Developing rings of assurance, warranties and accreditation and lender confidence
 - Establishing standardised approaches with design and regional/national factory to drive volume
 - Support on procurement models which are high value rather than low cost and reflect whole life costs
 - Capital funding for factories and start up costs

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Dr Roisin Willmott OBE FRTPI

November 2018

Questions

1. 'Space' has come across strongly through the review as important to maintain in homes. If something similar to the current standards were maintained, what changes should be made?
2. MMC approaches need volume especially homes constructed using modular - how ready are we to embrace standard pattern books again in Wales?
3. With so many RSLs, LAs and private developers interested in delivering homes through MMC approaches, why are so few actually building this way and what's going to tip the balance?

