

CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 18th February 2025

Title: Common Allocations Policy (Draft)

Purpose of the report: Draft Common Allocations Policy

For: Decision

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member:
Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Housing, Legal and Governance and Public Protection

Background

Ceredigion County Council (the Council), in agreement with our partner Registered Social Landlords, Barcud, Caredig and Wales and West Housing, operate a Common Allocations Policy. This means that applications for all social housing, no matter who the landlord is, are made to the Council through our Ceredigion Housing Options website. All social housing units within Ceredigion are allocated by the Landlord of the property in accordance with this policy.

The Council has worked with its partners to jointly review the Allocations Policy. Times have changed and this needs to be reflected in a revised allocations policy. The growing demand on Social Housing coupled with the desire to maintain and strengthen local communities has led us to conduct a thorough review of the way housing is allocated in the County.

The current policy has been in use since 2016 and was reviewed in 2019. Since then, there has been a change in landscape, most notably the cost of housing, cost of living, a Welsh Government focus on homelessness and the increase in demand on the housing register and homelessness service.

Current Situation

As of 19th December 2024, there are 2082 active housing register application, 1009, just under 50%, of those have been identified as having a priority band (A/B/C) as the Policy stands currently.

The above pressures have resulted in a significant change for the Allocation Policy, with a sole focus on housing need. Whilst the bands and quotas have been amended slightly, the main principles remain the same as the previous Policy ensuring we meet our legislative duties and strengthened further to ensure a variety of needs and vulnerable groups are captured within the policy. Some key changes are as follows:

- Removal of 5 years living and working as a priority band factor
- Increase of employment as a local connection criteria, from 3 years to 5 years

- Addition of Care Leavers - who have been in the care of Ceredigion County Council for at least 13 weeks, and who's care ended after their 16th birthday will be awarded a priority banding and local connection criteria relaxed.
- Addition of "housing affordability" as a priority factor, regardless of earnings (where calculations show current housing is unaffordable)

Consultation findings

The Consultation confirmed to us that we have covered the local and legislative needs and achieved the goals we were hoping too. We received a large proportion of responses from our current housing register applicants, they were our target audience in this process and therefore this is pleasing to note. We also received feedback from Barcud, one of our partners, who made only minor comments and, again, confirms our direction. It is critical we have buy-in from our Housing Association partners. All 3 partners were involved in workshops to develop the policy and therefore are in agreement with the proposed Policy. The proposed Policy will go before their Boards as and when appropriate.

Process

We will write to all active housing register applicants, when appropriate, to advise that their applications will be closed, and they will need to reapply in line with the new Policy. Given that all current active applicants have been contacted regarding the Consultation and advising that this is happening, we hope this will not be met with too much objection. The process needs to happen this way to ensure that the applicants are asked new questions in line with the new policy. We will try to minimise disruption to this by making staff available to support applicants through this process and activate the applications as quickly as possible. We will also ensure that priority applicants and vulnerable groups will be targeted for support and prioritised. E.g. Extra Care applicants, homelessness cases etc. This can be actioned through internal housing staff, Housing Association staff and Housing Support Grant Providers.

We will also aim to honour the existing waiting date for applicants who are active at the point the register is closed, should they reapply within an 8-week window. Repeat applications after this date will be treated with discretion. This will ensure that there is a staggered waiting list with immediate effect.

Next steps

With agreement from Cabinet, we plan to "go live" with the new policy in Summer 2025.

To reach this deadline, we will be required to make changes to our IT system, and we have reached an internal decision that the Housing Register will be closed to new applicants for a month leading up to the implementation date. Allocations of social housing will continue to take place from the original Register in the lead up to the implementation. However, no allocations will be made for the 2 weeks immediately post "go live" to allow the waiting list to build back up from applications assessed against the new Policy. This has been agreed with our Housing Association Partners, due to the impact on their allocations.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:

Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why.

Yes – appendix 2.

Summary of Integrated Impact Assessment:

Long term: The policy will be reviewed at regular intervals by both the Local Authority and its partners to ensure it is still meeting residents needs and amended accordingly as and when appropriate.

