

Management response form



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Audited body	Cyngor Gwynedd
Audit name	Temporary accommodation, long-term crisis?
Issue date	06/08/2025

Ref	Recommendation	Commentary on planned actions	Completion date for planned actions	Responsible officer (title)	Audit Wales Only
R1	<p>Value for Money</p> <p>We found that councils are not able to demonstrate that they are securing value for money in their temporary accommodation provision.</p> <p>To address this councils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensure the full range of approaches and options for temporary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Homelessness Service has carried out an inspection of all properties used to accommodate households, including their facilities and owners based on Government-defined 'Fit and Proper Person' requirements. <p>As a result of those inspections, recommendations were made for improvements to the property and/or property business arrangements.</p>	Ongoing	Homelessness Manager	

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	<p>accommodation provision are considered; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out how they will assess and monitor the overall value for money of temporary accommodation provision, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the intended outcomes; and also - the information they will use to assess the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of their temporary accommodation provision. 	<p>The intention is to continue with the arrangements to carry out these inspections on a regular basis. The Homeless Review (to comply with section 51 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014) will take place during 2025/26 which will surely reinforce the work that has already taken place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Service will continue to challenge costs on a regular basis, writing to property owners highlighting the emergency accommodation cost situation and setting an acceptable maximum nightly cost. • Following the creation of an internal system for recording and monitoring emergency accommodation bookings and expenditure, we have seen an improvement in the efficiency of our 	<p>Ongoing as required</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Homelessness Manager</p> <p>Homelessness Manager</p>	

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		<p>processes, and have a better overview of our spending. We will continue with these arrangements including setting up weekly meetings between our accountant, finance team and Homelessness Service Manager to monitor expenditure in order to identify patterns and proactively identify solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with the Council's Procurement Unit have been arranged to discuss the situation and emergency accommodation procurement options with the aim of facilitating arrangements and ensuring value for money. • Have and continue to identify suitable properties to buy for the purpose of accommodating homeless individuals e.g. Crown Building, Caernarfon and Tŷ 	<p>September 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Homelessness Manager</p> <p>Assistant Head of Housing and Property</p>	

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		Glyn, Bangor. Our hope is that this will lead to savings and a better standard of accommodation for homeless individuals.			
R2	<p>Planning for Prevention</p> <p>We found that while all councils have Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans in place, these are of variable quality. To effectively plan to prevent homelessness councils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure they use relevant data to make the best possible estimate of future demand for homelessness services; • include a range of primary, secondary and tertiary approaches in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is unclear whether this is a problem in Gwynedd, and our Rapid Rehousing Plan has been praised by the Government. • We can confirm that the Action Plan of our Rapid Rehousing Plan is currently being reviewed and that progress has been made. <p>As mentioned above, we are embarking on a Homelessness Audit which will eventually form the basis for our Homelessness Strategy. Alongside this we are</p>	End of 2026	Commissioning Team Leader	

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	<p>their plans, with the emphasis on primary prevention where possible;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • model the impact of policy changes on the skills and capacity needed in their workforce; • identify the workforce they will need to address demand for temporary accommodation in the future; and • set out how they will assess and monitor the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of their approach to preventing and reducing demand for temporary accommodation. 	<p>undertaking a Needs Assessment as part of the planning process for the Housing Support Grant which will form the basis of the Housing Support Strategy. According to the latest expectation from the Government, both these strategies will be merged into a single Housing Support and Homelessness Strategy. While the timeline for the rollout of these strategies has been extended to April 2027, we plan to roll out our strategy before the end of 2026.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Strategy, based on the information identified in the Needs Assessment and Homelessness Review, will consider all options for the provision of homelessness 			

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		<p>prevention services, whether statutory or otherwise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rapid rehousing ethos will be woven into the strategy to ensure that those values underpin the strategic direction of the strategy. • In terms of data, a new computer system allows us to get a better overview of a situation and key data. The specification was formulated with data needs in mind, ensuring that our decisions are data-driven. • We have commissioned research from the Council's in-house Research and Analytics Unit to look at presentation patterns with a view to proactively trying to prevent cases. 	<p>March 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Homelessness Manager	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have purchased and continue to purchase properties across the county to proactively try to prevent homelessness. • We have identified critical roles in workforce planning and ensured we have staff in place to respond to demand. • Continue to report on levels of homelessness prevention through the Council's internal Performance Challenge and Support procedure. • Established a "Homelessness Group" which reports to the Chief Executive and Cabinet Member. During the meeting, the Council's homelessness situation is reported to highlight efficiency and identify 	September 2025 Ongoing Ongoing	Assistant Head of Housing and Property Head of Housing and Property Head of Housing and Property Head of Housing and Property	

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		key patterns, including preventative work.			
R3	<p>Partnership Working</p> <p>We found that partnership working in preventing homelessness is often not effective. To improve this councils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with their partners to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identify existing respective roles and responsibilities; - agree how to address gaps in and/or duplication of services; • regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their partnership working for homelessness prevention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, it is unclear whether there is evidence of a lack of partnership working in Gwynedd, and WG has recognised the Gwynedd Housing Partnership as an example of good partnership working practice. • However, it is true that there is increasing pressure on every single public area in Wales e.g. probation service, health service, which in turn makes it increasingly difficult for organisations to work in partnership due to conflicting priorities. 	October 2025		

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have asked that this issue be included on the agenda of a meeting between North Wales local authorities and the WG's Housing Minister in October 2025. • Continue to discuss in the Partnership Board Allocation and Lettings sub-group. • Further information is expected following the new Homelessness Bill in light of its recommendations to make partnership working statutory. We are ready to respond when that happens. • As referred to above, the Needs Assessment and Homelessness Review will ensure that there is comprehensive engagement and consultation with partners and 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Head of Housing and Property</p> <p>Assistant Head of Housing and Property</p> <p>Homelessness Manager</p>	

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		<p>stakeholders in the field of homelessness and homelessness prevention. It is anticipated that the Housing and Homelessness Support Strategy will encompass themes of partnership working across the field and will search for opportunities to do so in order to mitigate the impact of homelessness. The content of the strategy will also incorporate the changes brought about by the introduction of the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation Act where there is an emphasis on partnership working.</p>			