



November 2023

Dear Chancellor of the Exchequer,

I write to you as Chair of Homes for all Cymru, an alliance of organisations in Wales, all of which are dedicated to ensuring everyone has a place to call home.

We have long been concerned about the impact of the static local housing allowance rates on the availability of homes in the private rented sector which are affordable for low income households.

This letter follows previous correspondence from Homes for All Cymru to the relevant Secretaries of State in March this year following the publication of statistics from the Bevan Foundationⁱ.

New data analysis by Crisisⁱⁱ and property website Zoopla demonstrate that the scale and impact of this issue continues to be a considerable homelessness threat for many households across Wales.

The statistics show that over the last financial year, only 2% of rental homes on the market in Wales were advertised within housing benefit rates. They also show that across the country, households on the lowest incomes and in receipt of housing benefit are left struggling to scrape together between £1,555 and £3,013 just to keep up with their rental payments each year. It should be remembered that many of these household may be working, but needing financial support towards their housing costs.

The situation is even worse in Welsh cities, where families on the lowest incomes are facing impossibly difficult situations as they try to find £4,269 above and beyond housing benefit to bridge the gap between benefits and the real renting costs of a three-bed urban home.

Homes for all Cymru alliance brings together a wide and varied range of organisations. Its formal members are third sector support and advice providers, campaigning charities and/or housing providers; and relevant umbrella and professional bodies. However, bodies representing the interests of the 'for profit' housing sector also play a role in the alliance. Across this diverse alliance there is a widely shared concern that housing benefit is failing to give people the support they need to keep a roof over their head and is contributing towards homelessness in Wales.

As the Autumn Statement approaches, we strongly urge you to reset housing benefit and protect households on the lowest incomes from homelessness this winter.

Yours Sincerely,

Ruth Power

Chair, Homes for all Cymru

Homes for all Cymru who have confirmed their support to reset housing benefit levels include:

Care and Repair Cymru

Community Housing Cymru

Country Land and Business Association

Crisis

Cymorth Cymru

End Youth Homelessness Cymru

EYST (Ethnic Minorities and Youth Support Team)

Llamau

National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) Wales

Propertymark

Shelter Cymru

Tai Pawb

The Bevan Foundation

The Wallich

Welsh Refugee Council

ⁱ <https://www.bevanfoundation.org/news/2023/03/calls-lha-uplift/>

ⁱⁱ <https://www.crisis.org.uk/about-us/media-centre/charity-calls-for-an-end-to-housing-benefit-freeze-this-winter-as-shocking-new-statistics-unveiled/>