

Dadansoddi ar gyfer Polisi



Analysis for Policy

Ymchwil gymdeithasol
Social research

Rhif/Number: 62/2013



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk

Local Authority projects to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform, using Homelessness Grant funding:

Monitoring report, October 2012 - March 2013 (Period 3)

**Local Authority projects to mitigate the impact of
Housing Benefit reform, using Homelessness Grant
funding:
Monitoring report, October 2012 - March 2013 (Period
3)**

**Knowledge and Analytical Services
Welsh Government**

The data contained in this report is based on the data returns received by the Welsh Government from each local authority during the spring of 2013.

For further information please contact:

Lucie Griffiths

Room 3.12

Cathays Park 1

Welsh Government

Cathays Park

CF10 3NQ

Tel: 029 2082 5780

Email: lucie.griffiths@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Welsh Government Social Research, 2013

ISBN: 978-1-4734-0332-1

© Crown Copyright 2013

Table of contents

Contents: Charts	4
1 Introduction and background	5
2 Summary of Key Findings	7
3 Monitoring system – Data collection returns	8
4 Findings	9
Landlords and tenants provided with services and advice throughout the projects	9
Tenants, Housing Benefit recipients and rent levels	9
Direct Payment of Housing Benefit to landlords	11
Discretionary Housing Payments	12
Homelessness due to private sector rent arrears	13
5 Qualitative information provided by Local Authorities	14
Appendix 1: Summary of progress for each Local Authority in Wales at 31 March 2013	16
Blaenau Gwent	17
Bridgend	18
Caerphilly	19
Cardiff	20
Carmarthenshire	21
Ceredigion	23
Conwy	23
Denbighshire	25
Flintshire	26
Gwynedd	28

Merthyr Tydfil	29
Monmouthshire	30
Neath Port Talbot	31
Newport.....	32
Pembrokeshire	34
Powys.....	35
Rhondda Cynon Taf	35
Swansea.....	36
Torfaen.....	37
Vale of Glamorgan	39
Wrexham.....	40
Appendix 2: Copy of data collection return form.....	42
Glossary of abbreviations	43

Contents: Charts

Chart 1: Rate of private sector tenants in receipt of housing benefit per 1,000 adult population.....	10
Chart 2: Percentage of tenants with weekly rent exceeding LHA rate.....	11
Chart 3: Percentage of tenancies with landlord in receipt of direct housing benefit payments.....	12
Chart 4: Percentage of annual DHP allocation spent at the end of each six month period.....	13

1 Introduction and background

- 1.1 This report presents findings from the third monitoring period (September 2012 – April 2013) for Local Authority (LA) projects set up using Welsh Government Homelessness Grant funding to mitigate the anticipated impact of Housing Benefit reform.
- 1.2 In October 2010, the UK government announced a public spending review and introduced their Welfare Reform Bill. The reforms include a significant number of changes to the way Housing Benefit is calculated and administered. Initial changes were introduced in April 2011 with a rolling programme intended to culminate in the introduction of universal credit. In order to mitigate the anticipated impact of the Housing Benefit changes upon tenancies, the Welsh Government made £1.4 million available for the period April 2011 to March 2014, to Local Authorities for use in introducing a programme of approved work with landlords and tenants with the intention that tenancies can be sustained.
- 1.3 The Welsh Government encouraged LAs to look at their local circumstances and strategic priorities when applying for funding, taking into account the conditions of the grant. This resulted in a number of different models being approved. The models are based on tenant casework, working with landlords, raising awareness of the changes to Housing Benefits and bringing empty homes back into use.
- 1.4 The principal purpose of the grant is for LAs to prevent homelessness as a result of the changes to the Housing Benefit regime. The conditions of the grant specified that, in order to prevent homelessness, Local Authority projects should involve:
 - Identification of and work with vulnerable people to reduce the risk of tenancy breakdown and enable them to access housing.
 - Work with private landlords to sustain and increase access to affordable homes.
 - Work across departmental boundaries.
 - Work with external partners.
 - Adaptation of Housing Benefit team practices.
- 1.5 The Minister responsible for Housing and Regeneration is keen to understand the effects of the grant funding in allowing LAs to bring about innovative solutions to address the risks associated with Housing Benefit changes, and therefore a monitoring and evaluation framework has been put in place.

The framework has two elements:

- (i) A monitoring system has been put in place whereby a small number of standardised quantitative data items and qualitative information are being collected by Welsh Government from all LAs. Data has already been collected and published for Periods 1 and 2 (October 2011 - March 2012 and April 2012 - September 2012).

This report focuses on the data provided by LAs for Period 3 (October 2012 - March 2013) as well as an overview of progress across all three periods.

The monitoring framework will also continue over the following two periods:

- April 2013 – September 2013
- October 2013 – March 2014

- (ii) To complement the monitoring a set of evaluation case studies was also commissioned in 2012. The contract to undertake the work was awarded to a partnership of organisations that are part of the Housing Research Network within the Wales Institute of Social & Economic Research, Data & Methods (WISERD), and was led by Shelter Cymru. The case studies were as follows:

- Partnership between three Local Authorities, incorporating landlord-focused and casework-focused methods: Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.
- Casework-focused methods: Swansea and Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- Landlord-focused methods: Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly.
- Focus on bringing empty homes back into use: Carmarthenshire.

1.6 The case studies provided a more detailed interim process and impact evaluation of the above sample of projects, and present much more detail about their approaches, operation, management and impacts. The case studies commenced in May 2012, with the final report published in May 2013¹. While this report provides an overview of the work of all LAs, the case studies report provides a detailed examination of a sample of seven.

1.7 In addition, the Welsh Government has contributed £120,000 to a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) research programme aimed at measuring the social and demographic impact of Housing Benefit reform. Denbighshire, Cardiff and Rhondda Cynon Taf were selected as pilot study areas for the programme. The research involves some contact

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/latestresearch/local-Local Authority-projects-minimise-impact-housing-benefit-reform-homelessness-grant-funding/?lang=en>

with Local Authority Housing Benefit officers. Interim findings were published in May 2013².

- 1.8 A steering group has been set up to oversee the monitoring and evaluation work, and includes officers from the Welsh Government Homelessness Policy Team and Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS), and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA).

2 Summary of Key Findings

The Key Points arising from the data collection for Period 3 were as follows:

- 2.1 From the inception of the projects to the end of Period 3 nearly 3,000 private sector landlords have been provided with advice and services *for the first time* through the projects. The number of tenants receiving the advice and services provided by the projects *for the first time* (from the inception of the projects to the end of Period 3) is just over 6,000.
- 2.2 At the end of Period 3, the rate of private sector tenants in receipt of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) per 1,000 people (across 14 LA reporting) varied between 15 persons per 1,000³ (the lowest rate, reported in Monmouthshire) and 45 persons per 1,000 (the highest rate, reported in Denbighshire). These figures have stayed broadly the same across all three periods.
- 2.3 At 31 March 2013 (Period 3), the proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate ranged between 0% to 91% for the 19 authorities reporting. This is similar to Period 2, although in Period 1 the range was 35% to 80%.
- 2.4 The rate of tenancies where the landlord was in direct receipt of Housing Benefit payments at 31 March 2013 ranged between 7% and 42%. This differed slightly to the Period 2 (16% to 43%) and to Period 1 (16% to 47%).
- 2.5 At the end of Period 3, over half (eight of 21) of Local Authorities had spent more than half of their annual DHP allocation, compared to less than a quarter in Period 2 and a third in Period 1.
- 2.6 Across both Period 2 and 3 (i.e. the 2012/13 financial year) 8 of 18 LAs reporting spent between 90% to 100% of their allocation.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/monitoring-the-impact-of-changes-to-the-local-housing-allowance-system-of-housing-benefit-interim-report-rr-838>

³ Rate per 1,000 population aged over 16, 2011 Census: Usual resident population by broad age group and local authority, Welsh Government: <https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Census/2011/UsualResidentPopulation-by-BroadAgeGroup-LocalAuthority>

- 2.7 National Statistics⁴ in relation to Period 3, showed that the proportion of homeless households⁵ where rent arrears on private sector dwellings were identified as the main cause of homelessness were very small, at less than 6% in all Local Authorities. This was similar to previous periods, with 6% in Period 2 and 5% in Period 1.
- 2.8 When asked about how DHP applications are processed, 10 of the 21 LAs reporting noted that they used application forms to process claims and nine reported that it was an individual, or team, of Benefit Officers who would receive and make a decision about whether to grant claims.
- 2.9 The majority of LAs (16 of 21) noted the use of income and expenditure information when assessing DHP applications. Six also mentioned other factors, such as establishing why the tenant needed to be in a specific property, as well as looking for previous awards of DHP and for any exceptional circumstances. A further four sought indications that tenants had taken proactive measures to alleviate their situation.
- 2.10 When asked whether or not they target specific groups, one or more specific group(s) were mentioned 18 times by 12 LAs. The most frequent mentions were of targeting due to health reasons (six mentions) or targeting those with greatest need, such as those facing eviction (six mentions). Those of a specific family type, such as lone or foster parent households, were also reported to have been targeted (four mentions).
- 2.11 Some LAs also provided information on the purpose of DHP payment. Seven noted that the payments were to offset the shortfall between Housing Benefit entitlement and their rent, while another two noted that the fund has been used to assist with payments of deposits and rent in advance.

