

# Sixth Senedd Legacy Report

April 2026



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# Sixth Senedd Legacy Report

April 2026



# About the Committee

The Committee was established on 23 June 2021. Its remit can be found at:  
[www.senedd.wales/SeneddHousing](http://www.senedd.wales/SeneddHousing)

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Current Committee membership:



**Committee Chair:  
John Griffiths MS**  
Welsh Labour



**Peter Fox MS**  
Welsh Conservatives



**Lesley Griffiths MS**  
Welsh Labour



**Siân Gwenllïan MS**  
Plaid Cymru



**Joel James MS**  
Welsh Conservatives



**Lee Waters MS**  
Welsh Labour

# Contents

<b>Chair’s foreword .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Conclusions and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2. Committee remit .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Legislative workload.....	11
Conclusions.....	12
<b>3. Working practices .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Formal committee business.....	13
Bilingual operation of committees.....	13
Engagement work .....	14
Committee timetabling .....	14
<b>4. Impactful outputs.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers.....	16
Building Safety (Wales) Bill.....	17
Diversity in Local Government.....	18
Community assets .....	18
Social housing supply .....	19
Second homes .....	20
Impactful citizen engagement.....	20
Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers.....	21
Community assets .....	21
Local authority leisure and library services .....	21
Housing support for vulnerable people.....	22

<b>5. Priorities for the Seventh Senedd.....</b>	<b>23</b>
Social housing supply .....	23
Standards of accommodation in rented housing .....	24
Decarbonisation of homes.....	25
Affordability of rented housing.....	25
Housing data .....	26
Leasehold and commonhold reform.....	27
Local government funding.....	28
Council tax reform .....	28
Digital Local Government.....	28
Post legislative scrutiny .....	29
Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024 .....	29
Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.....	29
Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Act 2026 .....	30
Building Safety (Wales) Bill.....	30
<b>Annex 1 : Committee work .....</b>	<b>32</b>
Policy work.....	32
Welsh Government Draft Budgets.....	32
Bill Scrutiny.....	33
Scrutiny of legislative consent memoranda.....	33

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## Chair's foreword

This legacy report is the culmination of the Local Government and Housing Committee's work over the last 5 years. It has been a privilege to Chair the Committee during this time and I am proud of the work we have done and the impact it has had on policy direction.

At the heart of our work has been our commitment to scrutinise policy and legislation with the aim of ensuring that people in Wales have a safe, secure place to call home and that local government is sustainable and supported to deliver for the communities they serve.

Our work would not have been possible without the dedication of the stakeholders and individuals who have engaged with us, their invaluable input has shaped our views and ensured the recommendations we've made were founded in the lived experience shared with us. I'm very grateful to everyone who has contributed to our work. The report highlights some of this work and the annex provides a complete list.

I want to put on record my appreciation and thanks to our dedicated committee clerks, researchers and entire team for all their commitment and work, without which the work of the Committee would not be possible.

Diolch yn fawr,

**John Griffiths MS**

Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

## Conclusions and Recommendations

**Conclusion 1.** We believe that our remit is well balanced and we have been able to effectively undertake scrutiny of a wide range of policy areas during this Senedd term. However, if additional committees are established in the Seventh Senedd, consideration could be given to separating local government and housing into distinct areas. ....Page 12

**Conclusion 2.** We believe that Senedd committees’ dual function of scrutinising both policy and legislation works well and advocate that this approach is maintained in the Seventh Senedd.....Page 12

**Conclusion 3.** We believe the hybrid model is an effective way of working. It has allowed Members to join remotely when needed which has also helped avoid quorum issues arising.....Page 13

**Conclusion 4.** We encourage the Senedd Commission to invest in new, user-friendly simultaneous translation technology. Ensuring a more seamless experience for Members and witnesses wishing to contribute in Welsh should be a priority for the next Commission to ensure equity across the use of both official languages in Senedd proceedings.....Page 14

**Conclusion 5.** We believe that regular ‘all-day’ slots for committees should be maintained in the Seventh Senedd.....Page 15

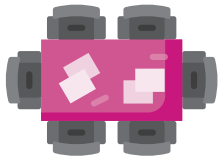
**Recommendation 1.** We strongly recommend that hybrid working should continue in the Seventh Senedd. It enables Members to attend remotely when needed, reducing the risk of meetings being inquorate, and facilitates participation from the widest possible range of contributors.....Page 13

**Recommendation 2.** We recommend that our successor committee continues our approach of engaging directly with citizens and undertakes off-site visits as part of its approach to evidence gathering.....Page 14

# 1. Introduction

- 1.** The Local Government and Housing Committee was established on 23 June 2021 to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising its expenditure, administration and policy matters, encompassing (but not restricted to), local government, communities, and housing.
- 2.** The Chair, John Griffiths MS, was elected on 29 June 2021 and has remained the Chair throughout this Senedd term. The wider membership was elected on 7 July 2021 and has changed throughout the course of the Senedd term.
- 3.** To inform the development of our strategy and work programme for the Sixth Senedd, we consulted stakeholders on what our priorities should be. Our consultation ran from 27 July 2021 to 17 September 2021 and we received 47 submissions.
- 4.** Following a strategic planning session where we considered the views of stakeholders, we agreed that our overarching priorities for the Sixth Senedd would be:
  - delivery and availability of appropriate housing; and
  - sustainability of local government in Wales.
- 5.** This report reflects the views of the current members of the Committee and gives an overview of our remit and ways of working during the Sixth Senedd. It highlights our most impactful areas of work, and suggests areas of priority for our successor committee in the Seventh Senedd.
- 6.** A full list of the work we have undertaken is included in **Annex 1**.