Collaboration: The Policy has been developed in conjunction with Partners and we will continue to work collaboratively in order to maximise the success of allocations to those identified as being in most housing need. Meetings were arranged between the Local Authority, Barcud, Wales and West to work through and agree the changes to the policy.

Involvement: A full public consultation has been undertaken and the findings shared.

Discussions have already taken place with our Housing Association Partners, interested Corporate Managers and Corporate Lead Officers, and appropriate members of the housing team.

Prevention: The policy will have a positive impact ensuring the allocation of housing which is suitably located which can enable people to live at home for longer; it has the potential to create more resilient and connected communities and improve people's health and wellbeing. With a high density of Welsh speakers within the County, there is a need to ensure, as far as possible, that housing needs fosters and strengthens the language.

Integration: The Policy relies on collaboration and partnership working to ensure the most suitable allocations are made.

The Policy has been developed with partners and will continue to be monitored by the Senior Housing Officer – Strategy & Monitoring

Recommendation(s):

To adopt the revised Common Allocations Policy (Appendix 1), effective from Summer 2025.

Reasons for decision:

To enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure social housing is allocated to those who are in most housing need.

Overview and Scrutiny:

The Common Allocations Policy was discussed at the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on 22nd January 2025.

Policy Framework:

N/A

Corporate Well-being Objectives:

- Boosting the Economy, Supporting Businesses and Enabling Employment
- Creating Caring and Healthy Communities
- Creating Sustainable, Green and Well-connected Communities

Finance and Procurement implications:

N/A

Legal Implications:

N/A

Staffing implications:

N/A

Property / asset implications:

N/A

Risk(s):

N/A

Statutory Powers:

Housing (Wales) Act 2014

Background Papers:

N/A

Appendices:

Appendix 1- Common Allocations Policy

Appendix 2- Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix 3- Housing Consultation responses summary

Appendix 4- Consultation responses (data)

Corporate Lead Officer:

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Date:

23/01/2025



Ceredigion Common Allocations Policy



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Introduction

Ceredigion County Council (the Council), in agreement with our partner Housing Associations, Barcud, Caredig and Wales and West Housing, operate a Common Allocations Policy. This means that applications for all social housing, no matter who the landlord is, are made to the Council through our Ceredigion Housing Options website. All social housing units within Ceredigion are allocated by the Landlord of the property, in accordance with this policy.

The Council has worked with its partners to jointly review the Allocations Policy. Times have changed and this needs to be reflected in a revised allocations policy. The growing demand on Social Housing coupled with the desire to maintain and strengthen local communities has led us to conduct a thorough review of the way housing is allocated in the County.

Applying for Housing

The Housing Register Team within Ceredigion County Council maintains the Housing Register on behalf of the partners and deals with applications in accordance with this policy. Households on the register are prioritised according to need, local connection and waiting time. An applicant will be placed in a Band, according to these criteria.

Social Landlords, with a property to let, will use the Common Housing Register to see which applicant is in greatest need and has been waiting the longest, with consideration to mixed communities. The Register shall be kept up to date and households on the Register will be asked to review their circumstances every 12 months or inform us if there is change in circumstances. New applicants join the Register when their application is complete.

Applicants who have been assessed and are not in housing need will not be given any priority but can remain on the Register. Occasionally vacancies arise to which a suitable match would be sought from the non-priority bands. Local connection will apply.

The Application Process

To apply to join the Housing Register you must be over 16 years of age. However, under the Renting Homes (Wales) Act, you must be over 18 to become a Contract Holder.

Applications can be made via our Ceredigion Housing Options Portal: www.ceredigionhousingoptions.cymru or through our Contact Centre on 01545 574123.

- Information you will be asked for includes;
- Your National Insurance Number
 - Your address history
 - Your local connection to Ceredigion
 - Your household's income/savings
 - Who you live with/ want to live with
 - What areas you want to live in

As part of the application, you may be asked to provide further documents to support your application. We will tell you what documents to provide and when to provide them.

Once we have received all necessary information and completed the assessment, you will be awarded the relevant Band and your application will become active. If we are unable to obtain all the necessary details from you, this may result in you being placed in a non-priority Band until the situation is resolved. All applications must be renewed every 12 months, you will be notified when this is necessary.

