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Ymgynghoriad ar ddiartrefedd – Hydref 2022

Consultation on homelessness – Autumn 2022

Ymateb gan: Nacro

Response from: Nacro



Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CS9 1FN

Unit | Uned 22, Parc Ffordd Las,
Rhyl,
Denbighshire | Sir Ddinbych
LL18 2QD

18 November 2022

To Whom it may concern

Re: Nacro perspective of homelessness situation in Wales.

I am writing in my capacity as a Service Manager for Nacro across Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham, but also having talked to my counterparts in Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.

I have worked in this field for the past 24 years and the situation as it stands is the most desperate I have ever seen it.

Nacro is a social justice charity. We operate a wide variety of services across Wales, all housing-related in some form or other. We have Floating support projects, supported housing projects, we help to run emergency accommodation in Pembrokeshire, and we also have Resettlement and Advice projects in Conwy and Denbighshire, a Bond Scheme and other Drop-in facilities for homeless people. We have therefore had a chance to see what people are facing on the ground, both from a service user perspective, and a landlord perspective.

Really since the pandemic, when people were all placed in emergency accommodation if they were homeless, we have seen no real let-up.

nacro.org.uk

Mae'r holl ohebiaeth ar gael yn Gymraeg ar gais · All correspondence is available in Welsh on request.

Nacro: Elusen cofrestredig 226171 · Nacro: Registered charity 226171; Cwmni Cofrestredig (Llundain) 203583 · Registered company (London) 203583
Cwmni cyfyngedig drwy warrant (Llundain) no.1052098 · A company limited by guarantee (London) no.1052098
Darparwr cofrestredig o dai cymdeithasol no.H2030 · Registered social housing provider no.H2030

Swyddfa gofrestredig/Registered office: Walkden House, 16–17 Devonshire Square, London EC2M 4SQ



Supply in the private rented sector has dwindled for a number of reasons;

Firstly landlords are cautious about some of the changes to the housing law that are due to come in in December. Rather than navigate this, many are choosing to sell.

Property house prices increased following lockdown as many people realised because of Lockdown that working from home afforded them more flexibility in where they could live. Furthermore, because of the complexity of travel abroad, more people were choosing holidays closer to home, which in turn led a good number of landlords to change the use of their properties to an Air BNB model, instead of renting. This supplies them with an all round better return.

Local Authorities are also trying to move people from the emergency accommodation that they have been in, and because there is little in place from a social housing perspective, they are also using the private rented sector. It is common for us to see adverts for private rent being put on social media and the local authority is offering a landlord 6 months rent up front, which makes it extremely difficult for anyone else to even be considered.

Now that the cost of living crisis and increase in interest rates is taking hold, many people who may have considered buying a property and vacating a private rented property, are instead staying put which is putting further strain on an already smaller stock of private rentals.

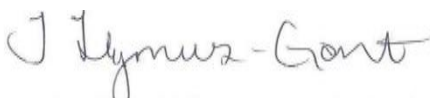
The competition for finding and securing accommodation in the private rented sector is fierce. Landlords we know have had 100 enquiries within the space of an hour of having advertised a rental, and have booked 30 – 50 viewings. They are able to take their pick in terms of who they take and their rents are often way above recommended local housing allowance amounts leaving people who rely on state benefits unable to compete.

From our Resettlement projects, we have noticed a change in who accesses our services. Previously it was predominantly people with complex needs but now it is also regular people who just need help and are struggling to find anything. Because of the competition to find good quality rented properties, anyone who presents with more complex issues is finding it even more difficult.

Sadly this is a rather sombre but very real reflection of the situation that our teams are facing at the moment. On a daily basis we take heartbreaking phonecalls from people who are at their most desperate and we are left with very few solutions for them to alleviate the problems that they face. I know we are not alone in this, as talking to other colleagues in both statutory and voluntary organisations, is a similar picture for us all.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Jessica Hymus-Gant
Service Manager
Nacro Cymru