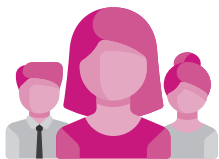
## The Committee in the Sixth Senedd



**HOW MANY FORMAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS WERE HELD?**

**110**

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**HOW MANY WITNESSES GAVE EVIDENCE TO THE COMMITTEE?**

**416**

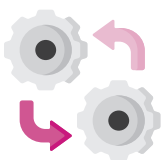
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**HOW MANY BILLS WERE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE?**

**4**

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**HOW MANY LEGISLATIVE CONSENT MEMORANDA (LCM) WERE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE?**

**13**

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**HOW MANY REPORTS WERE  
PRODUCED?**

**18**

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**HOW MANY DEBATES WERE HELD?**

**13**

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**HOW MANY INQUIRIES WERE  
UNDERTAKEN?**

**19**

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## 2. Committee remit

The Local Government and Housing Committee was set up by the Senedd to look at policy and legislation, and to hold the Welsh Government to account in specific areas. These areas include local government, communities, and housing.

**7.** At the start of the Sixth Senedd, our remit crossed two Ministerial portfolios – those of the then Minister for Climate Change and the then Minister for Finance and Local Government. Ministerial responsibility for housing and local government was subsequently brought together under one portfolio and most of our interactions with the Welsh Government since then have involved the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government. We found this made scrutiny of matters within our remit easier to facilitate, prompting us to consider whether committee remits should align with Ministerial portfolios in the Seventh Senedd. Although there may be some benefits to this, we recognise that directly aligning committee remits with ministerial portfolios would result in changes to remits if those portfolios change during the Senedd term. We have therefore concluded there would be little benefit in aligning new Committee remits with ministerial portfolios.

**8.** Overall, we believe that combining matters relating to local government and housing into one remit has worked well. However, we acknowledge that given our commitment to prioritise the scrutiny of delivery and availability of appropriate housing, there has been a strong emphasis on housing-related matters during the course of the term. We have, in particular, dedicated a significant amount of time to housing related matters during the latter half of the term, partly due to the timing of the introduction of two substantial pieces of legislation - the [Building Safety \(Wales\) Bill](#) and the [Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation \(Wales\) Act](#).

**9.** We have undertaken both policy and legislative work. We believe that the dual-function model works well. In particular, our policy work has enabled us to build expertise and thus be better informed when scrutinising related legislation. We have also scrutinised the Welsh Government's draft budget in relation to the policy areas within our remit for each year of this Senedd term.

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## Legislative workload

**10.** Our legislative scrutiny has included four pieces of primary legislation introduced by the Welsh Government:

- the [Elections and Elected Bodies \(Wales\) Act 2024](#);
- the [Local Government and Finance \(Wales\) Act 2024](#);
- the [Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation \(Wales\) Act 2026](#); and
- the [Building Safety \(Wales\) Bill](#).

**11.** While scrutinising four Bills over the course of the Senedd term has not been onerous, the timing of their introduction had a significant impact on our workload and ability to plan our forward work programme, as on two occasions, two Bills were referred to us within weeks of each other. In 2023, the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill (now Act) was referred to us on 26 September followed by the Local Government and Finance Bill (Wales) Bill (now Act) on 24 October. Similarly, in 2025 the referral of the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Bill (now Act) on 29 April was followed shortly afterwards by the Building Safety (Wales) Bill, which was referred on 17 June. This left little scope to undertake policy work during the scrutiny period of the Bills.

**12.** While legislative scrutiny is a core part of our work, we have no control over the timing of when Bills are introduced. This can make it difficult to manage our wider work programme and can limit the time available for policy scrutiny. We believe the Welsh Government should give greater consideration to the impact of its legislative programme on the wider work of committees, and in particular should avoid introducing Bills likely to be remitted to the same committee within close proximity to each other. Further consideration should be given to the implications for Senedd committees when setting time tables and deadlines for legislation to enable committees to incorporate policy inquiries alongside legislative commitments.

**13.** In addition to primary legislation, we have also considered [Legislative Consent Memoranda](#) (LCM) in relation to relevant UK Bills. A list of the LCMs referred to us can be found in **Annex 1** to this report. We have no control over the timing of LCM referrals, nor their reporting deadlines, some of which have been very tight which has significantly restricted our ability to conduct thorough scrutiny. There have been occasions where we have been unable to consider the memoranda and report within the specified timescales.

**14.** We believe that in the Seventh Senedd, the Welsh Government should ensure that the requirement under Standing Order 29 to lay a memorandum relating to a relevant UK Government Bill, normally no later than 2 weeks after its introduction, is adhered to. We strongly believe that sufficient time should be allocated for committees to conduct thorough, evidence-based scrutiny of LCMs and SLCMs.

## Conclusions

**Conclusion 1.** We believe that our remit is well balanced and we have been able to effectively undertake scrutiny of a wide range of policy areas during this Senedd term. However, if additional committees are established in the Seventh Senedd, consideration could be given to separating local government and housing into distinct areas.