This Policy also applies to existing social housing contract holders seeking to move to alternative social housing. Existing social housing contract holders who want to move will need to apply for a new allocation through the Register. The same rules about housing need will be applied to determine priority.

Some people are not eligible to register to apply for social housing. This is set out in legislation. Applicants who are 'a person from abroad' and subject to immigration control within the meaning of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 and do not have 'leave to remain' in the United Kingdom, or who's 'leave to remain' is subject to a condition of 'no recourse to public funds' are not eligible for an allocation of social housing.

If you are a British Citizen or have been granted leave to remain for an unlimited amount of time, with recourse to public funds, you would be eligible.

People who are not eligible because of these conditions won't be eligible for social housing even if they would normally qualify because they have other housing needs such as being homeless, having a disability or living in poor conditions.

Main Aims

The high level aims of the policy are to provide secure housing for those most in need and to ensure social housing is embedded as part of sustainable communities especially in a rural county such as Ceredigion. The Policy aims to deliver housing to people most in need, whose housing options cannot be met outside of the Social Housing sector, and to streamline the Housing Register application process for customers and partner agencies, with a view to managing peoples' expectations of, and aspirations towards, Social Housing.

The re-drafted Common Allocations Policy reflects The Housing (Wales) Act 2014, Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 and the role we play in the future provision of good quality, affordable, stable, and sustainable housing, aligning with our Local Housing Strategy.

The Common Allocations Policy is the main framework for use in conjunction with the Housing Register and explains what we will do regarding Accessible Housing, Older Persons' Housing and alternative housing options. This allows applicants to apply for a home that most suit their requirements.

Local Lettings Policies

On occasions, Local Lettings Policies may be applied to specific areas or properties to meet the needs of the community and to ensure strengthened communities.

Local Lettings Policies are used to achieve a wide variety of housing management and other housing policy objectives, and are usually developed where there is a wish to alter the balance of the community or ensure a balanced community at the stage where a new development is let. Each of the Housing Association's will have the ability to introduce Local Lettings Policies in areas of their stock. Local Lettings Policies introduced will be published. They will be monitored for effectiveness and reviewed regularly by the Housing Association, together with the Local Authority, so that they can be revised or revoked where they are no longer appropriate or necessary.

There should be a clear evidence base of need before considering a Local Lettings Policy and adoption of such a policy only following consultation with the Housing Associations' Board and the Local Authority.

Strengthening Communities

The allocations policy seeks to sustain communities through a number of different policy statements:

- Act positively to combat the effects of Ceredigion's lower than average pay levels. Helping families on low incomes to live in safe and secure housing by recognising housing affordability as a new banding factor.
- Actively seek to build sustainable and mixed communities, by allocating housing from each of the three 'reasonable preference' bands (A-C) via a quota system.
- Strengthen local connection criteria by using time frames, local connection and Local Lettings Policies as a factor, where appropriate.
- Take into account past behaviour of Private Sector and Social Sector contract holders in establishing eligibility for allocation. If applicants have acted with Unacceptable Behaviour, they may be placed in a Reduced Preference Band and subsequently not be eligible for allocation.

Delivering on Housing Need

The policy reinforces 'reasonable preference' categories, that are stipulated by law as having to be given due emphasis in any allocations policy. The prevention and relief of homelessness has had a particular focus in recent times through temporary measures brought about during the Covid19 Pandemic, rapid rehousing plans and the more recent policy intentions of the Welsh Government, proposed through a white paper in 2024. Where appropriate we have sought to improve the opportunities for social housing for homeless households, balancing statutory requirements and acute needs with a desire to give priority to those with a local connection. The white paper indicated some specific areas and groups of people for whom opportunities should be improved and we have sought also to incorporate this into the new allocations policy.

- Aims to free up adapted accommodation to allow greater numbers of adapted properties to be accessed by people who need them.
- Reflects need through a banding system and allocating housing from specific bands.
- Works in tandem with the Housing Standards Team, to improve standards of accommodation in the Private Rented Sector, to reduce the demands on the Social Housing Sector.
- Recognises housing need that is better met outside of the Social Housing sector, and signposts to the most suitable housing option.

