Welsh Government Social Housing Rent Standard Annual Self-Certification Monitoring 2025-2026

This briefing summarises the Annual Self-Certification Monitoring Returns provided by the 11-stock holding Local Authorities and Registered Social Landlords (32)[1].

The Self-Certification Monitoring Return for 2025-2026 consisted of six sections.

Section 1: Information for the year April 2025- 2026
Section 2: Information for the year April 2026 – 2027
Section 3: Rent and Service charge policy
Section 4: Affordability modelling and/or assessment
Section 5: Part III of the Rent Standard – jointly agreed initiatives
Section 6: Additional information

Responses to questions in Sections 1 and 2 are presented in tabular format: Table 1 displays data for local authorities, while Table 2 provides information for Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).

Table 1 – Local Authorities

Q1a. Please confirm the overall percentage increase you applied to your rents in April 2025.

Q1b. Please state your gross annual income from general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings for 2025-2026.

Q1c. Please state your stock numbers as of 31 March 2025 of general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings. For any new properties acquired and let for the first time during the 2025–2026 period, please specify the total number of properties involved.

Q1d. Please confirm that the level of rent for an individual tenant did not rise more than 2.7% plus an additional £2.

[1] Reflects numbers during 2025-26

Q2a. Please indicate the **estimated** gross annual rental income for 2026-2027 for general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings (total stock as at 31 March 2026) based on application of the Rent Standard in April 2026. *(Definition of 'estimated gross annual rental income' is the rental income you expect to receive for your whole portfolio of properties, excluding new builds you are anticipating letting in-year, and regardless of whether properties are occupied or void)*

Q2b. Please state your applicable total stock numbers as of 31 March 2026. Please identify separately the number of properties you anticipate letting for the first time during 2026-2027 (*not accounted for in your stock numbers as of 31 March 2026*).

Q2c. Please confirm the overall percentage increase YOU WILL apply to your rents in April 2026.

Local Authorities	Q1a	Q1b	Q1c	Q1d	Q2	Q2b	Q2c
Anglesey	2.7	£23.02M	Total Stock – 3980. New properties acquired - 13	Confirmed	£24.5M	Stock – 4019. First time lettings – approx. 69	4.3
Caerphilly	2.7	£60,416,159 Estimated	10,629. 45 New Build February 2026	Confirmed	£63,144,389	10,648 stock 31.3.26 estimated. 66 New Build anticipated 2026/27 financial year	4.3
Cardiff	2.7	£95,803,748	Stock Number 31 March 2025 = 14,088. Additions to stock (New build & acquired) = 351	Confirmed	£101,012,829	14,431. Anticipated letting for first time during 2026-27. New Build = 232, plus Acquisitions = 40. Total 272	4.3
Carmarthenshire	2.7	£53,043,916	9413	Confirmed	£55,665,859	No figures provided	4.3
Denbighshire	2.7	£19,012,000	3,332 at 31st March 2025. 27 new properties	Confirmed	£20,307,924	3359. New lets -	4.3
Flintshire	2.7	Forecast based on Week 44 figures is £44,483,605	General Needs = 4756 Sheltered = 2617 Total = 7373 New properties included = 6	Confirmed	£46,396,408	7373. New lets - 50	4.3
Pembrokeshire	Increase of 1.74% to all rents, plus up to £2.00 for	Projected income from Dwelling	Number of Dwellings 5,870 (inclusive of 80 New Builds/Acquisitions	Confirmed	£35.02m (excludes void	5953 dwellings as of 31st March 2026 (with an additional 103 dwellings forecast to be completed for first let during 2026-2027)	3.6% to all rents, plus a maximum of £2.55 for those below Pembrokeshire

	those below Pembrokeshire County Council Standard Rent. Once the increased income for transitions is factored in the overall income projected increased is 2.55%	rents for 2025-26 is £30.8m. This is actual rent excluding lost income for voids.	that become operational in 2025-26)		reduction and additions for 26/27)		County Council standard rent. For all new tenancies these commence from 1 April 2026, with all remaining existing tenancies from 1 July 2026 with this anomaly being for reasons previously provided. Once the increased income for transitions is factored in the overall income projected increase of 4.27
Powys	Rent Increase for 2025-2026: 2.7% (average rent £111.16 per week)	Gross Rental Income for 2025-2026: £32,069,215	Stock numbers 31.03.25: 5543 homes. 36 new properties let for the first time.	Confirmed	Gross Rental Income for 2026-2027: £33,737,694.22.	Stock numbers 31.03.26: 5596 homes*. Includes 36 properties let for the first time and 18 properties to be let	4.3
Swansea	2.7	£81,671,922	31st March 2025 – 13,806 Additions – 46 (some acquisitions will be initially void whilst works carried out to bring up to standard but will be let asap and counted as stock upon purchase. Included are in this figure are 30 new builds which are currently void as they have recently completed but will be tenanted shortly. Also included is 1 acquisition	Confirmed	£85,792,453	31st March 2026 – 13,852 Additions – 35 (some acquisitions will be initially void whilst works carried out to bring up to standard but will be let asap and anticipated during 26-27).	4.3