3 Monitoring system – Data collection returns

- 3.1 Local Authorities were issued with monitoring data return forms at the end of March 2013 which sought details relating to the third period (October 2012 – March 2013). The data items included figures about households found to be homeless where rent arrears were a factor, Housing Benefit claimants, rent levels and landlords and tenants supported through their project.
- 3.2 A copy of the data collection return forms for Period 3 appears in Appendix 2.

Data coverage

⁴ Homelessness Statistics, Welsh Government 2013:

<http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx>

⁵ Households which were eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

- 3.3 Of the 22 LAs in Wales, 21 returned data collection forms for Period 3 (compared to 20 LAs in Period 1, and 21 LAs in Period 2). No returns were received from Wrexham or Powys for Period 1. For periods 2 and 3 no return was received from Anglesey.
- 3.4 Most authorities provided figures about the numbers of households found to be homeless where rent arrears were a factor, about the number of tenancies where the landlord was in receipt of Housing Benefit payments, about the amount of Discretionary Housing Payment allocated to them and spent during this reporting period, rent levels and the number of landlords and tenants that had received support during the period.

4 Findings

- 4.1 The paragraphs below present a summary of the data returned. Where appropriate, data from other sources have been included. More detailed information about the data and performance information provided by each LA appears in Appendix 1.

Landlords and tenants provided with services and advice throughout the projects

- 4.2 Throughout periods 1 2 and 3, all LAs provided private sector landlords and tenants with services and advice as part of the project. The mode of services and advice could vary considerably between LAs, from personalised mail to phone or face-to-face contact, so it is not possible to make accurate comparisons between LAs. However total figures for services and advice provided to landlords and tenants, for all LAs who returned relevant data, helps to show the activity funded through this project since October 2011.
- 4.3 From the inception of the projects to the end of Period 3 nearly 3,000 private sector landlords have been provided with advice and services *for the first time* through the projects. The number of tenants receiving the advice and services provided by the projects for the *first time* (from the inception of the projects to the end of Period 3) is just over 6,000.

Tenants, Housing Benefit recipients and rent levels

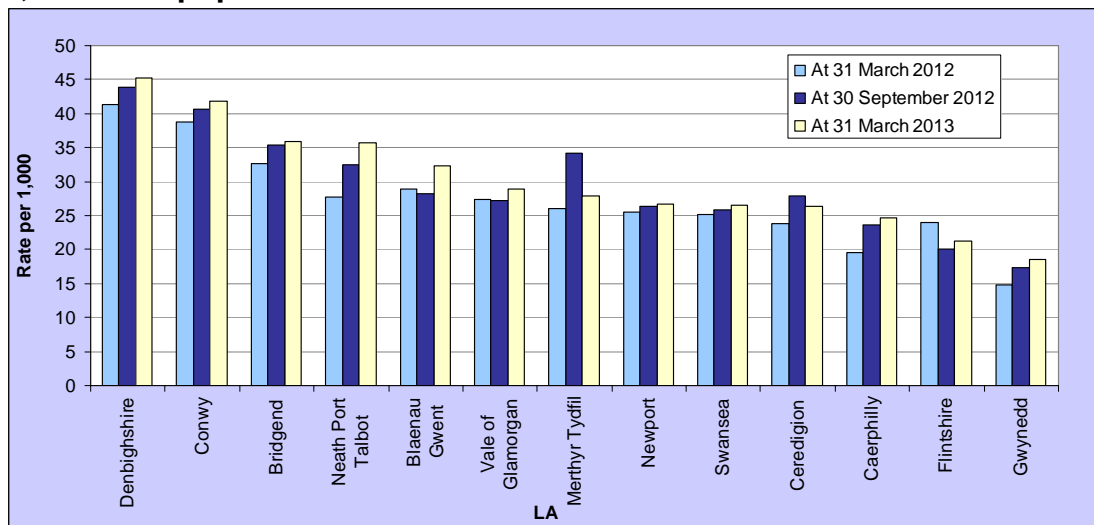
- 4.4 Twenty of 22 LAs provided figures for the number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit at the end of the reporting period. For Period 3, each reported between 15 persons per 1,000⁶ (the lowest rate, reported in Monmouthshire) and 45 persons per 1,000 (the highest rate, reported in Denbighshire). These figures have stayed broadly the same across all

⁶ Rate per 1,000 population aged over 16, 2011 Census: Usual resident population by broad age group and local authority, Welsh Government:
<https://stats.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Census/2011/UsualResidentPopulation-by-BroadAgeGroup-LocalAuthority>

three periods, with Monmouthshire and Denbighshire retaining the lowest and highest rates across periods 2 and 3.

- 4.5 Over the three periods, of the 13 LAs providing returns across all periods, most saw slight increases in the number of persons per 1,000 in receipt of Housing Benefit. The biggest increase was reported in Neath Port Talbot where the number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit at the end of the reporting period, rose from 28 per 1,000 persons in Period 1 to 33 per 1,000 persons in Period 2 to 36 per 1,000 persons in Period 3.
- 4.6 The only LA to see a decrease in the number of tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit at the end of the reporting period was Flintshire with 24 persons per 1,000 in Period 1, falling to 20 persons per 1,000 in Period 2 and rising slightly to 21 persons per 1,000 in Period 3. Chart 1 shows comparisons across periods 1, 2 and 3 for the number of private sector tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit at the end of each period, for each LA that returned relevant data for all periods.

Chart 1: Rate of private sector tenants in receipt of housing benefit per 1,000 adult population



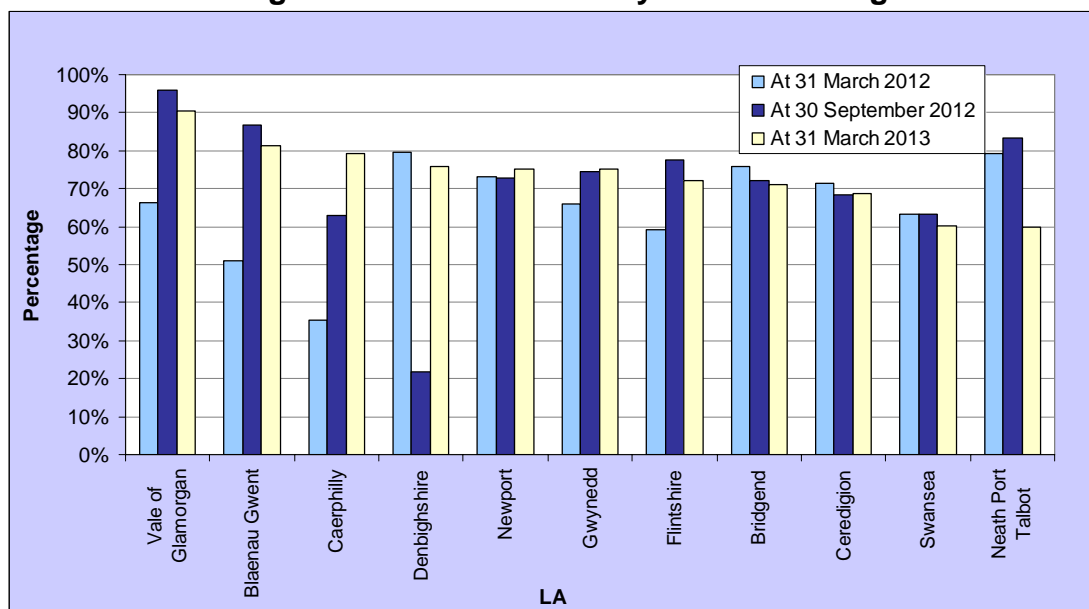
Source: Welsh Government monitoring data collection, periods 1, 2 and 3. Local Authorities reporting in all three periods only.

- 4.7 At 31 March 2013 (Period 3), the proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate ranged between 0% in Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Rhondda Cynon Taf to 91% in the Vale of Glamorgan, with an average of 63% amongst the 19 authorities reporting. This had decreased slightly from Period 2, which saw a range of 0% (Torfaen and Rhondda Cynon Taf) and 96% (Vale of Glamorgan) at 30th September 2012, with an average of 61% amongst the 16 authorities reporting. At 31 March 2012 (Period 1) the range was less, from 35% in Caerphilly to 80% in Denbighshire, averaging 65% amongst 14 authorities reporting.

4.8 Of the 11 LAs who provided responses for each of the three periods, six have reported an increase in the proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate. The biggest increase was reported in Caerphilly: 35% to 63% to 79%, an increase of 55% between Period 1 and 3. Four LAs reported decreases across the three periods in the proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded LHA rate. However, as LAs may not be notified about a rent change until a claimant's case is reviewed, it is possible that this information might be slightly out-of-date.

4.9 Chart 2 shows comparisons between periods 1, 2 and 3 for the proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate at the end of each period, for each LA that returned relevant data for all periods.

Chart 2: Percentage of tenants with weekly rent exceeding LHA rate



Source: Welsh Government monitoring data, periods 1, 2 and 3. Local Authorities reporting in all periods only.