The Banding System

One of the central aims of the policy is that the applicant will have a clear understanding of their chances of obtaining a Social Rented tenancy and offer more realistic options to those who do not fulfil the requirements for social housing. The policy will:

- Use a banding system, to offer a clear message to applicants.
- Use 'time-waiting' as a fair way of allocating housing to people assessed as having similar housing need.
- Clearly differentiate between the 'reasonable preference' bands and the non-reasonable preference bands and signpost applicants to other housing options as appropriate.
- Ensure those applying for reasons of poor quality housing in the private sector, are supported by the Housing Standards team, to address the issues and ensure private rented housing is of good order.
- Provide a direct match through the system to appropriate and suitable housing. Applicants will only be able to secure a home which suits household need and won't be able to choose inappropriate alternatives or specify a type.

Bedroom Calculations

Applicants are entitled to one bedroom for each of the following within their household:

- A married couple or two people cohabiting as if they were married
- Civil partners or two people cohabiting as if they were civil partners
- Each person aged 16 or over, not falling within sub-paragraphs above
- Two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- Two children regardless of sex under the age of 10
- Any additional child who cannot share with another child

For example, a married couple with sons 12 and 6, and daughters 5, 3 and 1 would have an assessed need of four bedrooms:

Married couple	1 bedroom	4 bedroom property required
Sons aged 12 and 6	1 bedroom	
Daughters aged 5 and 3	1 bedroom	
Daughter aged 1	1 bedroom	

Prioritising by time waiting

Applications are ordered based on their initial application date and priority of needs. This ensures the allocation of properties is administered to those who have been waiting the longest.

As such, we are unable to give precise dates when allocations will be made and, in some cases, applicants may be waiting some time, possibly years.

Choosing Areas

Households will be able to make up to five choices of location where they wish to be offered accommodation. The full list of area choices can be found on the Ceredigion Housing Options Portal. Consideration should be given to the type of housing, which is available in the area of choice, and whether that matches household need. For example, there are some areas which do not have bungalows, which may be necessary for the mobility of the applicant. A stock matrix is also available on the Portal.

Assessing Housing Needs

The process will take the applicant through three distinct phases, each of which will help Housing Services, Partners and most importantly applicants themselves, to understand their housing need; and ensure Social Housing is accessible to those most in need, and that the strategic priorities of all partners can be achieved.

Stage 1: Identifying Housing Need

The policy follows legislation as set down in s167 of The Housing Act 1996. The following groups of people must be given a reasonable preference:

- People who are homeless within the meaning of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014. An assessment to determine the homelessness will be carried out
- People who are owed a statutory homeless duty by any Local Authority under Housing (Wales) Act 2014. This includes a s66, s73 and s75 duty as determined under the Act
- People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions. An assessment of the housing conditions may be required
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, as a result of their present accommodation having a detrimental effect on their health and/or welfare.
- People who need to move to a particular locality in the area of the Local Authority, where failure to meet that need would cause social or welfare hardship (to themselves or to others). This includes to support or be supported by others.

Whilst the policy gives a reasonable preference to the above groups, additional needs have been identified locally. Households with the following needs will also be placed in a Band for allocation:

- Under occupation of social rented accommodation within Ceredigion. This helps us match households with the right sized property by encouraging movement.
- Adapted housing occupied by social housing contract holders in Ceredigion who no longer have the need. This helps us match adapted properties with those who need it.
- Applicants who are ready to be discharged or to move on from supported housing and care settings. These are placements which were only intended as short term to help with improving independence or with rehabilitation, and who are ready to move to greater independence.
- Care Leavers. This includes young people who have been in the care of Ceredigion County Council for at least 13 weeks, and who's care ended after their 16th birthday. We will also consider Care Leavers who have been in the care of other Local Authorities who meet the local connection criteria.
- Applicants who demonstrate that the cost of housing in the private rented sector for their household size (based on local median rent) is 30%, or more, than their gross household income

All of the above groups will be placed into Band A, B, C or D, from which allocations will be made. There will be an equal chance of allocation from Bands A, B or C.

Financial Considerations

It is recognised that due to a limited pool of social housing and a growing demand, prioritisation for housing will be given to those who don't have the financial means to satisfy their needs in other ways.