			which is due to complete by 31st March 26).				
Vale of Glamorgan	2.7	£25,265,605 class 1 estimated	3999 Class 1 as at 1st March 2025 Acquisitions in year 2526-7 properties New build units on stock in year 2526 -Olive lodge 10units (class 2), Coldbrook Road East 20unit	Confirmed	£28,202,756 Total income	Class 1 4043 Class 2 165 Total 4208	4.3%
Wrexham	2.7	£65,620,000	11,086 – Total stock 27 – New build and acquisitions	Confirmed	£68,394,000	11,070 – Total stock 10 – Acquisitions	4.3

Table 2 – Registered Social Landlords

Q1a. Please confirm the overall percentage increase you applied to your rents in April 2025.

Q1b. Please state your gross annual income from general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings for 2025-2026.

Q1c. Please state your stock numbers as of 31 March 2025 of general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings. For any new properties acquired and let for the first time during the 2025–2026 period, please specify the total number of properties involved.

Q1d. Please confirm that the level of rent for an individual tenant did not rise more than 2.7% plus an additional £2.

Q2a. Please indicate the **estimated** gross annual rental income for 2026-2027 for general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings (total stock as at 31 March 2026) based on application of the Rent Standard in April 2026. *(Definition of 'estimated gross annual rental income' is the rental income you expect to receive for your whole portfolio of properties, excluding new builds you are anticipating letting in-year, and regardless of whether properties are occupied or void)*

Q2b. Please state your applicable total stock numbers as of 31 March 2026. Please identify separately the number of properties you anticipate letting for the first time during 2026-2027 (*not accounted for in your stock numbers as of 31 March 2026*).

Q2c. Please confirm the overall percentage increase YOU WILL apply to your rents in April 2026.

Registered Social Landlords	Q1a	Q1b	Q1c	Q1d	Q2	Q2b	Q2c
Adra	2.7	£40,766m	General needs and sheltered dwellings as at 31/03/25: 7,082 Estimated completions in the 12 months to 31/03/26: 99	Confirmed	£42.839m (social housing stock). (Note: figures in Q2a and Q1b are calculated differently; Q2a does not contain the rent from in-year additions during 2026/27, whereas Q1b contains the part-year effect of in-year additions during 2025/26).	Estimated general needs and sheltered dwellings as at 31/03/26: 7,181 Estimated completions in the 12 months to 31/03/27: 91	4.3
Aelwyd	2.7	£1,274,963	Total stock owned as at 31st March 2025 260 Homes acquired during 2024/25	Confirmed	£1,349,594	As at 27th February 2026 we own 262 homes. We expect to complete on one more home by 31 March 2026, but this is not confirmed. During 2026/7 we anticipate acquiring 29 homes through a TOE with Gwalia Rest Bay Co-operative. We also expect to acquire an additional three more homes if given a TACP allocation.	4.3

Ateb	2.7	£14.9	As at 31/03/2025 – 2547 units (Subject to the standard) New properties 2025-26 – 93	Confirmed	£16.1m (2640 units estimated at 31/03/2026 subject to the standard	2620 units subject to the standard. New properties in 2026 - 27 estimated at 73 units.	4.3
Barcud	2.7	£27,492,646	4,298 95 properties let for the first time up to January 2026	Confirmed	£29,003,092	4,358 as at January 2026 Properties due to be let January – March 30 units New properties in 2026/27 estimated 134	4.1
Beacon	2.69	£42,364,683	7,954	Confirmed	£43,570,531	8,111 283 anticipated units to be handed over in 26.27 not included in March 26	4.1
Bron Myrddin Housing	2.7	£6,247	1036 – new properties - 9	Confirmed	£6,528	1045 general needs. 39 new properties under development expected to be completed in March 2027 but not included in budget rent figures due to uncertainty of income.	4.3
Bron Afon	2.7	£49,167,695	8073 includes 12 new properties acquired and let for first time during 25-26	Confirmed	£51,432,135	8113 includes 17 newly acquired that is anticipated to be let during 26-27	4.3
Cadwyn Housing Association	2.7	£10,590,00	1554	Confirmed	£11,005,000	Total stock at 31/3/26 1569 82 new handovers anticipated in 2026/27	4..3

