



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE	Publication of the updated Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness 2015
DATE	28 April 2015
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The Code of Guidance for Local Authorities on the Allocation of Accommodation and Homelessness is a key element of the Welsh Government's work to prevent homelessness and to help people in housing need. It is a substantial reference source of advice, information and guidance for Local Authorities and others.

The Code is issued by the Welsh Ministers. Local Authorities must have regard to the Code when exercising their functions in connection with allocating accommodation under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 and dealing with homelessness under Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. The Code is relevant to all Registered Social Landlords because they have a duty to co-operate with Local Authorities to help them achieve their obligations to people in housing need.

The Code has been updated in light of the new legislation introduced by the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and it emphasises the need for partnership working between Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords and the voluntary sector in meeting the housing needs of the communities in which they operate. Part 2 of the Code has been redrafted to set out in detail the new responsibilities to help prevent homelessness and secure housing for homeless people, within a more inclusive and person-centred approach. It describes the reasonable steps Local Authorities are expected to take, and how they can use all available resources, including the private rented sector, to find housing solutions for people.

The Code includes substantial amendments to reflect the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 2014 and the new Transforming Rehabilitation arrangements, which come into effect at a similar time to the new homelessness legislation. The change to priority need and the application of the new duties to prisoners, including the continuing work on developing a pathway for all prisoners to prevent homelessness, are described in full.

The updated Code provides new chapters on eligibility for social housing and homelessness assistance which aligns Welsh Guidance with EU and Immigration law. It also refers to the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and points out the need to update policies on eligibility and eviction on the basis of the new 'absolute' possession grounds for anti-social behaviour. Substantial changes have been made to incorporate principles underpinning the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015 and its framework for addressing the issue of domestic abuse. The Code also provides an update in relation to Care Leavers and Carers with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 in mind. The updated Code also places a greater emphasis on the prevalence of mental health issues and the effect of this on maintaining a tenancy.

The Code has been updated through extensive engagement with stakeholders including Local Authorities and voluntary sector organisations, including a public consultation on a draft revised Code between 26 January 2015 and 23 March 2015. I am grateful to the representatives of Local Authorities and many other organisations who have taken the time to contribute to the updated Code of Guidance. The Code is a web-based document, which will facilitate regular review of its content and further updating to reflect the implementation of our new homelessness legislation, which will do much more to prevent homelessness in the first place and provide better support to those who become homeless.

The Consultation Report can be found at the attached link:

<http://gov.wales/consultations/housing-and-regeneration/code-of-guidance-to-local-authorities-on-the-allocation-of-accommodation-and-homelessness/?status=closed&lang=en>

The Code of Guidance can be found at the attached link:

<http://gov.wales/topics/housing-and-regeneration/services-and-support/managing-social-housing/allocate/?lang=en>