

Cllr Mary McGarry
Cardiff Council
Chair of the Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee

Your Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/Cllr McGarry

20 November 2018

Dear Cllr McGarry

Re: Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee – 10 October Equality and Human Rights Toolkit for Councillors on Accessible Housing

I am writing in response to your letter of 15 October and the questions raised by Committee Members.

First, I would like to thank you for the invitation to speak with the Committee. We were pleased to present the Commission's work on Housing and Disabled People and to share with the Committee the toolkit for Councillors that we developed in partnership with Tai Pawb. The toolkit is published and can be found at the following link on our website. I would be grateful if you could share with your colleague on the Scrutiny Committee.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/housing-and-disabled-people-toolkit-local-authorities-wales>

Please find below our response to the two queries raised by Committee Members.

In response to the query on the objectiveness of the reports data. Our report cites evidence from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) that 26% of people in Wales identify themselves as disabled. The ONS is considered a reliable source for evidence, and is it standard practice in such data collection for respondents to self-identify their characteristics (such as whether they consider themselves disabled).

In order to effectively plan housing and housing service provision, local authorities should have an understanding of disabled people living in their area, and data on the proportion of people living locally who identify as disabled would be one part of this picture.

Bydd y Comisiwn yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg.

The Commission welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English.

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We found that 20% of local authorities in Wales consider the availability and usefulness of their disability data to be poor. Our toolkit for local authorities recommends using multiple sources of data to estimate the likely need for accessible housing, for example, population estimates alongside interviews with sample households, statistics on Blue Badge holders or other relevant local schemes, the local rate of disability-related benefits uptake, and data from local health and social care services.

In relation to the query on the extent of engagement on the toolkit. I can confirm that in development of the toolkit we engaged with a wide range of groups and professionals including:

- 134 responses to an online survey including Elected Members, Occupational Therapists and Housing professionals
- 17 interviews including Local Authority and Housing Association Officers; Occupational Therapist; Welsh Local Government, Wales Audit Office, Welsh Government Officials
- Conducted a Focus Group with 4 different disability groups represented, one Local Authority Access Officer and one Access Group representative
- Engagement with the Cardiff Council Community and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
- Consulted with a disabled social housing tenants network

I hope you find that information useful. We would be pleased to answer any further questions the Committee has and would be happy to continue our engagement.

Yours sincerely,

Geraint Rees

Senior Associate, Wales

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