Cardiff Community Housing	2.7	£18,442,916	Stock numbers at 31st March 2025 – 2780 New homes in year – 60 (of which 21 are forecasted to be acquired prior to 31st March 2026)	Confirmed	£19,794,312	Applicable stock numbers at 31st March 2026 – 2840 Number of new acquisitions/first time lettings forecast for 2026-27 – 10	4.3
Cardiff YMCA	2.7	£2.6 million	175 units all for prevention of homelessness. 18 new units added throughout the year	Confirmed	Estimated 2.8 million	175 units	4.3
Caredig	2.7	£13,720,011	2,236 as at 31 March 2025 and 84 additions during 2025/26	Confirmed	£14,065,026	2,296 as at 31 March 2026 with 128 additions expected in 2026/27	4.3
Cartrefi Conwy	2.7	Total forecast gross annual income for general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings for the financial year 2025-26 is 24,300,117	Stock numbers owned as of 31st March 2025 is 3,920 Policy Voids included in above 53 New properties acquired and let for the first time during the 2025-26 period is 19	Confirmed	£25,432,673	Total stock 3928 Policy voids included in above 53 New properties anticipated to let in 26/27 (New build & purchase) 18	4.3

ClwydAlyn Housing	2.22	£28,290,294	4231	Confirmed	£30,451,173	No. of properties in stock as of 31st March '26 - 4465 Expected Handovers in 26-27 – 233 properties	4.27
Codi Group	2.7	£96,879k	16,056 general needs plus sheltered homes New properties 435	Confirmed	£105,709k	Total stock on 31 March 2026: 16,491 general needs plus sheltered homes New properties during FY27: 682	4.3
Cynon Taf CHG	2.7	£10,662,891	1859	Confirmed	£11,056,000	1874 Includes 15 new properties let in 25/26	4.3
First Choice HA	2.7	NA	1017 as at March 25, 1070, by year end	Confirmed	0	Current projected total stock numbers (bed spaces) as of 31 March 2026 = 1185 Current projected bed spaces to be delivered in 2026/27 = 50	4.3
Grwp Cynefin	2.7	RENT BUDGET 2025/26General Needs £17,581,496.25 Sheltered Housing£1,825,569.89	Stock numbers at 31 March 2025 •General Needs 3,052 •Sheltered Housing 372 New properties acquired and let for first time during 2025-26 •General Needs 3	Confirmed	RENT BUDGET 2026/27ANNUAL TOTAL General Needs £19,074,738.38 Sheltered Housing £2,002,602.37	Please note that a full reconciliation of these figures will be undertaken prior to submission of stock and rent return. Total stock numbers as of 31 March 2026 •General Needs 3080 •Sheltered Housing 372 First Time Letting 2026-27 •General Needs 39	4.3
Hedyn	2.7	NCH rent £55,680k + £3,084k	NCH 8,961 (39 new units) Melin 4,137	Confirmed	Hedyn rent: £84,621k + £5,226k service charges TOTAL: £89,487k	B/f 13,098 units (Q1c above) New units 334 units Closing: 13,432 units (forecast)	4.3

		service charges Melin £25,692k + £1,783k service charges TOTAL £81,372 + £4,867k service charges GRAND TOTAL £86,239k	(83 new units) Total 13,098 (122 new units)				
Hafod Housing	2.7	£28,561k	March 2025 General needs 4812 Supported housing 510 Forecast new properties for 2025-26: 139	Confirmed	£30,474k excluding new developments	31st March: 5461 2026-27 properties: 159	4.3
Merthyr Tydfil HA	2.7	£6,440,000	The number of homes on 31 March 2025 was 1250. This includes 54 new and acquired homes that were let for the first time during the	Confirmed	£6,727,000	The number of homes as of 31 March 2026 is expected to be 1281. The number of new and acquired homes that are expected for the period 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 is: 18 x 1 bed flats 4 x 2 bed flats	4.3

			period 1 April 2025 to 27 February 2026			14 x 2 bed houses 6 x 3 bed houses 7 x 4 bed houses	
Merthyr Valley Homes	2.7	£22,973,513	4,093 homes were included in the budgeted figure. 4,095 was our actual stock number as at 31/3/25 (2 acquisitions were completed between budgeting and year end. 9 homes acquired/developed between 1/4/25 and 31/12/25 1 home sold between 1/4/25 and 31/12/25	Confirmed	£24,014,130	4,104 homes as at 31/3/26 65 additional homes expected to be let during 2026/27	4.2
Monmouthshire HA	2.7	£23.7M	3,877 Units additional units in 2025/26	Confirmed	£24.98m	Estimated stock @ 31 March 2026 - 3931 New lettings 2026-27 – 63 units	4.3
Newydd HA	2.7	£20,500,000	2956 at 31/3/25 145 new homes were handed over in 25/26	Confirmed	£22,067,000	3101 properties at 31/3/26 155 Handovers anticipated in 2026/27	4.3
North Wales Housing	2.7	General Needs (Rents) £13,689,152	Stock at 31.03.25: •GN- 2115 •Sheltered 59	Confirmed	£15,689,448	2,255 (total of 1c) plus 26/27 new properties 111 General Needs Properties	4.3