Applicants who otherwise have a housing need, but who have equity and savings of more than £90,000 will be afforded a reasonable preference, and be included in Band D. The exception to these criteria is for older persons seeking sheltered/extra care accommodation. The equity criteria would not preclude their access to older person's accommodation.

There will be a limited chance of allocation from Band D.

No Identified Housing Need

The policy aims to ensure Social Housing is allocated on need, and that applicants who do not meet an identified need are informed and made aware of housing opportunities other than socially rented properties.

Applications without an identified need will still be included on the register, but will be placed in Band E. This helps us to establish a wider understanding of the demographics and desires of households in the County, helping with wider strategic aims and future developments. This Band may include the following groups of people:

- Households whose private rented property is in disrepair, but which can and should be addressed by the Landlord. Referrals will be made to the Housing Standards Team.
- Households without needs as identified previously. This could include families without a garden or those who are looking to move closer to employment.
- Households we consider suitably housed at present.

Applicants in Band E are unlikely to be allocated social housing as there are no demonstrated needs.

Stage 2: Assessing for a Reduced Preference

The policy allows us to recognise criteria against which we would temporarily suspend an applicant's ability to obtain an offer of social housing. We call this a Reduced Preference category. The aim of this is to encourage responsibility for applicants to manage their household needs in a reasonable way. The criteria are as follows:

- Unacceptable behaviour grounds (as defined by s55, Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016).
 - * A member of the household has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a contract holder and;
 - * At the time of application they are still considered unsuitable to be a contract holder.
- The refusal of a reasonable offer, assessed as 'suitable' in accordance with The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order 2015. This standardises the manner in which refusals are dealt with between homelessness and general needs applicants, as well as acts upon the growing demand on Social Housing, and the need to allocate based on need rather than choice.
- Applicants who have deliberately worsened or manipulated their housing situation with a view to securing a socially rented property. This could include those who have given up suitable accommodation and would, if assessed through homelessness, be found intentionally homeless.

If an applicant is placed into Band F – Reduced Preference, this will be reviewed annually. If they can demonstrate altered behaviour (such as through a new tenancy reference of at least 12 months) or a change in circumstances, their application may be moved to the appropriate band.

Stage 3: Assessing for Local Connection

The Housing Act 1996 allows an allocations policy to award additional preference for particular descriptions of people who are already within a reasonable preference category. The Council and its partners have chosen to award additional preference to applicants it considers having a Local Connection. This ensures that the housing needs of existing residents are taken into consideration first.

To satisfy local connection criteria an applicant will be any of the following:

- A person who has resided within the County of Ceredigion or some specific border wards adjoining major towns for five years at the date of application to the Register.
- In recognition of the importance of supporting economically sustainable communities, a person who is presently employed in Ceredigion for the previous five years, at the date of application.
- Has close family – defined as parents (or parental equivalent), or brothers and sisters in Ceredigion, who have been resident within the County for at least 10 years.
- Ex-service personnel or a serving member who has lived in Ceredigion for five years (at any point).
- Care leavers for whom Ceredigion County Council has been providing care who may have been placed out of County but wish to return.
- Working with the Ceredigion Housing Options team under a statutory homeless duty for 12 months.

Applicants who have an identified housing need which gives them a reasonable preference who also meet the local connection criteria will be placed in Band A, B or C.

Applicants who have an identified housing need which gives them a reasonable preference but who don't meet the local connection criteria will be placed in Band D.

Bands—At a glance

Band A

- Urgent Priority medical/ mental health/ welfare needs for one or more household member, where their current accommodation is having a detrimental effect
- Cost of housing in the private rented sector for their household size (based on local median rent) is 30%, or more, than their gross household income

Band B

- Planned discharge/ move-on from institution, supported housing and/or care settings (excluding prison)
- Ceredigion Social Housing contract holders under-occupying current accommodation by one bedroom or more
- Ceredigion Social Housing contract holders occupying an adapted property for which they have no need
- Overcrowded accommodation as defined in s324 of Housing Act 1985
- Poor housing conditions which cannot be addressed through enforcement action