**Conclusion 2.** We believe that Senedd committees' dual function of scrutinising both policy and legislation works well and advocate that this approach is maintained in the Seventh Senedd.

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## 3. Working practices

### Formal committee business

**15.** Throughout this Senedd term, we have adopted a hybrid working model for our formal committee meetings. The majority of our evidence gathering has taken place during formal committee meetings held in a hybrid format, with Members and witnesses able to attend either remotely via Zoom or in person.

**16.** Working in a hybrid format has provided greater flexibility to both Members and witnesses. In particular, it has enabled those with caring responsibilities, or those living a significant distance from the Senedd, to participate in a wider range of meetings. It has also allowed us to hear from a broader range of witnesses from across Wales who may be unable to travel to Cardiff Bay.

**17.** The general exception to meeting in hybrid format is participation at Stage 2 proceedings where, in line with the Llywydd's [Guidance on Virtual and Hybrid Proceedings](#), there is an expectation for all Members to attend in person. However, during Stage 2 of the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Bill and the Building Safety (Wales) Bill, the Chair agreed that a Member could participate virtually due to exceptional circumstances. We experienced some delays during voting on amendments to the Homelessness Bill which, at times, resulted in the Chair having to confirm with the Member participating remotely how they had voted. We therefore agree that virtual participation for Stage 2 proceedings should only be agreed to under exceptional cases.

**Conclusion 3.** We believe the hybrid model is an effective way of working. It has allowed Members to join remotely when needed which has also helped avoid quorum issues arising.

**Recommendation 1.** We strongly recommend that hybrid working should continue in the Seventh Senedd. It enables Members to attend remotely when needed, reducing the risk of meetings being inquorate, and facilitates participation from the widest possible range of contributors.

### Bilingual operation of committees

**18.** We are proud to have conducted our meetings bilingually throughout the Sixth Senedd, and have encouraged Members and witnesses to participate in their preferred language. It is crucial that all participants feel comfortable and confident in their contributions and being able to express themselves in their

preferred language is key to effective engagement. However, we believe that the current technology used for simultaneous translation creates a barrier to effective participation. Whilst the service provided by interpreters is exceptional, the use of outdated technology and, in particular, headsets does not always provide an equal experience, and can lead to Members and witnesses who wish to contribute in Welsh feeling at a disadvantage, making it more difficult to use their preferred language.

**Conclusion 4.** We encourage the Senedd Commission to invest in new, user-friendly simultaneous translation technology. Ensuring a more seamless experience for Members and witnesses wishing to contribute in Welsh should be a priority for the next Commission to ensure equity across the use of both official languages in Senedd proceedings.

## Engagement work

**19.** An important part of our work has been engaging with the citizens of Wales. In addition to formal evidence gathering, we have sought views informally from people who are less likely, or unable, to attend formal meetings. To support this, we allocated some meeting slots for informal visits, focus group discussions and stakeholder events, enabling us to meet organisations and individuals directly affected by the policy areas under scrutiny. Hearing the lived experience of people directly involved has been invaluable in getting a better understanding of the implications of policy areas. A notable example of this is our engagement with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, to inform our inquiry on the Provision of sites for those groups. Further details on this are outlined in paragraphs 52-55.

**20.** Off-site visits and engagements are a valuable way of getting a different insight to evidence gathering. We were unable to undertake as many visits and as we would have liked, largely due to legislative workload and availability.

**Recommendation 2.** We recommend that our successor committee continues our approach of engaging directly with citizens and undertakes off-site visits as part of its approach to evidence gathering.

## Committee timetabling

**21.** At the start of the Sixth Senedd, we were allocated a fortnightly meeting slot on a Wednesday morning, which did not provide sufficient time to undertake our work. We were particularly constrained by the need to conclude our business by

12.30 due to Plenary commitments and disadvantaged compared to committees allocated slots on a Thursday.

**22.** We consider the current structure of scheduled and reserve slots for Committee meetings has worked well. This approach has provided greater flexibility when planning our forward work programme. Having a monthly cycle with two ‘all day’ slots available to us on a Thursday has been crucial when undertaking work with tight deadlines, such as legislative and budget scrutiny. It has also enabled us to adopt a ‘one-day’ approach to some shorter inquiries and to participate in informal visits outside of Cardiff.

**Conclusion 5.** We believe that regular ‘all-day’ slots for committees should be maintained in the Seventh Senedd.

## 4. Impactful outputs

As part of our strategy for this Senedd, we committed to “listen, learn and persist” in order to make a difference to the delivery of local government and housing in Wales. We also committed to engage constructively with stakeholders and listen to their lived experiences and to hear directly from “unheard voices”.

**23.** We have undertaken a number of inquiries which we believe have had an impact on the direction of policy across our remit.

### Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers

**24.** Our 2022 [inquiry](#) explored the effectiveness of the current legislative and policy framework requiring local authorities to provide gypsy and traveller sites where needed.

**25.** The Senedd’s Citizen Engagement Team held a series of discussions with members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and coordinated visits for Committee Members to meet residents on traveller sites.

**26.** Our [report](#) highlighted a number of issues, including the unsuitability of locations for local authority sites and poor engagement with the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. We called on the Welsh Government to ensure local authorities deliver on their statutory duties to provide culturally suitable sites.