		General Needs (Service Charges) £910,943 Sheltered (Rents) (Y Gorlan and TACT) £348,848 Sheltered (Service Charges) £105,782 Please note the above does not include our Supported Housing units, Shared Ownership, intermediate rents or extra care units – only the units covered by the rent standard.	New GN and sheltered properties 2025/26 currently estimated at 81			Total estimated at 31 March 2027 – 2,366 unit	
Stori Cymru	2.7	£209,171	29	Confirmed	£215,195.46	29	2.8
Taff Housing Association	2.7	£7,655,648	1156	Confirmed	Stock - 1156 Annual Rent - £7,966,868	Stock – 1156 No general need units anticipated in 2026-27 with the next development scheme estimated to come into management at the beginning of 2027/28. All new	4.06

						units in 2026/27 are for supported housing and intermediate rents	
Tai Calon Community Housing	2.7	Forecasted Rental Income for 2025-26 is £31,529,540	Stock at 31/03/2025 was 5,835 during the year 24 new properties were acquired or developed in the year.	Confirmed	Estimate rental income for 2026/27 is £32,900,510	Estimated Stock as at 31/3/2026 is 5,859 we anticipate letting a further 35 homes during the year from acquisitions and new builds	4.3
Tai Tarian	2.7	Gross annual rental income for 2025-2026 for general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings is 47.5M for April 2025 to January 2026 – please note this is for a partial year, due to the date of this return.	Stock @ 31 March 2025 was 9,167. New properties acquired and let for the first time during 2025-2026 period: -10 properties acquired and let from an English RSL-10 properties acquired via TACP programme at the end of the financial year 2024-2025 but will be let for the first time during 2025-2026. Scheme 1 and 2 (18 properties) all develop,	Confirmed	Estimated gross annual rental income for 2026-2027 for general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings: £56.5M	Stock @ 31 January 2026 was 9218 (please note this is the current figure as at the end of January 2026 but this is subject to change by 31 March 2026). New properties we anticipate letting for the first time during 2026-2027 period: -6 properties acquired via TACP programme in 2025-2026; acquired on the open market and dependent upon the required works, the letting dates will subsequently be agreed. -3 pipeline properties anticipated for legal completion and purchase by 31 March 2026, and dependent upon the required works, the letting dates will subsequently be agreed. Development of scheme (39 properties) to all be developed, completed and let for the first time during 2026-2027.	4.3

			completed and let for the first time in 2025-2026. Scheme 3 completed in January 2026 and we are in the process of signing up tenants for the properties on a phased basis (will be 12 properties by the end of the financial year 2025-2026).			Please note all of the above are correct at the time of preparing this return.	
Trivallis	2.69	£57,567,485 Gross Rent per year end forecast outturn (as forecast at January 2026).	Stock numbers at 31 March 2025 - 9,931 (9,866 excluding 65 voids) 47 New properties acquired and let for the first time during the 2025-26 period	Confirmed	£60,465,245	9,989 (9,810 general needs and sheltered and 179 voids) 75 new builds expected as new lettings in 2026-27	4.28
United Welsh HA	2.7	The annual income budget for 2025/26 is £31,721,000. The outturn	Total general needs and sheltered self-contained dwellings at 31	Confirmed	The budget will not be finalised until March 2026, but the current estimate is £34,469,000	Estimates total number of self-contained general needs and sheltered housing as at 31 March 2026 is 5,454 Estimated new properties let for the first time in 2026/27 is 143	4.3

		value is not finalised.	March 2025 was 5366. The number of general needs and sheltered new units let for the first time in 2025/26 is estimated to be 98.				
Valleys to Coast	2.7	£37,097k	5853 Homes, 5814 General Needs and 39 Extra Care.	Confirmed	£36,692k	5996	4.2
Wales and West Housing	2.7	68.6m **Please note: This figure includes an estimate for the final 4 weeks to 31 March 2026.	Stock numbers 31/03/2025: 10,764 New properties acquired and let in 2025-26: 202 Properties reclassified 4 Disposed units 76 **Please note: This figure includes an estimate for the final 4 weeks to 31 March 2026.	Confirmed	£71.7m	Projected total stock numbers 31 Mar 2026: 10,894 Properties WWHA anticipate letting for the first time during 2026-2027 -269	4.09% - 4.3% for those properties already on the living rent and 3.94% for the remainder of our properties to give an average of 4.09%

Comments on the above responses

There are several gaps relating to current and projected property numbers. Where both figures are shown, the additional properties planned figures are shown below:

- 2025–26 (reported new properties): 2,233
- 2026–27 (anticipated new properties): 2,688

Total predicted social landlord rental income is £1,379,121,391.

