

John Griffiths AM

Chair – Equality, Communities and Local Government Committee
National Assembly for Wales

Via email to John.Griffiths@gov.wales

16 January 2020

Dear John,

We write to you collectively in your capacity as chair of the Equality, Communities and Local Government Committee following our recent joint response to the consultation on the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2019.

We refer specifically to our campaign on the right to adequate housing in Wales and

- (i) note with gratitude your hosting of the launch of our [feasibility report](#) in June 2019, and
- (ii) recognise and welcome your continued interest in the matter both at plenary and committee level.

You'll likely be aware that the matter of the right to adequate housing has been the subject of a number of questions and debates both in plenary and committee sessions over the past few months and we are pleased that support has been offered from across the political spectrum in the Assembly.

In particular, following discussions with both the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Julie James AM, and Counsel General and Brexit Minister, Jeremy Miles AM, we welcome the progress made to date in securing an element of the right to housing – a due regard – as part of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2019.

It is our current understanding that the due regard duty is proposed as part of the Bill's statutory guidance. Though the Minister has herself stated that local authorities "will have to abide by it", we are strongly of the view that a due regard is best incorporated on the face of the Bill – as a free-standing provision of itself – in order that it is able to work to its maximum effect. We set out this case comprehensively in our joint consultation response and with the insight of Dr Simon Hoffman who authored our original feasibility report.

Furthermore – and more broadly on the full incorporation of the right to adequate housing - we note the Minister's response to the committee in October 2019 in which she referenced a "slide towards" such a right and a commitment to "move in that direction". We continue to make the case that the incorporation of the right to adequate housing in Wales would act as a catalyst for housing supply and resources on the basis of the full right being realised progressively over time.

To that end, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss, in particular, the due regard element of the right to adequate housing and its placement in the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Alicja Zalesinska, Tai Pawb Matt Dicks, CIH Cymru John Puzey, Shelter Cymru

Enc. – Consultation response, Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill 2019 on behalf of Tai Pawb, CIH Cymru and Shelter Cymru