**27.** We also pressed the Welsh Government on the distribution of the Capital Sites Grant, with significant yearly underspend. This was an issue the Equality and Social Justice Committee was also concerned with, with both committees calling for action.

**28.** To maintain pressure on the Welsh Government, we held a [follow-up inquiry](#) in 2024 to monitor Welsh Government progress and actions.

**29.** Our follow-up inquiry looked for signs of progress that local authorities had developed new or existing sites. It also examined whether there had been improvements in how local authorities and the Welsh Government engaged with communities.

**30.** We found little progress had been made in meeting the accommodation needs of these communities, and that the Capital Sites Grant continued to be under-utilised. We were pleased to see that the Welsh Government implemented our original recommendation to broaden the Capital Sites Grant to allow local authorities to purchase land for the development of new sites. The Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip notified us in August 2024 that changes to the grant criteria had been made so that the funding could also be used to purchase land for sites.

### **Building Safety (Wales) Bill**

**31.** One issue we heard compelling evidence on from a range of stakeholders, including affected residents, was the need for legislative measures to address a lack of progress with remediation<sup>1</sup> work in Wales.

**32.** On the basis of the evidence we heard, our Stage 1 report made 27 recommendations aimed at strengthening the Bill. The Welsh Government brought forward various amendments at Stage 2 to reflect some of our recommendations. Such amendments included additional protections for residents against increased service charges to meet the costs of building safety work and a requirement to consult residents on the preparation of Resident Engagement Strategies.

**33.** On remediation, our recommendation calling for an urgent statement on measures to address slow progress by some developers and to accelerate the pace of remedial works was accepted, however a separate recommendation on legally enforceable deadlines and sanctions in respect of remediation was rejected. These recommendations led to amendments on remediation being tabled by Senedd Members at Stages 2 and 3, and to a commitment from the Cabinet Secretary to work with Members. The Welsh Government subsequently supported amendments at Stage 3 to provide for a legal route to force developers to complete remediation work identified as necessary and to protect against the passing on of the costs of such work to residents and leaseholders. These

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<sup>1</sup> The term remediation means work required to address internal and external fire safety risks, including, but not limited to, defective building materials such as cladding which were found to have allowed for the spread of the fire in Grenfell Tower.

amendments were agreed in Plenary on 3 March with the amended Bill passed unanimously on 10 March 2026.

## Diversity in Local Government

**34.** We undertook an inquiry into Diversity in Local Government, building on work by our predecessor Committee. The initial inquiry focused on diversity among local councillors, and identified an under-representation in local government of women, people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, LGBT people, young people and those with lower incomes.

**35.** Following this, and passing of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, we held a follow-up inquiry to assess the progress made in improving diversity in local government.

**36.** Our report welcomed progress in implementing some of the predecessor Committee's recommendations, including significant developments in remote attendance for local government members and the creation of an Access to Elected Office Fund. Our work demonstrated our commitment to highlighting the need for initiatives to support candidates with under-represented characteristics in standing for election and has contributed to action by the Welsh Government, notably the creation of a pilot Candidate Diversity Grant available to provide services supporting under-represented groups at the next Senedd and local government elections.

## Community assets

**37.** Our inquiry into community assets, focused on whether the current statutory and policy framework empowers communities in Wales to develop community assets. We also considered the extent to which the Community Asset Transfer scheme promotes and supports the effective development of community assets, explored the barriers and challenges faced by communities in taking ownership of publicly or privately owned community assets (including access to finance and support services), and examined what lessons could be learned from elsewhere in the UK.

**38.** Evidence was gathered through a combination of formal oral evidence sessions and community visits, during which Members heard directly from community groups about their first-hand experiences. This helped us to better understand both the benefits of community ownership and the challenges and barriers faced by communities.

- 39.** One of our recommendations was the establishment of a commission on community ownership of land and assets in Wales, which was taken forward. The Commission reported in March 2026 and recommended that community ownership be strengthened by implementing Community Right to Buy legislation.
- 40.** The support expressed by the current Welsh Government to introduce legislation is a credit to our work on this, in particular to the testimony shared with us by people with direct experience of the existing processes.

### **Social housing supply**

- 41.** Our 2024 inquiry into social housing supply focused on checking progress towards meeting the Welsh Government's target of 20,000 low carbon social homes for rent, the extent to which current and projected levels of social housebuilding were likely to meet housing need, the challenges faced by social landlords in increasing supply, and how housing standards and decarbonisation were affecting the delivery of new social housing.
- 42.** We published our report in November 2024, making 17 recommendations to the Welsh Government, with all but three accepted or accepted in principle.
- 43.** In October 2024, the Welsh Government set up an Affordable Housing Taskforce with a focus on practical support and action to unlock and advance housing developments. The Taskforce published its report and recommendations in May 2025.
- 44.** In early 2026, we conducted a follow-up inquiry on social housing supply to evaluate progress in implementing the recommendations from our initial inquiry, and those of the Taskforce.
- 45.** Whilst we found that some progress had been made and a good momentum has been achieved over the last year to reach the 20,000 homes target, we were concerned to hear that progress in implementing ours and the Taskforce recommendations has been slow.
- 46.** In addition, the majority of stakeholders emphasised that they believed the Welsh Government should reconsider adopting the three recommendations it had rejected in our initial inquiry – the creation of an arm's-length National Development Corporation to prioritise and give focus to the Welsh Government's social and affordable housing programme; developing a separate standard for acquisitions so that more existing homes can be brought into the social sector;

and the development of a workforce strategy to address capacity and skills issues in the construction sector.