Some landlords have specifically indicated which parts of their stock are subject to the Rent Standard, distinguishing these from those that are not covered. This approach highlights a degree of variation in reporting practices: while some landlords may have only included properties governed by Welsh Government policy, others may have taken a broader view and reported figures for their entire housing stock.

In some cases, under sections 1 and 2 landlords have not supplied the required evidence in response to questions, an estimate or a zero response was given as an answer instead.

This absence of supporting evidence means that the data cannot be independently verified and may impact the overall reliability of the findings. As this is the first monitoring exercise under the new arrangements, officials will work with the sector to reflect on the lessons learned and identify opportunities to improve consistency in the provision of evidence and reporting in future monitoring exercises.

Section 3 – Rent and service charge policy.

Q3a: Please include a link or attach a copy of your local rent and service charge policy. Please state when this policy was last reviewed.

Most landlords provided or referenced a rent and/or service charge policy, either attached to the return or referenced within it. Many stated that their policies had been reviewed recently, most commonly in November or December 2025 or January 2026, reflecting the new Welsh Government Rent and Service Charge Standard 2026–2036.

Several landlords stated that their policies are being updated to reflect the new 2026–2036 Welsh Government Standard.

A small number of responses referenced older policies. However, most also confirmed that a review is planned or already underway.

Policy reviews were generally linked to:

- compliance with Welsh Government Rent Standards;
- affordability principles;
- service charge transparency;
- annual rent-setting processes;
- tenant consultation;
- rent convergence or target rent approaches.

Q3b: Please outline the tenant involvement (engagement, consultation and feedback) undertaken and how feedback received has influenced your rent setting process and decisions for the 2026-2027 financial year. Please provide evidence of this.

Most landlords involved tenants in 2026–2027 rent setting through surveys, events, focus groups, panels and ongoing satisfaction data. Feedback tested affordability, value for money and cost-of-living pressures, although response rates and reach varied.

Feedback influenced decisions by moderating some rent or service charge increases, improving communications and strengthening hardship, welfare and tenancy support. Boards generally considered this evidence alongside affordability modelling.

However, some landlords provided insufficient evidence of engagement or its influence on final decisions. Officials will revise the monitoring forms to improve the quality and consistency of data collected for the next reporting period.

Q3c. Please outline the tenant involvement (engagement, consultation and feedback) undertaken specifically in relation to your review of service charges and how feedback received has influenced your service charges for the 2026-2027 financial year. Please provide evidence of this.

Most landlords consulted tenants on 2026–2027 service charges through surveys, meetings, panels and written communications, often alongside wider rent engagement. Key concerns were affordability, value for money and clearer explanations of charges.

Feedback led some landlords to cap, freeze or review increases, improve transparency, change services and strengthen financial support. However, the quality of evidence linking engagement to decisions varied.

Q3d. Please explain how your annual assessment of operating costs and cost efficiencies has influenced your rent-setting decision for April 2026-2027, including the impact on the following: STAFFING

Staffing was a major, inflexible cost pressure due to pay inflation, higher employer costs, recruitment and compliance demands. Landlords sought savings through vacancy reviews, restructuring, benchmarking, digitalisation and service redesign, but generally concluded that a rent increase was still needed to protect frontline, regulatory and tenant support services.

Q3d. Development

Development remained a strategic priority but rising construction and borrowing costs, labour and material pressures, and uncertain grants reduced scheme viability. Landlords used modelling, procurement controls, grant maximisation, careful programme prioritisation and acquisitions to manage costs. Most considered a stable rent uplift necessary to maintain borrowing capacity, financial resilience and affordable housing delivery, while balancing investment in existing homes and tenant affordability.

Q3d. Housing Improvements

Housing improvements were a major factor in 2026–2027 rent-setting, as rental income primarily funds maintenance, safety, damp and mould work, decarbonisation and WHQS 2023 compliance. Landlords sought efficiencies through procurement, contract reviews, in-house delivery, grants and prioritised investment, informed in some cases by tenant feedback. Most considered the rent uplift necessary to avoid delaying essential work and maintain safe, compliant, energy-efficient homes while balancing affordability.

