

Housing pact between Welsh Government, CHC and WLGA

The housing sector in Wales has been one of the most successful partnerships of public, private and third sectors across the UK in recent years. We aim to continue to deliver on the objectives we share – by creating and investing in communities meeting people’s housing needs, making a positive difference to their lives and helping to give children the best possible start in life. Increasing the supply of rural and urban affordable housing is a vital part of this, as is meeting and maintaining Welsh Housing Quality Standards. To achieve our mutual goals, the Welsh Government, housing associations and local authorities must continue to work in partnership and ensure we encourage an environment in which we can thrive and deliver.

As a sector, we are committed to operating efficiently and effectively, making the best use of public funds and offering the best value possible for tenants and for our lenders and funders. The pact is an opportunity to create an even stronger working relationship which sets Wales apart as a country that is committed to social housing.

Whilst the Pact is not a legally binding document, it demonstrates the parties’ clear intention to create an even stronger working relationship.

Key outcomes:

- Deliver 13,500 additional units of affordable housing in this Assembly term which contribute to the target of 20,000 affordable homes.
- To help tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions in homes.
- Work together to support the innovative development and delivery of new models of affordable housing that meet current demands and also the needs of the future.
- Create up to 12,500 training and employment opportunities, including jobs and apprenticeships and offer skills development and support to 25,000 tenants.
- Continue to mitigate the impact of ongoing welfare reforms, and invest further to prepare tenants for Universal Credit.
- Effective co-operation with key partners to prevent homelessness, and reduced use of B&B accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers.
- Work together to create safe and resilient communities and improve help for victims of anti social behaviour and domestic abuse.
- Contributing to the preventative health agenda through developing housing, support and social care solutions.

Key enablers:

- Ensure that the sustainable rent policy is in place for the next 5 years to remove the potential uncertainty about developing new homes.
- Continued commitment to investing in affordable housing through sufficient Social Housing Grant capital funding, regeneration grant and support for innovative finance schemes such as Housing Finance Grant to enable the target to be achieved.
- Support housing development across all markets and geographies, including urban areas and through a continuation of funding for Rural Housing Enablers and support for Co-operative housing.
- Act swiftly and decisively to ensure the independence of the housing association sector is maintained.
- Engage with UK government on requesting the removal of the borrowing cap for Local Authorities.
- Maximise the HRA borrowing cap by ensuring flexibility in redistribution and lending arrangements between Local Housing Authorities.
- Prioritise creative use of land and seek the release of land owned by the Welsh Government and others for housing.
- Encourage swift development of sites allocated in Development Plans to prevent longer term land banking.
- Lever in as much additional housing as viable through adopted planning processes and investigate planning mechanisms to de-risk sites.
- Funding to prevent homelessness and to support people to live independently and with dignity.