Band C

- Recognised medical/ mental health/ welfare needs where current accommodation is having a detrimental effect
- Homeless with or without a duty (Assessment will need to be undertaken)
- To support or be supported in Ceredigion or where no move would cause hardship

Band D

- Housing needs as detailed in Bands A – C, but who have no local connection
- Housing needs as detailed in Bands A – C, but who have equity and/or savings of more than £90,000

Band E

- No identified housing needs, as per allocation policy, at present (adequately housed) with or without local connection
- Housing in disrepair, but can be improved through statutory intervention of the Housing Standards team

Band F

- Unacceptable behaviour
- Refusal of a reasonable offer of accommodation
- Deliberately worsened or manipulated their housing situation
- Applicants seeking rehousing within 12 months of a suitable allocation (with the exception of medical concerns or other risks)

Allocations

Once banded in accordance with the three stages, housing options are far clearer.

- Applicants in Bands A–D are in the position to be considered in the first instance, for Social Housing. This is a result of them satisfying one or more reasonable preference categories, or fulfilling the criteria for a locally agreed target group.
- Bands A–C are considered to have an additional preference due to local connection and therefore more allocations will be made from these groups than Band D.
- Applicants in Band E are unlikely to be matched to a social housing allocation and will therefore be signposted to other options. This includes the Affordable Housing Register which may enable a match to an Intermediate Rent property. On rare occasion, where Bands A–D do not produce a suitable match, Band E may be matched.
- Applicants who are in the Reduced Preference Band (F) will not receive an allocation for the duration of the suspension. Circumstances will be reviewed annually to enable any changes to be correctly implemented as per the policy.
- Quotas will be established to ensure fair and equitable allocations from each applicable preference band (A–D). There is an equal chance of allocation from Bands A–C with some chance from Band D. These quotas will be reviewed on a 6 monthly schedule, and the ability to adjust the quota from each band is retained by the Council. This will enable local needs to be considered.
- Partner Housing Associations may choose to take applications from any banding they deem appropriate at the time of allocation to ensure allocations are balanced. Guidance will be given through reporting, clearly identifying the quota levels of each Housing Association on a monthly basis, by the Council. This will ensure that the global target for all bands is met through the combined effort of each partner, through their own quota schedule.

Accommodation Types

General Needs Housing

Vacant properties will be allocated to the Applicant with the longest waiting date, from one of the reasonable preference bands, ensuring mixed communities.

Properties will be matched according to household needs and preferences for location, property type and household makeup, in line with occupancy criteria. The Housing Association may specify criteria to make best use of stock, for example consideration of a ground floor need.

Applicants will be unable to request a particular size of property that does not match their household and housing need. Allocations are made via a direct and best match.

Sheltered & Extra Care Housing

The Policy also covers Sheltered Housing and Extra Care Schemes. The Extra Care schemes in Ceredigion require additional 'Expressions of Interest' information from health and social care, but applicants will need to be registered on the Housing Register as a first stage in the referral process.

The opportunity to request Sheltered or Extra Care housing is given during the application process. The locations of these schemes are available on the Ceredigion Housing Options Portal.

Sheltered and Extra Care schemes are limited to specific age groups.

Accessible Housing

The policy enables people, individuals and families, who require adapted and/or accessible housing, to be identified and their specific accessibility needs to be understood, categorised (for the purposes of the Accessible Housing Register) and catered for. The policy covers applicants who have a physical impairment that require adapted housing, and housing that is accessible to applicants with other mobility issues. This includes sensory impairment such as sight loss, and hearing loss. The allocations policy does not include learning disabilities or mental health disabilities. However, applicants with multiple disabilities, including physical impairments are eligible for inclusion.

This policy shall cater for children and young people through a whole household approach to housing need. The eligibility criterion states that one or more people in the household must meet the physical or mobility requirement.

Applicants will have their needs and requirements assessed in line with the Common Allocations Policy banding procedure. This will take into account their position in regard to the 'reasonable preference' categories.

Affordable Housing

Rent to Own: The Welsh Government supports the purchase of a home for those who do not have sufficient funds for a mortgage deposit. Criteria applies.

Shared Equity: Shared equity is offered on properties purchased directly from a developer, Housing Association/Local Authority or re-sale properties. Criteria applies.