Q3d. Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs significantly influenced 2026–2027 rent-setting because landlords relied on finance for development, WHQS 2023, decarbonisation and major works. Higher interest rates, refinancing and covenant pressures were managed through treasury planning, fixed-

rate debt, grants and financial modelling. Most viewed the rent uplift as necessary to service debt, maintain resilience and sustain investment while balancing affordability, although the pressure varied by debt profile and investment needs.

1. Higher and slower-falling interest rates, market volatility and wider uncertainty increased current and future borrowing costs.
2. Borrowing supported new homes, major works, WHQS 2023, decarbonisation, regeneration and improvements to existing stock.
3. Covenant compliance, financial resilience and continued access to competitive funding were central considerations.
4. The rent uplift supported debt servicing, business-plan viability and capital investment, although it did not always offset rising borrowing costs.
5. Landlords mitigated risk through fixed-rate debt, refinancing, credit facilities, cash management, portfolio reviews, advisers, benchmarking and grants.

Q3d. Tenant Services

Tenant services were central to 2026–2027 rent-setting, balancing affordability with the need to sustain frontline, tenancy and financial support. Landlords prioritised protecting core services, improving efficiency and transparency, and using tenant feedback to shape decisions, generally presenting rent increases as necessary to maintain rather than expand provision.

Q3e. Please state the date your Board/Council/Committee made or ratified the final decision on your rent setting for 2026-2027. Please provide evidence of this

Rent-setting decisions were generally approved through formal governance routes in November or December 2025, with local authority approvals more commonly made in January 2026, supported by minutes, papers or formal resolutions.

The most common factors landlords reported considering when making rent-setting decisions were as follows:

- Welsh Government Rent Standard compliance;
- affordability modelling;
- tenant impact;
- service charge implications;
- business plan sustainability;

- hardship or support provision;
- rent convergence or relet issues.

Q.3f. Please provide any other comments or raise any issues in relation to your rent setting exercise for 2026-2027

Landlords broadly supported the longer-term Welsh Government Rent Standard but remained concerned about convergence, relets, affordability, rising costs and financial sustainability.

With an income growth of 11% in October 2025, following 8% the previous year, exceeded the permitted 4.3% rent increase, widening the gap between current and modelled affordable rents and strengthening calls for a clear convergence mechanism.

Landlords said current rules can prevent movement towards fair or target rents, creating inconsistencies between similar homes. They also stressed that affordability must be balanced against rising repair, construction, borrowing, compliance, staffing and decarbonisation costs, which CPI-linked increases may not fully cover.

Overall, landlords supported affordability controls but sought greater flexibility and clarity to promote fairness, convergence, investment and long-term sustainability.

There were calls for Welsh Government for clearer guidance on:

- rent convergence;
- relet rent rules;
- CPI scenarios;
- rent-envelope flexibility;

Please note landlords are advised to review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for further information and guidance on any of the listed above.

Q4a. Please specify which affordability model / framework you applied to inform your rent setting for 2026-2027 and explain why this method was used

Landlords frequently reported using:

- JRF Living Rent
- ASHE
- ONS income data;
- National Living Wage / Real Living Wage;
- local authority earnings;
- tenant income or arrears data;
- CHC / Housemark affordability tools

Landlords mainly used income-based affordability models, particularly JRF Living Rent, supported by ASHE/ONS data and local checks. Common thresholds were 28% of household income for rent and 33% for rent plus service charges, helping balance affordability and transparency with investment, services and financial sustainability.

Other methods detailed the following:

Local adaptations

Several landlords adjusted the model for:

- bedroom size;
- property type;
- household composition;
- geography;
- lower-quartile earnings;
- energy efficiency;
- service charges.

Wider affordability checks

Many also compared rents with:

- other social landlords;
- private rented sector rents;
- Local Housing Allowance;
- tenant feedback and arrears trends.

Q4b. What, if any, percentage of rents to earnings does your income ratio model deem affordable?

Most respondents identified 28% of income as the main affordability threshold for rent, usually based on the JRF Living Rent model. Many also referred to 33% as the threshold where rent and service charges are combined.

Key findings

- 28% rent-only threshold was the most common response.
- 33% combined rent and service charges was frequently cited.
- Some landlords used variations, including 26%, 28.5%, 30%, 35% or 23%.
- A few respondents did not use a fixed percentage or answered “NA”.
- One response stated affordability was assessed holistically rather than through a single ratio

Information shows strong consistency around the JRF benchmark: rent should generally be no more than 28% of income, rising to around 33% where service charges are included.

Q4c. Which underlying earnings data source is your model based on?