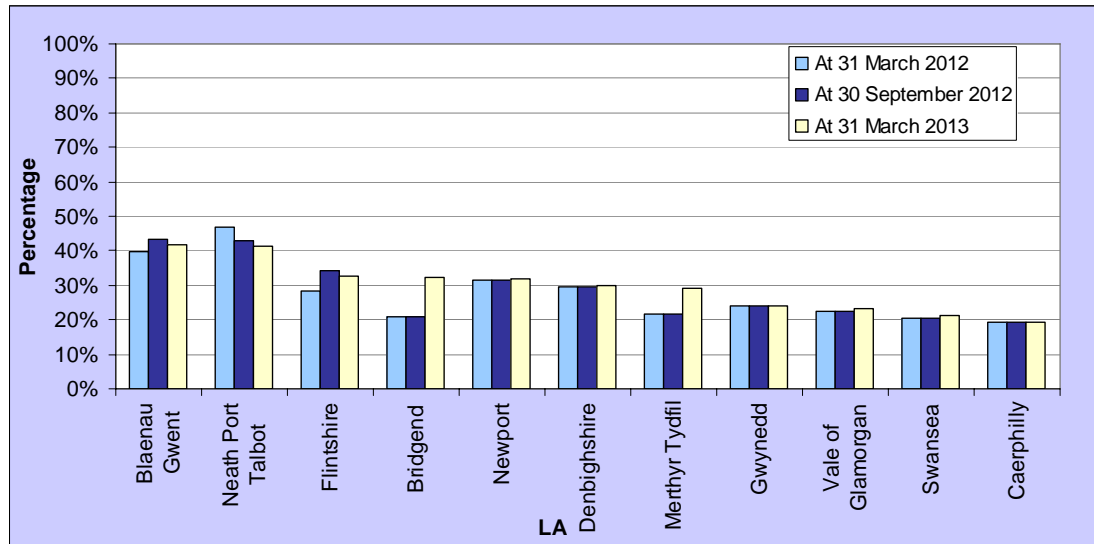
Direct Payment of Housing Benefit to landlords

4.10 Local Authorities were asked to state the number of tenancies where the landlord was in receipt of Housing Benefit payments at 31 March 2012, at 30 September 2012 and 31 March 2013. The rate ranged between 16% (Carmarthenshire) and 47% (Neath Port Talbot) at 31 March 2012 (Period 1). At 30 September 2012 (Period 2), there was a similar range in the rate, 16% (Carmarthenshire and Torfaen) and 43% (Neath Port Talbot and Blaenau Gwent). However at Period 3 this range broadened slightly and was reported as ranging between 7% (Cardiff) to 42% (Blaenau Gwent).

4.11 Chart 3 shows comparisons between periods 1, 2 and 3 for the percentage of tenancies where the landlord was in receipt of Housing

Benefit payments at the end of each period, for each LA that returned relevant data for all periods.

Chart 3: Percentage of tenancies with landlord in receipt of direct Housing Benefit payments



Source: Welsh Government monitoring data collection, periods 1, 2 and 3. Local Authorities reporting in all three periods only.

Discretionary Housing Payments

4.12 The amount of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) allocated to authorities for the full 2011/12 financial year, ranged between over £290,000 in Cardiff to just under £14,000 in Merthyr Tydfil. For the 2012-13 financial year, the amount allocated to authorities ranged between just over £485,500 in Newport to just over £32,000 in Merthyr Tydfil.

4.13 It was assumed that most Local Authorities would spend at least half of their annual allocation during each six month period, the demand for DHPs increasing gradually from January 2012 as tenants' transitional protection came to an end. While in Period 1, only one-third (six out of 18) of LAs reporting, spent more than half of their annual allocation, and less than a quarter (four out of 19) of LAs did so for Period 2, in Period 3 this rose to eight out of 21 LAs.

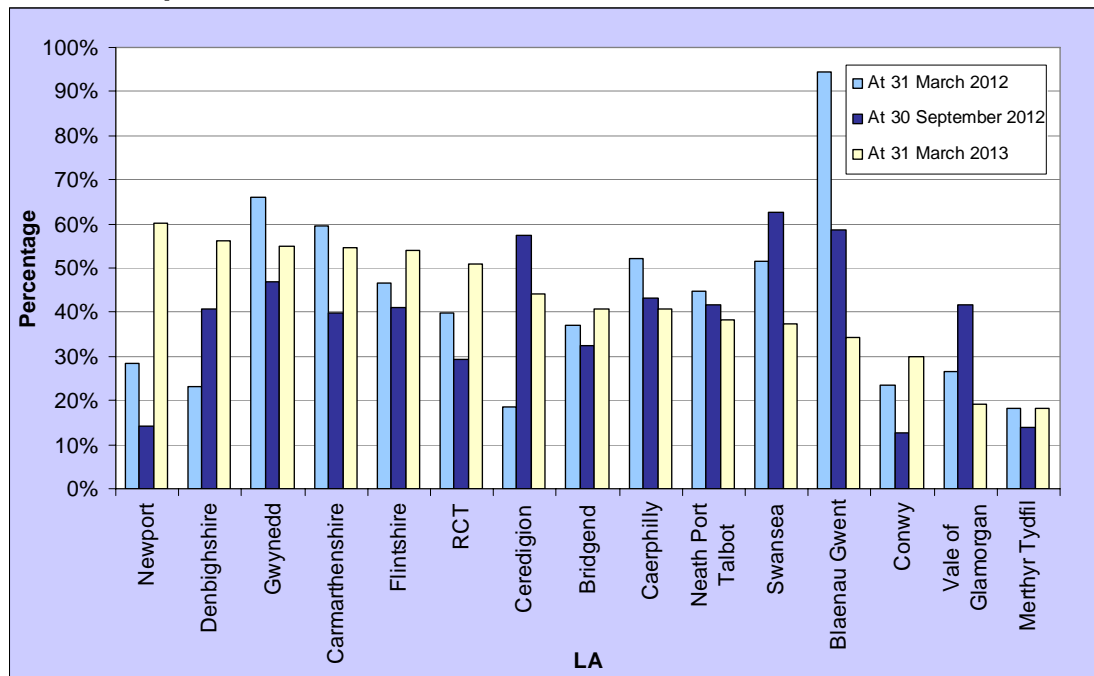
4.14 The lowest rates for Period 3 were in Merthyr Tydfil and Vale of Glamorgan where only 18% and 19% respectively, of the annual DHP allocation was spent in the six months to 31 March 2013.

4.15 Ten LAs reported spending more in Period 3 than in Period 2, eight of the 20 LAs reporting spent over half of their DHP allocation in Period 3, with Wrexham the highest, spending 72% of their allocation in Period 3 (the second half of the financial year). However eight spent less in Period 3 than in Period 2. The biggest margin was found in Swansea where 62% of the allocation was spent in Period 2 and 37% in Period 3. Across both Period 2 and 3 (i.e. the 2012/13 financial year) 8 of 18 LAs

reporting spent between 90% to 100% of their allocation. Ceredigion reports spending 101%⁷, but Merthyr reports spending only 32% of the annual allocation by the end of the financial year. It is important to continue to monitor the level of expenditure by LAs on Discretionary Housing Payments. It is within the power of authorities to spend money from other budgets, above the amount allocated by the DWP, but the monitoring data collected does not indicate that this power has been widely used, perhaps due to other pressures on Local Authority budgets.

4.16 Chart 4 shows comparisons between periods 1, 2 and 3 for the percentage of annual DHP allocation spent at the end of each period, for each LA that returned relevant data for all periods.

Chart 4: Percentage of annual DHP allocation spent at the end of each six month period



Source: Welsh Government monitoring data collection, periods 1, 2 and 3. Local Authorities reporting in all three periods only.

Homelessness due to private sector rent arrears

4.17 National Statistics published in June 2012⁸ in respect of Period 1, showed that the proportion of homeless households⁹ where rent arrears on private sector dwellings were identified as the main cause of homelessness was very small, at less than 5% in all LAs. National Statistics published in December 2012, in respect of Period 2, showed a similarly small proportion (6% or less in all LAs) and again in Period 3

⁷ This LAs allocation was topped up by other funds.

⁸ Homelessness Statistics, Welsh Government 2013:

<http://www.statswales.wales.gov.uk/ReportFolders/reportFolders.aspx>

⁹ Households which were eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need.

the National Statistics showed that the proportion was still at 6% or less in all LAs.

- 4.18 Whilst rent arrears may not be the *main* cause of homelessness in many instances, it is useful to understand the extent to which it may be a factor behind households losing their homes. Please see Appendix 1 for more information on private sector rent arrears as a contributory factor in investigations of homelessness. It is important to note that the factors leading to a household becoming homeless may be complex, and even where rent arrears do not appear to be a contributory factor, financial pressures may underlie other more obvious reasons, such as relationship breakdown.

5 Qualitative information provided by Local Authorities

- 5.1 In addition to the data items, LAs were asked to provide details about how they allocated the Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) fund. This included:

- how they process applications
- the criteria decisions were based upon
- the methods used to assess claimants
- the targeting of any specific groups

- 5.2 Responses to these questions from the 21 LAs who responded are summarised in the paragraphs below.

Processing applications

- 5.3 Ten of the twenty-one LAs noted that they used application forms to process DHP claims and nine reported that it was an individual or team of Benefit Officers who would receive and make a decision about whether to grant claims. There were also six LAs which indicated that they undertook a validation check on the information provided before making a decision about whether to allocate money from the DHP fund.

Criteria for application decisions

- 5.4 Four LAs reported that decisions were made on a case by case basis or on their own merit and five noted that allocation was dependent on guidance from the DHP.