**47.** We wrote to the Cabinet Secretary to highlight key issues that had emerged from our evidence and to ask for further information on certain matters. The Cabinet Secretary responded on 18 March 2026, and the following day, published a written statement outlining progress against all the recommendations of the Affordable Housing Taskforce.

## **Second homes**

**48.** Our first full policy inquiry of this term focused on second homes, specifically the recommendations made by Dr Simon Brooks in his report 'Second homes: developing new policies in Wales', and the Welsh Government's response to that report.

**49.** The evidence we gathered demonstrated that second homes are a contentious issue in many communities across Wales, with a particular impact in coastal and rural areas where there are higher concentrations of second homes. This, combined with the conversion of residential properties into short-term holiday accommodation and a shortage of affordable housing, has led to concerns about the sustainability of communities.

**50.** We published our report in June 2022, making 15 recommendations to the Welsh Government. These included recommendations that the Welsh Government should define second homes more clearly to distinguish between properties for personal use and short-term holiday lets. We also recommended that the Senedd be updated every six months on the progress of the Dwyfor pilot, including an assessment by the Welsh Government of the effectiveness of the measures and the basis for that assessment.

**51.** Our report's emphasis on transparency, better data and more consistent definitions informed subsequent action. New planning use classes clarified whether homes should be identified as residential or holiday lets, and the Welsh Government has reported regularly on the Dwyfor pilot. Our report helped to ensure the issue of second homes remained a priority during the Sixth Senedd.

## **Impactful citizen engagement**

**52.** As previously mentioned, engaging directly with citizens and hearing their experiences has been an important aspect of our evidence gathering.

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## Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers

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**53.** The Senedd's Citizen Engagement Team gathered the views of community members from five local authority and three private sites across Wales.

**54.** These communities often face obstacles that have historically limited their participation in formal engagement processes. To ensure people could contribute meaningfully, Members visited sites across Wales, held informal roundtable discussions at the Senedd and one-to-one depth interviews, creating accessible spaces for open conversation.

**55.** Contributors highlighted a range of issues, including planning challenges, strained relationships with local authorities, site conditions and location, and the importance of cultural awareness.

**56.** These insights played a key role in shaping our report and recommendations to the Welsh Government, and informed a follow-up focus group at the Senedd in December 2024, with many of the same community members.

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## Community assets

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**57.** We visited a number of enterprises and communities as part of our inquiry into community assets. These visits enabled us to hear directly from those involved in running community projects and working to ensure that local communities have access to facilities such as community centres, leisure centres, libraries and pubs. We found it particularly valuable to hear first-hand about these experiences, and the evidence gathered during these visits helped us to better understand both the benefits of community ownership and the challenges and barriers faced by communities.

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## Local authority leisure and library services

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**58.** We met with key staff and service users across library and leisure services throughout Wales to better understand how these facilities operate within their communities. By engaging directly with staff and people who use and deliver these services, Members gained valuable insight into how local models operate on a day-to-day basis.

**59.** Through visits to a range of services including Deeside Leisure Centre, Plas Madoc Leisure Centre, Gresford and District Community Library, Newport Live, Neath Leisure Centre and Sarn Library, we explored the benefits these centres bring to their local areas. These conversations also helped identify the challenges

facing staff and users alike, offering a clearer picture of what supports participation and what may limit it.

**60.** The views shared during this engagement shaped our thinking from the outset of the inquiry. They provided a strong foundation for evidence sessions and played a central role in informing our recommendations to the Welsh Government. This direct engagement ensured our work was influenced by real experiences and responsive to the needs of communities across Wales.

### **Housing support for vulnerable people**

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**61.** During our inquiry, engagement with people accessing housing services and frontline staff responsible for delivering those services, played a crucial role in shaping our understanding of housing support for vulnerable people.

**62.** The programme of engagement involved 118 contributors across all five Senedd regions. Views were gathered from people with varying needs and housing circumstances and were supplemented by experiences gathered from frontline housing staff working in a range of settings across Wales.

**63.** The views shared highlighted the practical realities faced by the housing support workforce and those they support. The overwhelming demand on housing services; the growing complexities in the needs of those accessing housing services and the impact on housing staff who were often making life or death decisions under enormous pressure, were key themes.

**64.** Engaging directly with people who have lived experience helped us better understand the real-world impact of housing support and demonstrated the significant value participants brought to the inquiry.

*“Thank you to everyone for sharing such important insights. Thank you for organising such an important event, to ensure staff can amplify their concerns and be heard by decision makers...”*

*“Thank you for involving us in the discussion. Support workers have valuable information to share and not much of an audience to share it with. Thank you.”*

## 5. Priorities for the Seventh Senedd

There are a number of policy issues within both Housing and Local Government which we believe would benefit from scrutiny in the next Senedd, including post-legislative scrutiny work.

### Social housing supply

**65.** Our [follow up inquiry on social housing supply](#) assessed progress made in implementing the recommendations from our initial inquiry and the recommendations of the [Affordable Housing Taskforce](#).