Most respondents reported using Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data, usually from ONS, as the main earnings source.

Main sources identified

- ASHE / ONS earnings data: most common source.
- National Living Wage: used by several landlords.
- Real Living Wage: used by a small number.
- Local lower-quartile income data: used in some models.
- Tenant/prospective tenant income data: used by a few.

- Benefit / Universal Credit data: used as supplementary affordability evidence.

Key observations

- Many landlords reported using lower-quartile earnings to reflect affordability for lower-income households.
- Some reported adjusting earnings by geography, property size or household composition.
- A few reported used blended sources, including ASHE, National Living Wage, Real Living Wage and benefits data.
- The purpose was to test whether rents remained affordable against realistic tenant income levels.

Q4d. Did you use any other data sources to model rent, and if so what sources?

Several landlords said they did not use other data sources whilst others used market comparisons, local authority data, private rent evidence, tenant feedback and affordability tools to test whether proposed rents remained reasonable.

Most landlords reported that additional data sources were used alongside earnings data to sense-check affordability and rent levels. Common additional sources included:

- Local Housing Allowance rates
- Private rented sector comparisons
- Other social landlord rent benchmarks
- CHC / Housemark affordability tools
- Stats Wales / Welsh Government rent data
- National Minimum Wage, National Living Wage and Real Living Wage
- Benefits, pensions, Universal Credit and Housing Benefit data
- Tenant feedback, rent surveys and engagement findings
- Arrears, income collection and financial inclusion data
- Property-level rent and service charge data

Information shows that additional data were mainly used as a sense-check rather than the core rent model, helping landlords compare rents with local markets, tenant circumstances and wider affordability indicators.

Q4e. Do you apply an additional charge or percentage to your rents for properties you have significantly improved (i.e. improved quality or energy efficiency)? If so, please tell us how much and how many properties this has been applied to.

Landlords mainly used supplementary data—including local and private rent comparisons, LHA, wage and benefit indicators, and tenant data—to confirm that proposed rents were affordable and fair; some used no additional sources.

Main data sources used

1. Market and rent benchmarks

Many landlords compared rents with:

- private rented sector rents;
- Local Housing Allowance;
- other social landlords' rents;
- Stats Wales / Welsh Government rent data;
- Hometrack or Savills market rent analysis.

2. Wage and income indicators

Several used:

- National Living Wage;
- Real Living Wage;
- National Minimum Wage;
- state pension increases;
- means-tested benefits;
- Universal Credit and Housing Benefit data.

3. Tenant and internal data

Some landlords used:

- arrears and income collection data;
- tenant feedback and rent surveys;

- financial inclusion insight;
- contract-holder level affordability testing;
- property-level rent and service charge data;
- household size assumptions.

4. Tools and frameworks

A number referenced:

- CHC affordability tool;
- Housemark affordability tool;
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) equivalence scales;
- Welsh Government guidance;
- sector benchmarking.

Q4f. Please specify whether service charges are included in your affordability modelling

Most landlords confirmed that service charges are included, considered, or tested separately within their affordability modelling.

- Yes / included or considered: 33 responses
- No / not included in main model: 10 responses

Most landlords considered service charges in affordability assessments, commonly using thresholds of 28% of household income for rent and 33% for rent plus service charges. Some assessed charges separately, particularly for flats, sheltered housing and schemes with higher communal costs.

Q4g. If service charges are included, is this through a combined cap? If so, please specify

Many landlords assessed rent and service charges against the JRF benchmark of 33% of income, compared with 28% for rent alone. Others used the figure as a guide, assessed charges separately or reviewed higher charges case by case, with safeguards such as capped increases where affordability concerns arose.

- capping service charge increases;
- limiting total weekly increases where rent and service charges are considered together;
- reducing or reviewing charges where affordability concerns arise; and
- reviewing higher-cost sheltered, supported or independent living schemes on a case-by-case basis.

A number of responses stated ‘NA’ or ‘No’, or confirmed that service charges were set separately, often on a cost-recovery basis.

Overall responses mainly indicated that the dominant approach was to test combined rent and service charges against a 33% affordability threshold, although practice varied. Some landlords said they applied a formal cap, while others used the figure as a sense-check or managed affordability through separate service charge reviews.

Q4h. Please state whether your service charges are predominantly fixed, variable or a mix of the two.

Responses showed that variable service charges were the most common approach, followed by fixed charges and mixed/combined models.

Response summary:

- Variable: 20 responses
- Fixed: 12 responses
- Mixed / combined: 11 responses

Variable service charges
Many landlords reported that service charges vary annually and are calculated by reference to actual costs. These charges are often determined at scheme, block or service level, depending on the services received by tenants.