Methods of assessment

- 5.5 Sixteen LAs noted the use of income and expenditure information in assessment, a further four sought indications that tenants had taken

proactive measures to alleviate their situation. Six also mentioned other factors such as establishing why the tenant needed to be in a specific property, as well as looking for previous awards of DHP and for any exceptional circumstances.

Specific groups

5.6 The specific groups targeted by LAs included those who had health issues, which 6 mentioned in relation to disability and illness, and those who were considered to be most in need, which 6 mentioned with examples such as those facing eviction. Four also reported family type as a targeted group, such as lone parent households or those with foster children. Overall one or more specific group(s) were mentioned 18 times by 12 LAs, with the remaining 9 reporting that there were no specific groups targeted.

Other information provided

5.7 In addition to these areas, LAs also provided details related to the uses of DHP payment. Seven noted that the payments were to offset the shortfall between Housing Benefit entitlement and their rent, while another two noted that the fund has been used to assist with payments of deposits and rent in advance.

Appendix 1: Summary of progress for each Local Authority in Wales at 31 March 2013

This section is drawn from the project progress summaries provided by each local authority and appears here in their own words.

The figures relating to homelessness are taken from National Statistics provided for each local authority and are expressed as 'less than 5'. The actual figure could be any number up to four. Actual figures are suppressed from National Statistics due to the risk of identification of individuals or disclosure of facts about them.

The households referred to homeless within the following sections are those household which following assessment, were found to be eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need during the Period, where the main reason for the loss of the last settled home was due to rent arrears on a private sector dwelling.

Anglesey

Anglesey did not submit a return for Periods 2 or 3, so this information applies to Period 1 only (up to 31 March 2012).

Project summary

Anglesey's project recruited a worker in late November 2011 to co-ordinate actions between partner organisations, to negotiate the reduction of rent levels with private sector landlords, to produce a newsletter for tenants and landlords and to facilitate meetings and forums to inform interested parties of changes in the welfare benefit system.

Information from the monitoring data return for the six months to 31st March 2012

The monitoring data return for the six months to 31 March 2012 (Period 1) showed that nearly four-fifths (78%) of housing benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. The authority spent nearly three-quarters of their DHP allocation for the year in this six month period, and noted that they had provided 270 landlords and 92 tenants with services and advice.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Anglesey showed that less than 5 households within the authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. In Periods 2 and 3 there were no households found in this position. The monitoring data return showed that private sector rent arrears were not identified as a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 1 (there is no update available on this).

Blaenau Gwent

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Blaenau Gwent is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

A Tenant Sustainability Officer (TSO) was employed in July 2011 to help residents sustain tenancies and mitigate the impact of welfare reform, initially in relation to the single room rent changes and then for those affected by the welfare reform changes from April 2013.

The TSO is responsible for administration of DHPs, and has also been involved in setting up a landlords' forum as well as a referral systems with advice agencies. They make internal referrals to schemes aiming to support a better quality of life and managing rental liability (e.g. supporting people and bond schemes) and are devising promotional materials and caricature brand for the welfare changes, as well as purchasing a text service to enable customers to text for advice on the changes.

They have attended various meetings with partners to give presentations on the impending welfare reform changes (such as attendance at landlord forums, Supporting People networks and 50 Plus forums) and work closely with the Housing Options team.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The Local Authority previously reported that the new TSO's work with DHPs had led to improved efficiencies, resulting in many applications being assessed within three working days. Prior to October 2011, DHPs took around 16-17 days to process, which was reduced to less than 12 days between April and September 2012, and further to an average of 10-11 days in Period 3.

The TSO, along with admin support, has been proactively contacting all those affected by the Welfare Reform Changes by letter, i.e. 1,500 people affected by the 'under occupation' change in legislation. By giving people beneficial budgeting advice and working with them before the changes took effect this ensured that those who expressed concerns about sustaining their tenancies were equipped with knowledge of the options available to them from April 2013. The TSO also became a first point of contact for many private landlords concerned for their tenants affected by the change in single room rent once transitional protection ended on their claims, and how they could sustain their tenancies.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return showed that the percentage of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate had fallen from 87% in Period 2 to 81% in Period 3. In Period 2 the Local Authority spent 59% of their annual DHP allocation and 34% in Period 3. Ten landlords were provided with services and advice during Period 1 compared with 21 landlords in Period 2 and 10 landlords in Period 3. The Local Authority reported providing services and advice to 73 tenants in Period 1, which increased to 139 tenants during Period 2 before falling to 10 in Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data from the homelessness statistics return for Blaenau Gwent during all 3 periods has shown that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 16 investigations of homelessness during Period 1, 28 investigations in Period 2 and 52 investigations in Period 3.

Bridgend

Project summary

This Local Authority appointed a specialist debt advisor in January 2012 whose role was within both Housing Options and Housing Benefit teams, and intended to provide information events for professionals as well as financial advice, budgeting information for the targeted client group. These include those subject to under occupation reduction and the overall Benefit cap. Those identified as likely to be in hardship are targeted by the financial inclusion officer.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

No details were provided about the Local Authority's monitoring of performance during periods 1 and 2.

The project sees the prevention of homelessness as its key indicator. The outcome of the assessments will be monitored with the aim of assisting the claimants who are / will be affected through the welfare reform (to remain in their current housing or move to a sustainable alternative).

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The previous monitoring data returns showed that at the end of Period 2, 72% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate, which became 71% in Period 3. In Period 2 the Local Authority spent just under a third (32.5%) of their DHP allocation for the year (noting the inclusion of £8,321 carried forward from 2011/12, making their allocation £118,999 for 2012-13), and 41% in Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for all 3 periods from the homelessness statistics return for Bridgend showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless⁴, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in one investigation of homelessness during Period 1, four investigations in Period 2, and five investigations in Period 3.

Caerphilly

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Caerphilly is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

This Local Authority's approach was to appoint a Private Rented Sector (PRS) Access and Advice co-ordinator in August 2011 to make contact with landlords to raise awareness of Housing Benefit changes through welfare reform, signpost affected tenants to sources of help and information and to provide an interface for the Local Authority. They have sought to ensure the DHP award has been effectively utilised and demonstrated the need for a corporate approach to developing a multi-service input to prevent homelessness. In Period 3 Caerphilly has continued to support and foster good relationships with PRS landlords to ensure an adequate number of good quality housing will be available to rent in the area. They have also promoted landlord accreditation, the use of credit union rent accounts and helped landlords and tenants to access alternative housing options such as house-sharing.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The co-ordinator previously focused on the achievement of several key targets, including the promotion of SmartMoney Credit Union payments to landlords and access to money management advice. This work was regarded as successful, having led to 14 new landlords using the SmartMoney facility and the credit union being linked in with DHP claims to assist with money management for tenants in the private rented sector.

In Period 3 specifically, 257 successful DHP awards were made and 65 claims were refused on the grounds that hardship could not be demonstrated. However, referrals were made to the Citizens Advice Bureau and Supporting People where clients were concerned about their financial and general coping situation in the light of the welfare reforms.

The homelessness prevention return for Period 3 shows an overall reduction of 31 on the number of homelessness decisions made compared to the same

quarter in the previous year. Similarly, the number of homeless households and families accommodated in temporary accommodation has reduced by 22 and 23 respectively. While this is believed to be as a result of the Local Authority's corporate approach to homeless prevention, the role of the PRS access and advice coordinator was considered the most valuable in pulling the strands together.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that at the end of the period, 63% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the Local Housing Allowance rate, which rose to 79% in Period 3 (almost 4 in every 5 Housing Benefit recipients). The Local Authority spent 43% of DHP allocation in Period 2 and 41% in Period 3. The Local Authority noted that they had provided 56 landlords in Period 2 with services and advice, which fell to 20 in Period 3. In Period 2, 98 tenants were provided with services and advice, which similarly fell in Period 3 to 61 tenants.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Caerphilly showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy and that less than five households were found in this position for periods 2 and 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 164 investigations of homelessness during Period 1, 13 in Period 2, and 1 in Period 3.

Cardiff

Project summary

This Local Authority recruited a specialist adviser in late September 2012 within the Housing Options Centre. Working jointly with the Housing Benefit department to pro-actively mitigate the effects of Housing Benefit reform, they liaised with landlords and targeted each household in writing, beginning with those most adversely affected (five bedroom occupancy), then four bed occupants and 158 three bed occupants. In total 249 households were contacted during this reporting period. There were 47 households which requested advice and assistance, 32 of which attended appointments. These households received basic debt and budgeting advice, as well as housing and benefit advice and assistance. Grant funding was utilised to secure tenancies.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

Cardiff Local Authority did not provide any performance information or data for periods 1 or 2 and noted that following an induction period for the specialist adviser, work on the project had not begun by the end of Period 2 and this LA did not claim or receive the grant allocation during this time.

In Period 3, against the initial bid, the Local Authority focused on prevention based measures and reporting. Service users who engaged with the Housing Options Centre service following initial contact were monitored. Progress of prevention mechanisms was charted by recording all initial contact with service users and reporting should they then present for advice and assistance under homelessness.

No homelessness applications have been directly correlated with those affected by the LHA changes. The feedback offered to clients was following appointments and in those cases, where complex matters were discussed follow up telephone conversations were made by the officer. Additional appointments were always offered. From the 32 households which made contact, the Officer successfully negotiated seven cases with landlords/agents. This has not necessarily resulted in use of the grant funding available, as some of the landlords have been willing to reduce the rent without financial incentives.