**66.** The delivery of social housing remains in crisis and progress in implementing recommendations has been slow. On 4 March 2026, we [wrote](#) to the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government to outline our concerns and request further information on a range of matters. On 18 March, the Cabinet Secretary [responded](#) to the questions we raised. In our letter we also called for an update on progress made against each of the Affordable Housing Taskforce recommendations before the end of this Senedd term, and the Cabinet Secretary issued a [written statement](#) on this on 19 March.

**67.** We note the response provided to our questions and welcome that some progress has been made, however, we recommend that our successor committee continue to keep under review the Welsh Government's progress in implementing both ours and the Taskforce's recommendations to ensure that people's housing needs are being met. This should include reviewing:

- whether the 20,000 target for new, low carbon homes for social rent has been met by the revised projection of December 2026;
- steps being taken to ensure the housing emergency is a shared, cross-cutting priority across government so that policies in areas such as the environment and decarbonisation are aligned with housing;
- steps being taken to address the current barriers to housebuilding in some parts of Wales due to the National Resources Wales guidance on marine nitrates;

- progress in increasing social housing so that it comprises at least 20 per cent of total housing stock (currently it is 16 per cent);
- progress in making more public land available for social housing, whether via a National Development Corporation or the Welsh Government's in-house Place Division;
- local planning authorities' progress in updating their Local Development Plans (LDPs), in particular the 11 out of 25 LDPs that we heard are either expired or not in place; and
- whether housing standards, for example covering energy efficiency and minimum floor space, should be revised to increase supply.

## Standards of accommodation in rented housing

**68.** There has been a renewed focus on housing quality and disrepair across the UK in recent years, and a growing awareness of the need to properly address damp and mould issues following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in 2020. In March 2026, we conducted a one-day inquiry exploring the issue of hazardous disrepair in social housing.

**69.** We focused on the Welsh Government's decision to introduce a new rule within the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), requiring social landlords to investigate and remediate certain hazards within specific timescales. We welcomed the improved transparency and accountability that the change aims to bring about, and the requirement for better data collection. However, given the short timescales for implementation, we concluded that there would be a need to monitor and review the new WHQS rule as it is rolled out to ensure it is achieving the desired outcomes, and that there are no unintended consequences.

**70.** Although it was not the focus of our inquiry, we also heard concerns about poor housing standards in the private rented sector. Witnesses told us that overall housing quality is lower in the private rented sector and that much of the enforcement action taken by local authority environmental health teams relates to private rented homes. During our inquiry, Welsh Government officials told us that housing standards within the private rented sector was "*an area of interest*"<sup>2</sup> for the future, and that there was an opportunity to explore whether aspects of the WHQS rule might be applied to the private rented sector in future.

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<sup>2</sup> Local Government and Housing Committee, 5 March 2026, RoP paragraph 484

**71.** The lack of recent action on standards in the private rented sector in Wales stands in contrast to developments in England. The UK Government is seeking to drive improvements through the development of the Decent Homes Standard and by requiring private landlords to make repairs within specified timescales. Under the Renters Rights Act 2025, private tenants will benefit from improved security of tenure and will soon have access to an Ombudsman scheme to resolve complaints. There will also be a new requirement for private rented homes to achieve EPC C energy efficiency standards by 2030, which will apply across England and Wales.

**72.** Our successor committee may wish to consider exploring ways to improve housing quality in the private rented sector in Wales, and to scrutinise the implementation of the new WHQS rule for social housing.

### **Decarbonisation of homes**

**73.** To achieve its legally binding target to reach net zero by 2050, future Welsh Governments will need to make significant reductions in carbon emissions from homes and buildings. The retrofit of existing homes presents an important opportunity to improve housing conditions and tackle fuel poverty.

**74.** Whilst the focus to date in Wales has largely been on the retrofit of social homes, there have been calls for a long-term strategy for decarbonising housing across tenures. There are opportunities to build on recent actions taken by the UK Government, including the publication of a new Warm Homes Plan and the consequential funding provided to Wales as a result.

**75.** Our successor Committee may wish to scrutinise how a future Welsh Government is planning for the decarbonisation of housing, and how these plans align with work to tackle fuel poverty and improve housing conditions.

### **Affordability of rented housing**

**76.** As well as the provisions mentioned above, the Renters Rights Act 2025 also creates additional protections from above-market rent increases for private tenants in England. These new protections will not be available to tenants in Wales. The affordability of private rents was a theme in our 2023 inquiry on the private rented sector, during which we heard strong views for and against rent regulation. The Welsh Government's 2024 White Paper on adequate housing, fair rents and affordability explored options for rent regulation and while no new

Welsh Government proposals have come forward so far, we believe this issue is likely to keep arising.

**77.** Affordability in relation to social rents was raised during our 2026 follow-up inquiry on social housing supply. Witnesses discussed the challenges in balancing affordability for current and future tenants with the financial sustainability of social landlords and their capacity to deliver new homes. While the Welsh Government's recent 10-year rent settlement was broadly welcomed, some questioned how sustainable the settlement could be for tenants facing above-inflation rent rises year on year. We also heard that the Welsh Government is giving consideration to rent convergence. This was welcomed by social landlords as an opportunity to build fairness and consistency, while tenant representatives voiced concern that convergence could affect some tenants' ability to afford their rent. The Welsh Government is also in the process of developing an affordability framework. The issue of social rent affordability may be one that the next Committee decides to consider in more depth.

