



Presentation for
Communities and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
2nd March 2016

Housing (Wales) Act & Use of the Private Rented Sector

Housing (Wales) Act



- Effective from 28.04.2015
- Major change in homeless legislation
- Applies only in Wales
- Delays in receiving guidance from WAG
- England are closely following impact

Housing (Wales) Act



- Changes focus and responsibilities for both staff and applicants in housing need
- Create all new procedures and processes
- Staff have had to be trained (and retrained) on the new duties
- Resource intensive change
- Managing clients expectation

Housing (Wales) Act



- Grant funding from WAG
- Remodelled existing Housing Options Service
- Created 'Housing Solutions' brand
- Team of dedicated Prevention Officers & Assistants



Housing Wales Act Main Duties



- **Advice and Assistance**

Duty to provide advice and assistance to all clients including those not eligible i.e. persons from abroad



- **Duty to Prevent**

Minimum of 56 days to work with the client to try and prevent homelessness or secure alternative accommodation. There is no time limit on how long prevention work can be carried out. This rule is priority status neutral.



- **Duty to provide interim accommodation**

Interim accommodation for those who are homeless pending completion of enquiries for those with priority need.



- **Duty to Help to Secure**

Working with client for 56 days with a personalised action plan to help secure accommodation in the private rented sector. Plan clearly sets out expectation from client . This rule is priority status neutral.



- **Final duty – local authority must secure accommodation**

Discharging duty into either private or social housing for those in priority need.



Housing Wales Act Main Duties



Use of the Private Rented Sector



- Consulted with private landlords
- Listened to their feedback
- Identified barriers for landlords in housing clients with housing need
- Created a offer to landlords
- Early days, soft launch, but still challenging

Performance since April 2015



3373 Customers to date

328 no duty accepted

- 277 Young People via Basement partnership with Childrens Services & Llamau

528 assisted with duty to prevent

- 61% of which have had a successful outcome

1331 accepted a duty to help to secure

- 94 housed in Private Rented Sector with assistance of bond/rent in advance

392 final duty to secure

- 1 housed in Private Rented Sector with assistance of bond/rent in advance



Housing (Wales) Act

Since 28.04.2015

- 95 homeless clients housed in PRS
- 378 homeless clients housed in social housing

Private Rented Sector tenancies make up 20% of all homeless clients housed to date this year.

Focus will be on increasing this in the coming year.

Case Study



- Housing Options liaised with private landlord
- 6 bed house in multiple occupation made available
- Agreed LHA rate rents with landlord & carried out visit with PSH. Works identified and agreed to be carried out
- Work carried out checked
- Matched 6 tenants and carried out viewing
- Tenancies signed, tenants move in and house induction meeting.
- Ongoing communication with all parties.
- Successful outcome

Housing Solutions Package



- Property inspection
- Tenant matching service
- Financial incentives – bond, rent in advance, access to grants
- Fast track Housing Benefit
- Payment direct to landlord
- Support to landlords and tenants
- Mediation if required
- One point of access to a range of council services
- Dedicated telephone and email address



Housing Solutions Launch

- Official launch 22nd March 2016 at City Hall
- Over 200 private landlords invited
- Showcase the Housing Solutions package
- Encourage partnership working with PRS
- Publicity plan for the next 12 months and will be attending various PRS events.



Any Questions?