Some tenancies were found to be affordable, others unaffordable. In these circumstances it was recommended that the client secure more affordable accommodation and the Local Authority would assist with the bond and rent in advance. These instances were primarily due to occupation of four-bed properties with a three-bed need and the shortfall in rent being too great. Referrals were made to *Cando Lettings*, a joint scheme to source accommodation. There were occasions where the landlords would not agree to reduce the rent, either in line with LHA rates, or higher than LHA rates, but less than the current tenancy agreement. There were service users who did not want the Local Authority to negotiate with the landlord, these clients were not in arrears.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

No data was provided for Period 2, and in Period 3 62% of the DHP allocation for the year was spent within these six months.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Cardiff showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. In Period 2 the return for Cardiff showed that five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, which rose to eight in Period 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in four investigations of homelessness during Period 1, and five in Period 2 and 3.

Carmarthenshire

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Carmarthenshire is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a

detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

This project was set up to identify potential rental properties and provide financial assistance, minor financial incentives such as interest free loans, and advice to owners of empty homes in order to bring into use otherwise redundant accommodation and to encourage owners and landlords to encourage them provide long-term and affordable private rented accommodation. All properties provided with this assistance are managed by the Local Authority's Social Lettings Agency and all rents are set at or below Local Housing Allowance levels. The plan did not involve appointing a new worker.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

By the end of March 2012, 10 properties had been brought back into use and were being let and managed by the Local Authority's Social Letting Agency. For Period 2 (1 April to 30 September 2012), performance was as follows:

- Target of 20 additional, sustainable units of accommodation were made available in the private rented sector, 15 achieved
- Target of 10 landlords were assisted to bring affordable units of accommodation into the private rented sector, 8 achieved
- Target of 75% of tenants who had been homeless or threatened with homelessness were housed (through the financial assistance, 60% achieved
- Target of 10 additional units of accommodation were being managed through Carmarthenshire's Social Letting Agency as a result of assistance through funding, 8 achieved

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

In Period 2, no information was provided about changes in rent levels or the provision of direct payments to landlords. The Local Authority spent 40% of their DHP allocation for the year during Period 2 and 55% in Period 3. The Local Authority noted that they had provided 180 landlords and 180 tenants with services and advice during Period 1, 130 landlords and 671 tenants during Period 2, and 240 landlords and 387 tenants during Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Carmarthenshire showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in

one investigation of homelessness during Period 1, 105 investigations in Period 2, and 98 in Period 3.

Ceredigion

Project summary

The Officer has been working in partnership with the homelessness/ housing options section to ensure maximisation of tenants benefit/income, using data from the Housing Benefit section to identify affected tenants and make contact. They have also been involved in training various departments throughout the Local Authority, particularly those who have day to day involvement with the general public, as well as RSL staff. The Officer has also attended various events throughout the county giving presentations

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

By the end of March 2012, there had been progress in presenting information to Landlord Forums, and landlord participation had been improved. Homelessness had been prevented in 120 cases by welfare reform advice and information in Period 2, which has increased to 125 cases in Period 3.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st September 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that at the end of the period, 68% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate, which rose slightly to 69% in Period 3. In Period 2, the Local Authority increased their spending to 58% of their DHP allocation for the year, noting that 120 tenants had been provided with services and advice during this period. In Period 3, 85 tenants were provided with services and advice and the Authority spent a further 44% of their DHP allocation for the year, having used an additional £1,817 from internal funds. No data was provided indicating the number of landlords who had received services and advice during all 3 periods.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Ceredigion showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 10 investigations of homelessness during Period 1, one in Period 2 and six in Period 3.

Conwy

Project summary

This project appointed an officer to this post in September 2011 to work with local landlords to assist them in maximising their opportunities with tenants

claiming Housing Benefit by providing support and advice. The project also developed a service to provide private sector landlords with support, advice and services to prevent homelessness resulting from welfare benefit change and ensure social inclusion and equality of access to services. A top priority for 2012-13 was to facilitate the creation of shared accommodation units, engaging new landlords and the development of a database of landlords and landlord forums which was developed to aid communication. The landlord Liaison Officer left the post in January 2013, it is currently in the process of being re-filled. The tasks associated with this post have been distributed within the housing advisory team and continue to be actioned.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

- Target of 50 new landlords advised or assisted in Period 3, 26 achieved. The Local Authority also reached their target of holding two landlord forums (in Period 2 the target was two and one was held).
- Target for the proportion of cases where advice or assistance resulted in landlords adopting due process was 85% and the number achieved was 99.3%, with one illegal eviction (in Period 2 the target was 85%, all cases of advice or assistance resulted in this).
- Target of 24 for the number of reviews of the web resource www.conwy.gov.uk, nine achieved.
- Target of two landlords to be advised on sharing-moving to create new shared tenancies, two achieved (One landlord had been advised on house sharing in Period 2).

The Local Authority feels that the funding has resulted in greatly improved relations with the National Landlords Association. The private sector working group has pulled together specialists in all areas of housing in the Local Authority, with representation from local landlords and *Shelter Cymru*, fire services, corporate improvement, enforcements etc. are now all working together to engage, advise and assist private landlords and form good relationships to help mitigate the impact of the welfare benefit reforms and prevent homelessness.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that 75% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. The Local Authority spent 13% of their DHP allocation for the year during this period, noting that they had provided 33 landlords with services and advice. In Period 3 the Local Authority spent 30% of DHP allocation for the year and 35 landlords were provided with services and advice.

Two tenants were also provided with services and advice in Period 3, though it has been noted previously that tenants identified through the project are

signposted or referred for tenancy support or homelessness services. The project officer is located with these services.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Conwy showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. In Period 2 there were less than five households within the Local Authority that were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, which increased to five in Period 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were not identified as a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 1, two in Period 2 and five in Period 3.

Denbighshire

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Denbighshire is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

This project involved the appointment of a co-ordinator in September 2011 to develop services for vulnerable tenants as a result of welfare benefit changes, to enhance services to landlords and work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies to link relevant services. The project has been concentrating on disseminating the information about the Benefit Changes to a diverse group of private and social tenants. There have also been many presentations to housing projects and social housing providers, support projects and to private landlords, to try and gain the maximum publicity for the changes and what tenants' options are. This has been a mainly training and coordinating role and case working has not been a primary function. The project has adopted a collaborative approach with other agencies as well as other LAs on the project (Flintshire and Wrexham) to share good practice and learning.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

- Target to maintain/increase the number of landlords renting in the private rented sector at LHA rates was 1,500 properties, 1,036 achieved.
- Target of 25 new Landlords to receive advice and assistance from HOHB Liaison Officer, 11 achieved.
- Target of 125 support workers, or people who work with residence face to face, to receive training in regards to welfare reforms, 190 achieved.

- Target to provide advice and assistance in regards to welfare reform changes to 33 vulnerable clients, 44 achieved.
- Target for positive feedback from (landlords/tenants/support workers) was 80%, 100% achieved.

In addition, individuals across 14 services and voluntary groups have attended a welfare reform overview workshop. The project officer has also led on the activity to prepare residents and housing colleagues for the spare room subsidy and as a result a further 370 tenants have been visited prior to the Housing Benefit change and been given information on how the change affects them and what they can do to mitigate against it.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that at the end of the period, 80% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. Just under one-quarter of DHP allocation for the year was spent during this period (23%), and the Local Authority noted that they had provided four landlords and 40 tenants with services and advice through this period. While the proportion that were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate dropped to 22% in Period 2 this rose back to 76% in Period 3. The Local Authority spent 41% of their DHP allocation for the year during Period 2 and 56% in Period 3. Denbighshire also noted that they had provided eight landlords and 19 tenants with services and advice during Period 2, which increased to 11 landlords and 44 tenants during Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Denbighshire showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 35 investigations of homelessness during Period 1, three in Period 2, and none in Period 3.

Flintshire

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Flintshire is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

The Liaison Officer who was appointed in early February 2012 has targeted vulnerable people who are at risk of becoming homeless, offering short term

advice, support, assistance and has signposted for further support needs to mitigate the risk of homelessness and to enable them to live independently. Initially, the Liaison Officer offered support to those affected by the LHA changes to under 35 single people. The Liaison Officer has also been coordinating a response to help those affected by the spare room subsidy. Training internal and external services on the reforms and their impact has been a central role of the officer to reduce their need to refer to specialist services. Providing a low level landlord management and mediations service has also been central to the work undertaken.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

During Period 2, 37 landlords had received advice and assistance from the Liaison Officer and 100% positive feedback was received. One landlord even commented that he is now looking to purchase more properties in the county because of the service he received. Training on welfare reforms, tailored to the requirements of services, was delivered to 274 support or advice services. One-to-one advice and guidance was given to 63 vulnerable clients. Initial assessments of need were conducted, and help given (such as a DHP application) with crisis situations to reduce the risk of homelessness. Referrals to appropriate services were then made and 100% positive feedback had been received from residents.