## Housing data

**78.** A lack of robust and up-to-date data on housing has been a cross-cutting theme in our housing inquiry work. Witnesses have repeatedly highlighted to us that Wales lacks data on aspects of housing that are published for other UK nations. This makes it harder to identify the extent of housing problems and to track the impact of Welsh Government policies. Examples of gaps highlighted by stakeholders have included data on social housing allocations; the size of the private rented sector; the demographics of social tenants; people's housing aspirations; and the current condition of the housing stock, with the most recent [housing conditions survey](#) having been carried out nearly ten years ago.

**79.** The Welsh Government has committed to carry out a Welsh housing survey, which will include a physical conditions survey and an interview-based survey of people's experiences with housing. Fieldwork is due to be carried out in 2027-28 with headline results available from 2028-29, and more detailed findings from 2029-30. These results are likely to indicate further areas of interest for Committee scrutiny.

**80.** Accurate data on housing need is vital to guide local authorities' development plans. The Welsh Government has recently [published](#) revised housing need estimates which give a bracket of 7,800 to 9,300 additional homes being needed every year to June 2030, with around 35 per cent being for affordable homes, plus a backlog of unmet need estimated at a further 9,400

affordable homes. We have raised concerns that these figures are an underestimate of true housing need.

**81.** Housing need data is particularly important in relation to homelessness. We have heard that local authorities are taking better account of homelessness data in their Local Housing Market Assessments (LHMAs), but we have also heard that there are weaknesses in Welsh homelessness data compared to other UK nations. The Welsh Government has said it intends to move to a new system of individual level data collection to improve the data picture. It is also in the process of implementing an Ending Homelessness Outcomes Framework which includes 44 data indicators to measure progress. Whilst we recognise that the Welsh Government's revised approach to LHMAs is an improvement, we believe further changes are needed to ensure that local authorities have a full picture of housing need in their areas.

**82.** The next Committee may be interested to scrutinise the Welsh Government's progress in gathering and making best use of housing data including on housing need, homelessness, housing standards, social housing allocations, and other areas.

### **Leasehold and commonhold reform**

**83.** The UK Government is in the process of implementing measures in the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024 with the aim of improving consumer choice and fairness for leaseholders. It also intends to introduce a draft Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Bill with the aim of bringing leasehold to an end, and making commonhold the default tenure for blocks of flats.

**84.** The Welsh Government has been working jointly with the UK Government on legislation to reform leasehold, and on the development of the draft Bill. Ministers had previously stated that doing so would be "*more expedient*" given the complexity of existing leasehold legislation. The Law Commission has stated that the extent of Welsh devolution in relation to leasehold and commonhold is "*unclear*" as, although housing is devolved, there are limits on the extent to which the Senedd can modify property law.

**85.** The UK Government has said it is likely the draft Bill will engage the convention on legislative consent. The draft Bill will be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny before the final version is introduced to the UK Parliament.

**86.** We believe our successor committee could consider exploring measures that could be taken in Wales to address problems faced by leaseholders.

## Local government funding

**87.** The local government funding formula has long been a topic of debate and a perennial theme in draft budget scrutiny. The formula is used to distribute funding to Welsh local authorities. While there is growing demand from some quarters to undertake a wider review of the formula and the data used, such a review has not been undertaken.

**88.** Some political parties have already made commitments to review the funding formula for local government if they are in power, seeking funding fairness for all parts of Wales. Our successor committee may wish to monitor developments in this area, and scrutinise a future Welsh Government if such a review was undertaken.

## Council tax reform

**89.** The Local Government Finance (Wales) Act 2024 set in motion a full Council Tax revaluation of all domestic properties in Wales in 2028, three years later than originally planned. It will be a matter for the next Welsh Government to decide whether to proceed with the revaluation, but would require a change in the law for that to happen. The last revaluation was undertaken almost a quarter of a century ago in 2003.

**90.** A revaluation is considered the minimum option for council tax reform, and the previous Welsh Government had set out options for wider reform of the system. Whether the next administration decides to continue on either path, the successor committee may wish to closely scrutinise policy and legislative developments.

## Digital Local Government

**91.** Local government transformation and innovation is no longer an optional, but a necessity. Digital provides local authorities with opportunities to re-design services around user needs, making systems more responsive and sustainable for their residents, and provide efficiencies and resource savings in the process. Our work on Digital Local Government found a disconnect between delivery of national digital priorities and current local government service priorities. There was also an absence of leadership and understanding of digital within some local authorities, and that there is a need for stronger buy-in around digital at both senior management and political levels.

**92.** There are several examples of innovative digital solutions being developed and deployed by local government in Wales, but a severe shortage of digital skills, which has been exacerbated by limited budgets and competition from the private sector, is hampering progress. Our successor committee may wish to monitor local government progress on its digital agenda, along with Welsh Government delivery of a national digital strategy.

### **Post legislative scrutiny**

**93.** There are several pieces of legislation pertaining to both housing and local government which we believe would benefit from post legislative scrutiny in the Seventh Senedd. Our successor committee may wish to consider reviewing progress in implementing the provisions within the Acts listed below.

#### **Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act 2024**

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**94.** The [Elections and Elected Bodies \(Wales\) Act](#) brought about changes to electoral administration and registration for Welsh elections among other matters. One key development was the automatic registration of local government electors. This enables Electoral Registration Officers to add eligible electors to the local government register in Wales without the individual needing to submit an application.

