

**Y Pwyllgor Deisebau
Petitions Committee**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



Bae Caerdydd / Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd / Cardiff CF99 1NA

Our ref: P-04-480

19 December 2013

Dear Sir or Madam,

As you may be aware, the Petitions Committee of the National Assembly for Wales exists to consider all admissible petitions received from the public and stakeholders.

The Petitions Committee has received the following petition submitted by Aberystwyth Student's Union:

We call on the National Assembly to urge the Welsh Government to investigate the problems raised in the recent Aberystwyth Housing Survey Report 2012 which has raised concerns about the poor standard of student accommodation and the correspondingly poor treatment of students in the private rented sector. Furthermore, we call on the Welsh Government to engage in a full and frank consultation with the affected communities on this neglected issue while ensuring that current housing legislation and new

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measures by the relevant authorities are properly observed to help raise standards in the private rented sector.

Student housing has been a constant issue in Aberystwyth for many years. A report published in December 2012 surveyed students on their housing experiences and details the issues that they have been facing.

A copy of the report referred to in the petition wording is [here](#).

The Committee has agreed to look at this issue in more detail.

We are interested in receiving views from individuals, groups and organisations on the subject of this petition. We would specifically welcome the views of your organisation. These views will be used as evidence by the Petitions Committee in its consideration of the petition. We will also be engaging with students to enable the Committee to hear directly from those affected by the issues raised in the petition.

The Committee is aware that the Welsh Government will shortly be bringing forward the Housing (Wales) Bill.

The Committee is interested to hear views on the standards of student housing across Wales, and what steps, if any, are needed to improve standards.

Questions you may wish to consider in responding

- Do you agree with the conclusions reached by the Student's Union in their report?
- Do you have concerns about the standard of student housing? If so, what changes do you think would help improve standards?
- One of the issues raised by the petitioners is the level of administration fees. They have suggested either introducing a total ban or a cap on the level of fees charged. Do you agree with this suggestion? What would the impact of such a ban or cap be?
- Why do some agents charge tenants more than the deposit protection schemes to store the deposit?

- Do you think the current enforcement scheme when properties do not minimum standards is sufficiently robust? If not, what changes are needed to improve enforcement?

If you would like to submit evidence, we would be grateful to receive it by **28 February 2014**. Please send an electronic copy of your submission to petition@wales.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can write to:

Committee Clerk, Petitions Committee, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

Responding to the consultation request

The Committee welcomes responses from both individuals and organisations. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide a brief description of the role of your organisation.

The Committee welcomes contributions in English or Welsh and will consider responses to the inquiry before deciding whether to hold oral evidence sessions in the Spring term.

Submissions should arrive by **28 February 2014**. It may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.

For your information, the Committee has invited submissions from those on the attached distribution list. We would be grateful if you could forward a copy of the letter to any individuals or organisations that are not included on this list, but might like to contribute to the inquiry. A copy of this letter has been placed on the National Assembly's website with an open invitation to submit views.

Disclosure of Information

It is normal practice for the National Assembly to publish evidence provided to a Committee. Consequently your response may appear in a report or in supplementary evidence to a report. The National Assembly will not publish information which it considers to be personal data.

In the event of a request for information submitted under UK legislation, it may be necessary to disclose the information that you provide. This may include information which has previously been removed by the National Assembly for publication purposes.

If you are providing any information, other than personal data, which you feel is not suitable for public disclosure, it is up to you to stipulate which parts should not be published and to provide a reasoned argument to support this. The National Assembly will take this into account when publishing information or responding to requests for information.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Powell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'W' and 'P'.

William Powell AM

Chair, Petitions Committee

Distribution List:

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Association of Letting and Management Agents

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