Shared Ownership: An Applicant is able to buy a percentage of the home and pay rent on the remaining percentage. Conditions apply and may differ according to the scheme in place.

Discounted 106 Properties: A developer builds homes and sells them on at a discounted price that is lower than the open market. The discount is agreed during the planning process. The Applicant will be required to comply with the eligibility criteria of the Section106. Further criteria applies.

If you have selected any of these housing options on your Housing Register Application, the Council will be in touch as and when appropriate.

Additional Information

Sensitive Lets

There may be occasions when an allocation is made as a "sensitive let". This may be due to a history of anti-social behaviour for example, or criminal activity, involving the previous contract holder. If the property is deemed a "sensitive let", certain households may be excluded from consideration for the property in exceptional circumstances.

Management Decisions

Management Decisions are when an allocation is made outside of the normal allocation process in order for a suitable allocation to be made for exceptional circumstances.

The Local Authority Corporate Manager for Housing will be notified of all such decisions. Ceredigion County Council Housing Team will monitor as part of the overall monitoring process.

Cancelling Applications

Applicants may be removed from the register if:

- They are not in a position to take up an offer of accommodation in the near future
- They don't reply to application review letters within 14 days
- They have requested to cancel their application
- They have provided false or misleading information, deliberate manipulation or withholding requested information

Such cases shall be considered on an individual basis and on the information provided to or received by the Team.

Appeals Process

What can applicants do if they don't agree with decisions made about their applications for housing?

Applicants have the right to request a review of a decision regarding their:

- Eligibility to join the Common Housing Register
- Any facts which have been used to reach a decision in respect of the Priority Band in which the applicant has been placed
- The applicant believes that they have been treated as ineligible on the basis of their immigration status.
- The applicant believes that they have been treated as ineligible to join the register due to unacceptable behaviour
- The applicant believes that they have had their application cancelled because they have refused a reasonable offer of accommodation

Requests for a review should be made in writing or by e-mail to Ceredigion County Council, within 28 days of notification of the decision. Applicants' circumstances at the time of the review will be considered, particularly if they have changed from when the decision was first made.

A Senior Officer from the Local Authority, not involved in the original decision, will consider the request for a review. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of the review within 28 days of the hearing or receipt of the written statements. If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the review decision they may apply for a judicial review or submit their case to the Ombudsman for investigation.

Equality & Diversity

Ceredigion partners are all committed to equal opportunities and do not discriminate either directly or indirectly on grounds of gender, sexual orientation, religion, colour, race, nationality, disability, age or ethnic origin. To make sure that we are respecting equal opportunities, applicants will be asked to answer monitoring questions.

Ceredigion partners also believe that strong communities thrive and prosper if individuals and groups are treated fairly, with respect, and given equitable and good access to rights and services. All landlords in Ceredigion are working together to create an environment where this is possible and to put equality and diversity at the heart of everything that they do.

Privacy Statement

Ceredigion County Council will process data submitted by applicants in accordance with all current data protection legislation. Further information can be found at www.ceredigion.gov.uk



Cyngor Sir
CEREDIGION
County Council

INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IIA) TOOL

Proposal Details

Title of Policy / Proposal / Initiative	
Common Allocation Policy – Review	
Service Area	Officer completing IIA
Housing	Cerys Purches-Phillips
Corporate Lead Officer	Strategic Director
Greg Jones	James Starbuck
Please give a brief description of the purpose of the proposal	
<p>The Local Authority holds the Common Housing Register for the County and plays a lead role in developing an allocations policy for social housing. The growing demand on social housing, the need to maintain and strengthen local communities and anticipated change in legislative direction has led us to conduct a thorough review of the way housing is allocated in the County, whilst safeguarding the heritage and culture of the County. Sustaining existing communities is key to this policy, and vital for the health of the Welsh language in Ceredigion.</p>	
Who will be directly affected by this proposal? HINT	
<p>Residents of the County, across all tenures could be affected by the policy. The policy has been in place since June 2016 and a review has been undertaken in order to strengthen and ensure consistency. The allocation policy is accessible to all qualifying individuals and provides choice and control in accessing housing options.</p>	
Have those who will be affected by the proposal had the opportunity to comment on it?	
<p>Following permission from Cabinet a full public consultation was undertaken. We received in the region of 100 responses, to both direct questions and free text boxes. The responses and our findings and subsequent responses have been shared with the Policy documents. The responses received confirmed that we have ensured the right groups and local housing needs have been captured within the policy.</p>	

Version Control

The IIA should be used at the earliest stages of decision making, and then honed and refined throughout the decision-making process. It is important to keep a record of this process so that we can demonstrate how we have considered and included sustainable development, Welsh language and equality considerations wherever possible.