In Period 3 the project worked towards agreed performance indicators as follows:

- Target to maintain/increase the number of landlords renting in the private rented sector at LHA rates was 1,500 properties, 733 achieved.
- Target of 25 new Landlords to receive advice and assistance from HOHB Liaison Officer, 26 achieved.
- Target of 125 support workers, or people who work with residence face-to-face, to receive training in regards to welfare reforms, 150 achieved.
- Target to provide advice and assistance in regards to welfare reform changes to 33 vulnerable clients, 150 achieved.
- Target for positive feedback from (landlords/tenants/support workers) was 80%, 100% achieved.

In addition 268 individuals across 18 services and voluntary groups attended a welfare reform overview workshop. Of the 106 people who received formal half day welfare reform training, 92% felt confident to provide initial support and guidance to clients affected by welfare reform as a result.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 1 showed that 59% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate and 47% of DHP allocation for the year was spent during the period.

The proportion of Housing Benefit recipients who were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate increased to 77% in Period 2 and 41% of the Local Authority's DHP allocation for the year was spent in Period 2. For Period 3, 72% of tenants were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate and 54% of DHP allocation for the year was. Additionally 26 landlords and 82 tenants were provided with services and advice in Period 3, compared to 37 landlords and 63 tenants in Period 2.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1 and 2 from the homelessness statistics return for Flintshire showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were not identified as a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 1, two in Period 2, and four in Period 3.

Gwynedd

Project summary

This project was funded partly through the grant and partly by the Local Authority to provide a liaison role between the Local Authority, landlords and tenants and to provide training for Local Authority and partner-organisation staff in giving welfare reform advice. An officer was appointed in January 2012. A percentage of the grant was to be used as a Landlord Incentive Fund to support collaboration with the private rented sector through, for example, a rent deposit scheme.

The aims were to continue to identify and support those affected by Housing Benefit and wider welfare reforms, to further develop links with private landlords, partner agencies, Local Authority departments (including positive input to the Private Rented Sector Improvement Plan), to promote affordable housing solutions in both the private and social sector, and to work closely with the Housing Benefit team to promote fast tracking and effective use of the Discretionary Housing Payment fund.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

In Period 2, the project identified 49 cases of significant shortfall, with 33 contacts made and advice given. Of these, 21 resulted in additional Housing Benefit or DHP payments and nine Incentive Fund Payments were made totalling £3,995. In relation to these referrals, 14 landlords and agents were contacted to provide advice and information. An additional 15 contacts were made with landlords and agents identified as having tenants in receipt of benefit, and information about Local Housing Allowance changes and welfare reform developments was provided. A further 11 agents were e-mailed to offer advice and support. Presentation and networking activities were also undertaken with 11 partner agencies and support providers during this period.

The project has been monitored by the Benefits Action Sub Group. A work plan was set out for the year with quantifying worksheets which tie in with Performance Indicators formulated as specified by Welsh Government. During Period 3 the project has identified and advised 36 clients. Of these, 16 resulted in additional Housing Benefit or DHP payments (with a 26 week multiplier applied, this amounts to £6,274.32) and 9 Incentive Fund Payments were made totalling £5,110. In relation to these referrals 21 landlords and agents were contacted to provide advice and information.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

Period 2 and 3 data showed that 75% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. During Period 2 the Local Authority spent 47% of their DHP allocation for the year, noting that 29 landlords and 33 tenants were provided with services and advice. In Period 3, 58% of DHP allocation for the year was spent (The Authority contributed additional funding of £6,970), with 21 landlords and 36 tenants being provided with services and advice.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Gwynedd showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, which decreased to 0 in periods 2 and 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in nine investigations of homelessness during Period 1, five in Period 2 and two in Period 3.

Merthyr Tydfil

Project summary

The project was set up to provide housing advice and support to individuals to find affordable and appropriate accommodation and to sustain tenancies. A Tenancy Sustainability and Homelessness Prevention Officer was appointed in November 2011. The project has entailed closer collaborative working with all Local Authority departments and has been successful in relation to co-operative working with the Housing Benefit Team where joint working has been able to identify and offer support to households who are experiencing tenancy or Housing Benefit issues.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

For both periods it was noted that the appropriate advice, assistance and support has prevented some issues being problematic and alleviated issues relating to Housing Benefit which have resulted in tenancies being maintained. In Period 2, 13 tenancies were sustained at current accommodation address; in 6 cases, homelessness was prevented by finding alternative accommodation in the private rented sector. Over this period, 11

individuals were referred to a specialised support service; and 5 landlords were worked with to develop affordable accommodation for single persons within the Local Authority area. The Local Authority noted for Period 3 that the identified and targeted households for the project have been case worked and solutions found. There were no 'active' cases which were initially identified in relation to the project.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that the proportion of tenants for whom the weekly rate exceeded the LHA rate for this period was remarkably high (92%). The Local Authority spent 14% of their DHP allocation for the year during Period 2, noting that they had provided five landlords and 32 tenants with services and advice. In Period 3, 85% of tenants were charged a weekly rent that exceeded the LHA rate and the Local Authority spent 18% of their DHP allocation for the year. There were no landlords or tenants that received services or advice (given that solutions were found).

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Merthyr Tydfil showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in five investigations of homelessness during Period 1, two in Period 2 and no investigations during Period 3.

Monmouthshire

Project summary

Monmouthshire and Torfaen established a joint action plan to raise awareness amongst the authorities' customers of welfare benefit reform, and to advise them about housing options, through working with key partners and other stakeholders. The plan did not involve appointing a new worker.

Through the joint action plan, Monmouthshire and Torfaen's approach identified four areas for improvement which contributed toward offsetting the Housing Benefit changes in particular, but also addressed the wider benefit changes of the introduction of universal credit by supporting people through the welfare change; maximising uptake of the private rented market; working with key partners; and the provision of information and communication. During Period 3 the projects set up within the Joint Action Plan have continued and consolidated for future sustainability.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

For Period 2, it was noted that regular quarterly monitoring meetings are co-ordinated where the action plan is updated and reviewed, and regular

development meetings are co-ordinated with the nominated RSL delivering a shared housing scheme. Feedback questionnaires are collected at landlord forums and landlord accreditation sessions. In Period 3 the funding has significantly enabled both Local Authorities to develop a joint landlord forum with six landlord forums being held to date and over 80 landlords attending regularly from across both areas. There were five landlord accreditation sessions held, with an additional 10 vouchers for future use. Through the landlord forum 70 landlords are now fully accredited and have benefited from additional training. Regular landlord newsletters are now produced, providing supporting information and guidance for private landlords in Monmouthshire. A six unit share housing scheme for single people aged under 35 is now nearing completion and is expected to be up and running by July.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The Local Authority did not provide details for the monitoring data return in Period 1, apart from the below figures for investigations of homelessness. For Period 2, no data was provided regarding the proportion of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate or about the number of landlords and tenants who were provided with services and advice. The amount of DHP allocation for the year spent during Period 2 was over half (54%) and 37% in Period 3. There were no Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector for whom weekly rent exceeded the LHA rate in Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1,2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Monmouthshire showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in two investigations of homelessness during Period 1, one in Period 2, and none in Period 3.

Neath Port Talbot

Project summary

This project was set up to provide a dedicated post to improve the housing advice provided by other agencies, to work directly with vulnerable tenants affected by the Housing Benefit changes, to support the Social Lettings Agency in its work to sustain tenancies, and to develop guidance and training for Housing Benefit staff.

The approach involved integrating the grant-funded post with the core retention work of the Housing Options Service. The officer is effectively working alongside the housing options officers to assist in the prevention of homelessness within the private sector and manage a case load. During Period 3 they have worked closely with the Housing Benefit Section, and local

housing providers to assist in administering DHP claims for tenants affected by the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The post holder has continued to attend the Landlord forums and the work of the post holder as part of the bid is reviewed on a quarterly basis by a multi-agency group attend by the Housing Benefit staff, Welfare Rights, Housing Options Service, in house Social Lettings Agency and Supporting People Team. During Period 3 the post holder has attended 15 meetings providing housing related advice which include meetings for 'benefits are changing' by Welfare Rights, Welfare Reform and meetings with third sector support providers in the area i.e. *DIP*, *Gofal* and *Dewis* to promote the changes and raise awareness.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

Period 2 data was similar to the first period, showing that 83% of Housing Benefit recipients were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. The Local Authority spent 42% of their DHP allocation for the year during this period, noting that they had provided 74 landlords and 95 tenants with services and advice. In Period 3, 60% of Housing Benefit recipients were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate and 38% of DHP allocation for the year was spent. 59 landlords and 105 tenants were provided with services and advice.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Neath Port Talbot showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, in periods 2 and 3 there were no households in this position. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 19 investigations of homelessness during this period and this was not identified as a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 2 (though the Local Authority noted this had been difficult to assess due to landlords not providing reasons) and two investigations in Period 3.

Newport

Project summary

The focus of this project was to develop sustainable accommodation options through the provision of small improvement grants and other incentives to landlords, such as free lettings and sign-ups, the in-house rent guarantee scheme and free access to specialist services such as surveying and legal work. These incentives are provided to encourage them to rent their properties via the lettings agency at affordable rents and to prospective tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit. The project also aimed to develop flat-sharing and spare room letting schemes. This period has seen a marketing

campaign to attract landlords to the Letting Agency including radio, newspaper and magazine advertising. An enhanced incentive package for landlords to encourage the letting of properties to Housing Benefit clients at Local Housing Allowance rates or below has continued to be provided. This has consisted of free sign up and letting fees for landlords alongside a safety net for costs arising from the provisions of a rent guarantee scheme.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

By the end of Period 2, the number of flat share units that had been set up was 14, this rose to 23 units set up or advertised in Period 3. During Period 2, 256 people under the age of 35 had registered for shared accommodation, this fell slightly to 185 in Period 3. Seventeen properties had either been let or were ready to let (with 30% of these properties let to potentially homeless households) in Period 2, while 9 were let or ready to let in Period 3.