Fixed service charges
Some landlords reported applying fixed service charges, usually calculated in advance using estimated or known costs for the year ahead.

Mixed or combined approach
Several landlords reported using both fixed and variable charges, depending on the type of service provided. For example, standard or routine services may be fixed, while usage-based, communal or scheme-specific services may vary.

Cost recovery and transparency
A recurring theme was that service charges are intended to recover the cost of services provided, with charges applied only to tenants who receive those services. This reinforced the importance of clear communication and transparency about what tenants are being charged for.

Overall, variable service charges based on actual or scheme-specific costs were most common, although many landlords used fixed or mixed models depending on the service and local arrangements.

Q4i. Please state how many tenants have requested further information or clarification in relation to service charges.

Landlords recorded enquiries inconsistently: some provided exact figures, while others did not track them separately or could not report them reliably. Differences partly reflected organisation size.

Reported enquiry volumes ranged from 1 to 248, although some landlords received no or very few requests.

Several landlords did not record service charge enquiries separately, but overall, enquiry levels were generally low, but with some landlords recorded substantially higher volumes.

Comparisons remain limited because reporting practices were inconsistent.

Q5a. Please state the number of tenants you have evicted in the financial year 2025-2026 and the reason for the eviction.

Evictions information varied in detail, but the most common reasons were rent arrears, anti-social behaviour (ASB), non-engagement, non-occupation, tenancy breaches and criminal behaviour.

Several landlords reported no or very few evictions; the highest figure reported by an LA was 16 and 13 for a RSL.

Many landlords emphasised that eviction was treated as a last resort. Money advice, arrears support, tenancy sustainment activity and referrals to partner agencies were commonly offered before legal action was pursued.

Q5b. Have any tenants approached your organisation for further support? If so, how many? Please explain the type of support provided.

Landlords detailed extensive tenant support activity. Support mainly related to financial hardship, rent arrears, benefits, energy costs, food/fuel poverty, tenancy sustainment and wellbeing. Overall, landlords explained that they provide substantial practical and financial support to tenants. The strongest themes are income maximisation, hardship assistance, tenancy sustainment and prevention of escalation into arrears or eviction**.**

Key types of support

- Benefits, Universal Credit and Housing Benefit advice
- Discretionary Housing Payments and hardship funds
- Food, fuel and supermarket vouchers
- Rent arrears support and payment plans
- Debt, budgeting and money advice
- Energy advice and utility support
- Furniture, white goods and flooring support
- Tenancy sustainment and housing support
- Referrals to Citizens Advice, foodbanks and partner agencies
- Mental health, safeguarding and wellbeing support

Q5c. Please indicate how many properties were let to households moving from temporary accommodation.

Information provided showed that most landlords let a significant number of homes to households moving from temporary accommodation or otherwise classified as homeless/priority need. Reporting definitions vary, with some recording temporary accommodation specifically and others reporting broader homelessness-related allocations.

The highest reported figures by landlords were 584 with the lowest being 14,

Some landlords reported percentages rather than absolute numbers. For example, one landlord stated that 61% of its lettings were made to alleviate homelessness. In some cases, the data covered only part of the year, such as Q1–Q3, while a small number of organisations were unable to provide exact figures or did not capture this information separately.

Responses indicated that landlords are making a substantial contribution to rehousing households from temporary accommodation and wider homelessness pathways, though figures are not fully comparable due to different recording methods and reporting periods.

Q6. Please use this section of the form to provide any additional information you wish to share.

Most respondents provided no additional comments. Where comments were provided, they were mainly focused on rent policy concerns, financial pressures, rent convergence, affordability and the need for flexibility.

Key themes

1. Rent convergence and fairness - Several landlords asked for action on rent convergence, relets and consistency between similar properties. Concerns were raised that tenants in comparable homes may pay different rents.

2. **Financial pressures -** Respondents highlighted rising costs from:

- WHQS 2023;
- construction inflation;
- supply chain pressures;
- employer National Insurance;
- maintenance and capital programmes;

- homelessness and temporary accommodation pressures.

3. Rent policy flexibility - Some landlords said the current Welsh Government Social Housing Rent Standard 2026 – 20 36 restricts their ability to meet business plan, investment and landlord obligations.

4. Affordability remains central - Respondents stressed the need to balance affordability with investment in homes, services and new supply.

5. Tenant support and eviction prevention - A few responses referenced continued early intervention, financial support and tenancy sustainment to prevent eviction and homelessness.

Overall responses largely contained limited additional information, but the substantive comments reinforce earlier themes: landlords want greater flexibility and clarity on rent convergence and relets, while managing significant cost pressures and continuing to prioritise affordability and tenant support.