



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

OPEN CONSULTATION

Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023

We want your views on the proposed new standard to improve the quality of social homes in Wales.

First published: 11 May 2022

Last updated: 11 May 2022

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Contents

Overview

Consultation questions

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Overview

Everyone accepts that living in a quality home brings benefits to both the physical and mental wellbeing of those who live in them.

The purpose of this Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 (WHQS2023) is to improve the quality of social homes in Wales. All social homes in Wales are required to meet and maintain the standard.

Over the last two decades, Welsh Government together with social landlords, have invested billions of pounds to significantly improve and maintain the quality of social homes across Wales.

WHQS2023 will replace the existing WHQS Standard.

The existing Standard requires updating to reflect changes to how people live, work and feel about their homes, and to start decarbonising the Welsh social housing stock at scale.

The Standard consists of individual elements, supporting guidance, good practice examples and details on assessment.

Parts of the existing WHQS standard remain unchanged but some elements

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

have been modified to reflect updated legal requirements. Some parts are new such as increased requirement for flooring, consideration of biodiversity and water poverty have also been included.

The existing WHQS contained energy efficiency (affordable warmth) requirements but these have been boosted significantly to reflect decarbonisation ambitions and to minimise energy bills for tenants.

Welsh Government wants to continue to drive up the standard of existing social housing, and WHQS2023 is a demanding standard which all social landlords in Wales will be legally obliged to meet.

Setting a standard which is both bold and achievable is highly complex and the Welsh Government is now seeking your views on the WHQS2023 proposed new standard.

Consultation questions

Question 1: The definition of social housing used in the proposed Standard has been expanded to include a wider range of properties:

‘The Standard [WHQS2023] applies to all self-contained properties owned and managed by local housing authorities (LHA’s) under Part 4 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and registered social landlords (RSL’s) who are regulated by the Welsh Government. It includes intermediate rent properties and properties owned for the purposes of social housing by Local Authorities not in a Housing Revenue Account.’

Do you agree with this definition?

YES, NO

if no, why not and which properties should be included?

Question 2: Having a high-quality home has a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Do you agree that the proposed Standard goes far enough to improve the quality of social homes in Wales?

YES, NO

If no, what specifically should the standard address?

Question 3: Do you agree the proposed Standard covers all the key areas that you would expect?

YES, NO

If no, which **specific** areas are missing?

Question 4: It is proposed that social homes in Wales should comply with the Standard by the end of 2033. Do you agree with this timescale?

YES, NO

If no, what should the compliance date be?

Question 5: Appendix 5 sets out the dates by which each element in the proposed Standard should be met.

Are these reasonable?

YES, NO

If no, which **specific** compliance dates would you change, to what and why?

Question 6: Do you agree that the proposed Standard places sufficient obligations on landlords to ensure they meaningfully engage with tenants about planned works to their homes?

YES, NO

Question 7a: Higher standards usually mean higher costs.

[To be asked only of Social Landlords from selection above]

As a landlord what specific financial challenges do you foresee for **your own organisation** in complying with the proposed Standard?

Question 7b Non Social Landlords

What financial challenges do you see could be faced by social landlords in complying with the proposed standard?

Question 8: Does the proposed Standard strike the right balance between being bold and achievable?

YES, NO

If no, please explain

Question 9: In the context of the current cost of living crisis, what do you think could be added to the proposed standard to further mitigate poverty?

Part 2 of the Standard: Homes must be safe and secure

Question 10: Should anything be added to the Proposed Standard to make homes safer and more secure?

YES, NO

If yes, what should be included?

Part 3 of the Standard: Homes must be affordable to heat and have minimal environmental impact.

Element 3a – Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the home to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions (minimum of SAP 92- EPC A).

Question 11: Do you agree that SAP/EPC is the best current measure to assess the energy efficiency of social homes?

YES, NO

If no, what measure would you suggest is used and why?

Question 12: If SAP/EPC is the measure used, do you agree that SAP 92/EPC A should be the target for homes?

YES, NO

If no, what target would you suggest is used and why?

Question 13: Element 3b - Carbon emissions from homes must be minimised (minimum of EIR 92).

Do you agree that SAP/EIR is the right measure, currently available, to assess carbon emissions from homes?

YES, NO

If no, what measure would you suggest is used and why?

Question 14: If SAP/EIR is to be the measure used, do you agree that EIR 92 should be the target for homes?

YES, NO

If no, what target would you suggest is used and why?

Question 15: In order to reduce carbon emissions, landlords should plan to stop installing fossil fuel fired boilers to provide domestic hot water and space heating from 2026 onwards. Do you agree with this date?

YES, NO

If no, then what date would you suggest?

Question 16: Element 3c - Landlords must carry out a Whole Stock Assessment and produce Target Energy Pathways for their homes. The Target Energy Pathway refers to a plan to optimise energy efficiency for each home.

Do you agree that 3 years is sufficient time to develop these pathways for each

home the standard applies to?

YES, NO.

If no, what is a sufficient time period?

Question 17: Element 3d - All measures recommended through the Target Energy Pathway must be implemented.

Do you agree this is the right approach?

YES, NO

If not, what approach would you suggest?

Question 18: Do you agree with the dates within the example set out in 3d?

YES, NO

If no, what alternative dates would you suggest?

Question 19: The proposed Standard sets out that minimising carbon emissions from homes can be achieved by balancing the performance of homes with a high carbon footprint, against more efficient homes. Therefore, the proposed Standard demands Net Zero from the whole housing stock, rather than Net Zero for individual properties.

Do you agree with this approach to achieving Net Zero for the social housing stock?

YES, NO

If no, what would you suggest instead?

Question 20: Element 3f – Measures to improve water efficiency and alleviating water poverty must be installed when replacing fittings and fixed appliances.

Are the new water efficiency requirements included in the proposed Standard sufficient?

YES, NO

If no, what alternatives would you suggest?

Question 21: Element 6b – At change of tenancy all habitable rooms (bedrooms and living rooms), staircases and landings located within the home should have suitable floor coverings.

Tenants have told us how important flooring throughout their home is.

Do you agree with the inclusion of the new flooring requirement at change of tenancy?

YES, NO

If no, please explain how you would address tenants' concerns about flooring

Question 22: Please use this space to raise anything else about the proposed Standard that you feel should be considered, excluding funding issues.

Question 23: We would like to know your views on the effects that the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Question 24: Please also explain how you believe the proposed Standard WHQS2023 could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language.

Question 25: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation

If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
CARDIFF
CF10 3NQ

e-mail: DataProtectionOfficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545 745 or
0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

About this document

This document is a copy of the web page [Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023](#) downloaded.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

This document may not be fully accessible, for more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

Get [information on copyright](#).

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-housing-quality-standard-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).