In Period 2 there were 39 properties either in management or waiting to go into management, this remained similar at 37 in Period 3. Legal costs associated with loans for minor repair grants made by the lettings agency, were making small loans expensive for potential owners, and none were issued during the period.

In Period 3, there were 16 properties where future letting had been agreed with landlords. Loans for minor repair grants made by the Letting Agency are falling under the consumer credit act. As such, legal costs associated with each case are making small loans expensive for potential owners.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that the proportion of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector who were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate was 73%, consistent with Period 1. In the same period, the Local Authority spent 14% of their DHP allocation for the year, and the Local Authority noted that they had provided 72 landlords and 508 tenants with services and advice. For Period 3, 75% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate and the Local Authority spent 60% of their DHP allocation for the year. During the period 70 landlords and 373 tenants were provided with service and advice.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Newport showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, which increased to 15 households in Period 2 and remained at 15 in Period 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 32 investigations of homelessness during period one, 17 in Period 2 and 16 in Period 3.

Pembrokeshire

Project summary

This Local Authority planned to use the grant funding to give advice and assistance to the private sector to help sustain their tenancies, through training for staff, provision of information to landlords, financial top-ups and bond and rent advance payments to assist tenants to move to more affordable accommodation. The plan did not involve appointing a new worker.

During Period 3, the focus was on mitigating the impact of future changes to the Housing Benefit system by:

- ensuring staff are up to date on who will be affected and by how much.
- supporting households to remain or create sustainable tenancies.
- helping households access advice.
- providing households with accurate information.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

For Period 2, the Local Authority noted that 12 people had been assisted through the Assisted Tenancy Scheme, this rose to 16 in Period 3. In Period 2 25 people had been provided with a travel warrant to attend the Support Agency Office for advice and assistance. Also in Period 2, 15 people had been assisted via a Prevention Fund aimed at sustaining tenancies, this fell slightly to 13 in Period 3. Ten social and private tenants had been provided with low level tenancy support, in Period 2, this rose to 25 in Period 3. A newsletter had been prepared to inform social housing tenants about the affects of changes and training was undertaken (120 attended over 8 sessions).

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The Local Authority did not provide details for the monitoring data return in Period 2, apart from figures for investigations of homelessness, shown below. They also noted that 43 tenants had been provided with services and advice during this period. During Period 3, 76% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate and 20% of DHP allocation for the year was spent. During the period 16 landlords and 38 tenants were reported to have been provided with services and advice.

Homelessness statistics

Data for all 3 periods from the homelessness statistics return for Pembrokeshire showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in one investigation of homelessness during Period 1, 49 in Period 2 and none in Period 3.

Powys

Project summary

This project was set up to second an experienced benefits officer to act as liaison officer for tenants and landlords, and to supplement the Discretionary Housing Payments fund over and above the expected Welsh Government contribution. The Local Authority did not claim any funding or run a project and provided no performance information or data for Period 1.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

In Period 2, the only figures provided were those indicating the percentage of DHP allocation for the year spent in the second period (33%), in Period 3 a further 30% was spent. No grant funding was allocated for Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for all three periods from the homelessness statistics return for Powys showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. No monitoring data return was provided by this Local Authority to show whether private sector rent arrears were a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during periods 1 and 2, and there were no instances of this in Period 3.

Rhondda Cynon Taf

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Rhondda Cynon Taf is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

This project was set up to fund an Advice Worker/Co-ordinator to liaise jointly with the Housing Benefit Department and the Housing Advice Centre, to provide advice for clients affected by the benefit changes both in the social and private sector, as well as supporting landlords to help mitigate the impact of changes on the private rented sector. The co-ordinator was appointed on 31 May 2012.

The Tenancy Sustainability officer makes contact with individuals to offer advice and assistance, including completion of a Discretionary Housing Payment application and helping them to identify cheaper accommodation. The officer also works closely with other agencies and Community Groups to provide information to the wider community on their benefit issues.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The Local Authority provided no performance information for Period 1. For Period 2, it was reported that the 211 clients supported (see below) had each been paid up to three home visits. The Local Authority had assisted 100% of people referred and met a target of 85% in respect of the prevention of homelessness.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

Period 2 and 3 data shows that 0% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. The Local Authority spent 29% of their DHP allocation for the year during Period 2, and 51% of their allocation in Period 3. The Local Authority noted that 38 landlords and 211 tenants had been provided with services and advice during Period 2, which fell to 4 landlords and 118 tenants in Period 3.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Rhondda Cynon Taf showed that less than five within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. No monitoring data return was provided by this Local Authority to show whether private sector rent arrears were a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 1. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in one investigation of homelessness during Period 2 and six investigations in Period 3.

Swansea

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Swansea is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

A post was created to work with and provide a point of contact for tenants housed in the private sector, both through the Bond Board (currently approximately 200 tenancies) and non-Bond Board tenants, to prevent households from becoming homeless through early interventions before a crisis situation. The role also includes negotiating for lower rents with landlords and assisting tenants in securing alternative cheaper housing. An officer was appointed to the post in September 2011 and the project for Period 3 specifically has involved caseworking of private tenants who are impacted by the welfare reform on their Housing Benefit claims, as well as negotiation with landlords, DHP claims, income maximisation, assisting with

other one off and discretionary payments and a landlord event to recruit and advise landlords.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

In Period 2, 40 more tenants were referred and accepted, making a total of 99 against the annual target of 150. In Period 3, 32 referrals were made against the Period 3 target of 75. An additional 33 tenants did not have to leave their homes in Period 2, as a result of benefit reductions, making a total of 41 against the annual target of 75. In Period 3, against a target of 37, 18 tenants did not have to leave their homes as a result of benefit reductions. Eleven further tenants found alternative suitable housing in the private rented sector, making a total of 17 against the annual target of 25. In Period 2, 3 tenants out of a target of 12 found alternative suitable housing in the private rented sector. Also, in Period 2 an additional seven landlords reduced their rent, making a total of 10 against an annual target of 75. Against the Period 3 target of, 37 3 landlords reduced their rent.

It was noted that difficulty in obtaining consent to approach landlords, and an inability to monitor “tacit” acceptance of a lower rent may have contributed to this. Apparent poor performance on rents reduced is also likely to be as a result of *IKON & Bond Board* projects recruiting/negotiating a significant number of LHA rate LL’s, hence the post holder's involvement in these was limited.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 found that 63% of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate, this fell to 60% in Period 3. In Period 2 the Local Authority spent 63% of their DHP allocation for the year and then 38% in Period 3. The Local Authority noted that they had provided 37 landlords and seven tenants with services and advice during Period 2, which became 17 landlords and 31 tenants in Period 3. The Local Authority believes short-term measures such as DHP has contributed to tenants maintaining their tenancies.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Swansea showed that eight households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, which increased to 14 in periods 2 and 3. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in 34 investigations of homelessness during Period 1, 15 investigations during Period 2 and 10 in Period 3.

Torfaen

Project summary

The principles of the project was a joint approach with Monmouthshire County Borough Local Authority to raise awareness amongst the authorities' customers of welfare benefit reform, and to advise customers about housing options through working with key partners and other stakeholders. The plan did not involve appointing a new worker. It included a number of individual initiatives which contributed toward offsetting welfare benefit reform. All funding has been fully utilised resulting in a six unit share housing scheme for single people under 35, six landlord forums being held, five landlord accreditation sessions held with an additional 10 vouchers for future use, creation of a recyclable bond for the Private Rented Sector, assisting Registered Social Landlords partners with written literature, tenant training sessions being held, credit union support within Monmouthshire.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

In Period 2, it was noted that regular quarterly monitoring meetings were co-ordinated where the action plan is updated and reviewed, and regular development meetings were co-ordinated with the nominated RSL delivering the shared housing scheme. Feedback questionnaires were collected at landlord forums and landlord accreditation sessions.

For Period 3 the Local Authority reported that through the funding, the landlord forums have developed significantly with now over 80 landlords attending regularly (previously 20 +). There are currently over 600 single people aged under 35 registered to Torfaen common housing register so the development of share accommodation specifically for this group is a significant step forward and will be rolled out across the LA. There are now 70 fully accredited landlords who have benefited from additional training. Regular landlord newsletters are now produced providing supporting information and guidance for private landlords in Torfaen. School children aged 16-18 have also benefited from housing advice and information through presentations given by housing officers.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

Period 2 and 3 data showed that at the end of the period, no Housing Benefit recipients were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate. The Local Authority spent 47% of their DHP allocation for the year during Period 2, as well as noting that they had provided 400 landlords and 350 tenants with services and advice throughout Period 2 and 404 landlords in Period 3 (services and advice for tenants was carried out by external partners). Information on DHP allocation spend for Period 3 was not provided.

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Torfaen showed that no households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that

private sector rent arrears were not identified as a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during periods 1, 2 or 3.