**95.** The Act also makes provision for Welsh Ministers, by regulations, to provide for a scheme of financial assistance to help candidates in a Welsh election having specified characteristics or specified circumstances overcome barriers to their participation in the election.

**96.** A successor committee may wish to scrutinise implementation of provisions in the Act by the next Welsh Government and monitor its effectiveness and impact in promoting local democracy.

#### **Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016**

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**97.** The [Renting Homes \(Wales\) Act 2016](#) received Royal Assent on 18 January 2016.

**98.** The Act was fully implemented on 1 December 2022. It is subject to an ongoing Welsh Government evaluation, currently in its third phase, but has not been subject to post-legislative scrutiny by this Committee.

**99.** The impact of the legislation has been raised by stakeholders in several of our inquiries, including on the private rented sector, homelessness, and housing support for vulnerable people. The Renters’ Rights Act 2025 brings further divergence in tenancy legislation between England and Wales, which may call into question the suitability of the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016’s provisions for Wales’s changing rented sector.

### **Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Act 2026**

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**100.** The Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Act received Royal Assent on 1 April 2026.

**101.** The Welsh Government has not yet published a detailed implementation timeline but is assuming a ten-year implementation timeline, with the prevention aspects of the Act implemented first, followed by the ‘ask and act’ duties on public bodies, and ending the priority need and intentionality tests later on.

**102.** The legislation places a duty on the Welsh Government to review the operation and effect of the Act, and publish a report within four years of the Act coming fully into force. The legislation also introduces a rolling requirement for progress reports, with a report required by 31 December 2028, a further report by 31 December 2029, and then every two years until the Act is fully commenced.

**103.** On 13 March 2026, homelessness charity Crisis asked to recommend that our successor Committee maintains a focus on “reviewing progress with implementation and ensuring the legislation delivers the greatest possible impact”.

### **Building Safety (Wales) Bill**

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**104.** The Building Safety (Wales) Bill is currently at Post Stage 4.

**105.** A detailed implementation timeline has not yet been published. The Welsh Government’s Explanatory Memorandum states that implementation will begin in 2027, approximately one year after Royal Assent. The Cabinet Secretary told us that registration of Category 1 buildings will come first, with registration of Category 2 buildings and most of Category 3 buildings coming during 2028<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Local Government and Housing Committee, 22 October 2025, RoP paragraph 10

**106.** The Welsh Government has committed<sup>4</sup> to a post-implementation evaluation beginning approximately three years after implementation begins, which will be approximately four years after Royal Assent.

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<sup>4</sup> Building Safety (Wales) Bill - Revised Explanatory Memorandum, 24 February 2026, [Chapter 11](#), page 161

## Annex 1: Committee work

### Policy work

<b>Inquiry</b>	<b>Date</b>
<a href="#">Second Homes</a>	October 2022
<a href="#">Corporate Joint Committees</a>	October 2022
<a href="#">Provision of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers</a> <a href="#">Follow-up inquiry</a>	November 2022 May 2025
<a href="#">Council Tax Reform</a>	December 2022
<a href="#">Community Assets</a>	January 2023
<a href="#">Housing Ukrainian Refugees</a>	March 2023
<a href="#">Building Safety</a>	March 2023
<a href="#">Homelessness</a>	May 2023
<a href="#">The Right to Adequate Housing</a>	May 2023
<a href="#">Local Authority Leisure and Library Services</a>	October 2023
<a href="#">Diversity in Local Government</a>	February 2024
<a href="#">Private Rented Sector</a>	January 2025
<a href="#">Social Housing Supply</a> <a href="#">Follow-up inquiry</a>	February 2025 March 2026
<a href="#">Inquiry into the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector</a>	May 2025
<a href="#">Housing support for vulnerable people</a>	October 2025
<a href="#">The role of local authorities in supporting hospital discharges</a>	November 2025
<a href="#">Digital local government</a>	November 2025
<a href="#">Hazardous disrepair in social housing</a>	March 2026

### Welsh Government Draft Budgets

<b>Inquiry</b>	<b>Date</b>
<a href="#">Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022-23</a>	March 2022
<a href="#">Welsh Government Draft Budget 2023-24</a>	March 2023

<b>Inquiry</b>	<b>Date</b>
<a href="#">Welsh Government Draft Budget 2024-25</a>	March 2024
<a href="#">Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26</a>	March 2025
<a href="#">Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27</a>	January 2026

## Bill Scrutiny

[Elections and Elected Bodies \(Wales\) Act 2024](#)

[Local Government Finance \(Wales\) Act 2024](#)

[Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation \(Wales\) Act 2026](#)

[Building Safety \(Wales\) Bill](#)

## Scrutiny of legislative consent memoranda

<b>LCM</b>	<b>Date</b>
<a href="#">Elections Bill</a>	3 December 2021
<a href="#">Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Bill</a>	13 December 2021
<a href="#">Building Safety Bill</a>	29 March 2022
<a href="#">Social Housing (Regulation) Bill</a>	13 January 2023
<a href="#">Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill</a>	13 February 2023
<a href="#">Non-Domestic Rating Bill</a>	22 June 2023
<a href="#">Renters (Reform) Bill</a>	10 May 2024
<a href="#">Leasehold and Freehold Reform Bill</a>	15 May 2024
<a href="#">Renters' Rights Bill</a>	7 January 2025
<a href="#">Pension Schemes Bill</a>	25 September 2025