

Carl Sargeant AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai ac Adfywio
Minister for Housing and Regeneration



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref SF/CS/1070/14

To all Local Authority:

Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Planning

CC Chief Executives & Chief Planning Officers

10 April 2014

Dear Colleagues

I am writing to you to remind you of the Welsh Government's policy and expectations relating to the use of household projections in the planning system. In February 2014 a new set of household projections for Wales, based on 2011 census, were published by the Welsh Government's Knowledge and Analytical Service. The assumptions underlying these projections are based on past trends, which have been significantly affected by recent past economic conditions resulting from the global economic crisis. As a consequence they may give rise to lower household projections and higher household sizes than in previous projections; it is important that this is borne in mind when using the projections for planning purposes.

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out our policy on how projections should be used when planning for new homes and it makes it clear that the latest Welsh Government local authority level household projections should form the **starting point** for assessing housing requirements and are therefore not an end in themselves. PPW is clear that local planning authorities should consider the appropriateness of the projections for their area, based on all sources of local evidence.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act requires that Local Development Plans are sound, and integral to this is the coherency and consistency of Plans. It is essential that LDP policies and allocations are informed by evidence and are mutually supportive of the Plan's strategy so that, for example, if a Plan has regeneration or economic aspirations there must be consideration of the associated levels of housing to accommodate this. The Plan should reflect all aspects of the evidence base, and it is not prudent for a Plan, looking 15-20 years ahead to replicate a period of exceptionally poor economic performance. In most instances this will result in an examination of the housing numbers, taking the Welsh Government's projections as the starting point.

For the avoidance of any future doubt, local planning authorities must seek to provide for the level of housing required as the result of the analysis of **all** relevant sources of evidence rather than relying solely on the Welsh Government's household projections.

I am copying this letter to the Planning Inspectorate and expect full consideration of the relevant evidence before housing levels are agreed on at LDP Examinations.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl Sargeant', with a stylized flourish at the end.

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