Vale of Glamorgan

Project summary

This project was set up to appoint a tenancy and benefits support co-ordinator, to liaise with tenants of all tenures to inform and guide through the changes to benefits. The officer was appointed in September 2011.

In Period 3, the Local Authority reported benefit take up campaigns (extension to existing work to add in advice around benefit changes), attendance at meetings to promote benefit change work (landlord forums, homelessness forums). Welfare Reform road shows have been held in various locations with staff from Benefits/Job Centre Plus/ Pension Service/Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and those affected by changes were sent letters advising of these road shows. DHP was specifically promoted to those affected by the changes and awareness training took place for other departments and agencies.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

For Period 2, it was noted that all under-35s affected, and those subject to the 30th percentile and non-dependent deductions had been contacted several times to offer advice and assistance by telephone, face-to-face and by post. DHPs had been awarded. Budgeting advice had been given and referrals to CAB were made where necessary. Assistance and advice from the liaison officer was advertised at events and in publications and presentations were made to a number of supporting groups about welfare reform changes and advice points.

The liaison officer left the post in July 2012, after which a part-time officer was appointed to continue their work. In Period 3, a service offered by the homeless section offers, whereby landlords/letting agents can refer someone to them if there are any concerns so that the Local Authority could try and intervene at an early date to try and prevent homelessness/arrears, has been promoted. DHPs were targeted to those affected by the changes to try and keep them in their homes or if someone needs to move funds can be provided for a bond and for rent in advance. Under 35's have also continued to be targeted by DHPs and if they are 35 within a year the Local Authority has paid DHP. The Local Authority has also targeted those who have reasons why they would be unsuitable for shared accommodation.

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

The monitoring data return for Period 2 showed that proportion of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate increased to 96%, the highest percentage out of all LAs, this fell to 91% in Period 3 but remained the highest of all Local Authorities reporting. The Local Authority spent 42% of its DHP allocation for

the year in Period 2 and 19% in Period 3. The Local Authority noted that they had provided 55 landlords and 374 tenants with services and advice in Period 2, a huge increase from the first period, and in Period 3 20 landlords and 5 tenants were provided with services and advice (the Local Authority noted that numbers were lower in this period because efforts had been concentrating on contacting all those affected by under occupancy).

Homelessness statistics

Data for periods 1, 2 and 3 from the homelessness statistics return for Vale of Glamorgan showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless, where the main reason was rent arrears on a private sector tenancy. The monitoring data return from this Local Authority showed that private sector rent arrears were identified as a contributory factor in six investigations of homelessness during Period 1, 10 in Period 2 and four in Period 3.

Wrexham

The project to mitigate the impact of Housing Benefit reform in Wrexham is one of seven projects which were made the subject of a detailed case study, also published on the Welsh Government website. Please follow this link to Welsh Government housing research for the case studies report.

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/research/housing/?lang=en>

Project summary

This project was set up to appoint a co-ordinator to develop the welfare benefit changes services. The role involved enhancing services to landlords, work in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies to link services, and ensuring that the private rented sector remains and develops into an affordable housing option for local residents.

The co-ordinator was appointed in May 2012. In Period 3 the role involved raising awareness of LHA changes to private sector landlords & affected tenants as well as informing people of wider welfare reform changes as and when they occur. The postholder is not an individual caseholder and would provide signposting advice and basic advice where applicable in dealing with customers.

Performance reported by the Local Authority for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

For Period 2, the Local Authority noted that the number of landlords who let to tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit had been maintained, and that information, guidance or support had been provided for 181 people. It was also noted that use of the liaison officer has helped see an improvement in Housing Benefit processing times despite a significant work increase. In Period 3 the Local Authority reported that they had maintained the number of landlords who have let to tenants in receipt of Housing Benefit, as there is no

evidence that landlords have left the market. This is partly because of the communications by the liaison officer as landlords have a point of contact to raise any queries. As the postholder was appointed in May 2012, unfortunately there is no historic data to compare this against.

Support has been provided to 181 people, and whilst this is not caseholding, the postholder would provide basic advice and support and highlight to more specialist organisations where appropriate. Use of DHP policy and processing has been reviewed and work was reported to be continuing with private sector landlords. The officer has provided training to over 280 front line staff, to ensure that staff can provide accurate advice as relating to Welfare Reform to ensure that customers are aware of appropriate changes. Customer feedback has been undertaken which has identified a 100% satisfaction rate with training provided. Work has also started in conjunction with Digital Inclusion Teams

Information from the monitoring data return for the 12 months to 31st March 2013

No data was provided for the proportion of Housing Benefit recipients in the private rented sector were charged rent that exceeded the LHA rate, in Period 3 74% of Housing Benefit recipients were in this position. The Local Authority spent 27% of their DHP allocation for the year in Period 2, and 73% in Period 3. In Period 2, 85 landlords and 400 tenants had been provided with services and advice, and in Period 3 this became 10 landlords and 280 tenants.

Homelessness statistics

Data for Period 1 from the homelessness statistics return for Wrexham showed that less than five households within the Local Authority were found to be homeless due to rent arrears on a private sector tenancy, in periods 2 and 3 no households were in this position. No monitoring data return was provided by this Local Authority to show whether private sector rent arrears were a contributory factor in any investigations of homelessness during Period 1, six in Period 2 and five in Period 3.

Appendix 2: Copy of data collection return form

Homelessness Grant Programme: Collection of Data and Monitoring Information

Email [Alicia Friend](#)
Reporting period 4 - 1st April - 30th September 2013

This form collects data and monitoring information for the evaluation of the S180 Homelessness Grant.

This sheet is the main data collection form. There is also a technical guidance sheet explaining how the form should be used. The technical guidance can be accessed using the hyperlink on the right.

The box on the right shows the proportion of data entry cells that contain data. Please do not submit your form unless this cell shows a figure of 100%

[Go to Technical Guidance](#)

0%


Local Authority

(Please enter the name of your authority)

Please provide contact details for your authority below. This will help us to direct any queries to the correct contact.

Name	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	✘
Telephone number	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	✘
E-Mail address	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	✘

(Form completed by/Main contact for data queries)



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Guidance on interpretation of questions is available as a separate Q&A document. Please contact Alicia Friend if you don't think you have the latest version. If an answer is unknown or not applicable please leave the response box blank and add a suitable comment.

Quantitative Measures	Comments
1.1 Number of all homeless households for which decisions were taken (not including households which were not homeless, or which were ineligible) where the investigation revealed that rent arrears were part of the reason for homelessness (private sector tenancies).	✘
1.2 Number of tenants in private sector rented dwellings for which Local Housing Allowance is payable and housing benefit is paid.	(i) Total tenants at the last day of the reporting period. ✘
(ii) Where weekly rent exceeded LHA. At the end of the reporting period. Proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent exceeded LHA.	✘ Must be less than 12 (i).
(iii) Number of tenancies where the landlord was in receipt of direct housing benefit payments at 30/09/2013. The rate of tenancies where the landlord received direct payment of housing benefit payments at 30/09/2013.	✘ Must be less than 12 (i)
1.3 The total amount of Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Discretionary Housing Payment allocated to this Local Authority for the financial year 2013-14. Have you topped up your allocation from other funding sources? (If yes, please state sources in comments area). The amount of DWP Discretionary Housing Payment allocation that was spent during the reporting period (i.e. April 2013 - September 2013). The percentage of DWP Discretionary Housing Payment allocation that was spent during the reporting period. (Equals the amount spent during the period as a percentage of half the allocation for the financial year.)	✘ ✘ ✘ Must be less than 13 (i)
1.4 Number of private sector landlords provided with services and advice through this project during this reporting period, for the first time. (Landlords receiving personalised mail or contact only. Do not include generic publicity or events).	✘
1.5 The number of private sector tenants provided with services and advice through this project during this reporting period, for the first time. (Tenants receiving personalised mail or contact only. Do not include generic publicity or events).	✘
Number of tenants in social rented dwellings who are in receipt of housing benefit.	(i) Total tenants at the last day of the reporting period. ✘
(ii) Tenants for whom weekly rent is higher than their housing benefit, due to the number of bedrooms exceeding Proportion of tenants for whom weekly rent is higher than housing benefit, due to the number of bedrooms exceeding	✘
Qualitative measures	
2.1 Of the number of claimants who were found to have existing adaptations in their home, what percentage were successful in claiming DHP? Of those who were unsuccessful, what were the most common reasons for refusal? (850 character limit applies)	
2.2 How does your local authority treat disability related benefits when considering DHP claims? If these benefits are considered as income, what efforts does your local authority take to identify and therefore disregard disability related benefits which may be committed to other liabilities for which the money was intended, (e.g. Motability schemes, provision of care, increased laundry costs, higher heating bills, accessible taxi fares costs, equipment, essential dietary requirements costs, special clothing (because of wear and tear), internet costs, therapies etc?) (850 character limit applies)	
Further details	
3.1 Please use the box below to briefly summarise the approach of your project and its principal elements during this period. (850 character limit applies)	
3.2 Please use the box below to provide further performance information about your project. Please use the evaluation approach you identified in Part II (iii) in your bid and identify any changes. Quantifiable measures must be included. Figures and other evidence must be related to this reporting period only. (850 character limit applies)	

Glossary of abbreviations

DHP	Discretionary Housing Payment
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
HB	Housing Benefit
LA	Local Authority
LHA	Local Housing Allowance