Version Number	Author	Decision making stage HINT	Date Considered	Description of any amendments made HINT
1	Cerys Purches-Phillips	Cabinet	01/10/2024	
2	Cerys Purches-Phillips	O&S	22/01/2025	
3	Cerys Purches-Phillips	Cabinet	18/02/2025	Consultation feedback

Council Corporate Well-being Objectives

Which of the Council's Corporate Well-being Objectives does this proposal address and how? Click here to read a summary of our [Corporate Strategy 2022-27](#)

Boosting the economy, supporting business, and enabling employment.	The Policy will have a positive impact on the local construction industry providing job opportunities in the development of new homes and adaption and improvement to existing homes. It will also provide the opportunity for residents to maintain a sustainable home as a basis to find secure employment.
Creating caring and healthy communities	The Policy will provide opportunities to enable local people to remain in their communities, safeguarding cultural heritage and language, especially in areas of high proportion of Welsh speakers. It aims to provide early assistance and support for peoples' housing needs, sustaining their accommodation, or enabling them to move on where appropriate. The right level and type of support will be provided at the right time, to prevent escalation. Wherever possible, through a variety of options, we will maximise people's independence enabling them to remain in their own homes and communities.

Providing the best start in life and enabling learning at all ages	The Policy will provide the opportunity for residents to maintain a sustainable home as a basis to find education / secure employment.
Creating sustainable, greener, and well-connected communities	Providing quality housing, suitably located will enable people to stay in their own homes for longer, promoting community resilience. Improvements to existing homes can enhance an area giving a sense of community pride.

National Well-being Goal: A Prosperous Wales

An innovative, productive, and low carbon society where everyone has decent work and there is no poverty.

Click [here](#) for information about a prosperous Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

The policy positively contributes to a prosperous Wales, through opportunities for local connection and recognition of the unaffordable housing in the County.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

We know from our Housing Strategy and Local Housing Market Assessments that we have a housing affordability issue in Ceredigion.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

Due to the acknowledgement of expensive and largely unaffordable housing within the County, a new banding factor has been added to the Allocations Policy. Should applicants be able to evidence that they are spending more than 30% of their income on rent, priority banding will be awarded.

National Well-being Goal: A Resilient Wales

A society where biodiversity is maintained and enhanced and where ecosystems are healthy and functioning.

Click [here](#) for information about a resilient Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

The Policy provides access to accommodation for those in most housing need. This has been developed with partners in the county. The Policy provides opportunities

for a resilient Wales which will help to maintain and enhance biodiversity and eco systems through the provision of green spaces along with opportunities to improve energy efficiency within people's homes and build upon community resilience through the provision and access to sustainable cost-effective homes, in line with our Housing Strategy and development programme, determined by Allocation Policy and Housing Register need.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

The Allocation Policy enable a clear picture of the housing register and subsequent housing needs within the County, in turn providing development teams with an understanding of housing need in the County.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

N/A

National Well-being Goal: A Healthier Wales

A society where people make healthy choices and enjoy good physical and mental health.

Click [here](#) for information about a healthier Wales.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. (Click [here](#) for information)

The policy aims to ensure that individuals and families are matched positively to properties for recognised needs.

The Policy aims to improve the living environment which will have a positive impact on a person's physical and mental wellbeing.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

Improved living standards, access to adapted property, sheltered housing/extra care and affordable housing.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to this National Well-being Goal?

Close working with other Pyrths through the Through Age Wellbeing model.

National Well-being Goal: A More Equal Wales

A society where everyone has an equal chance whatever their background or circumstances.

This section is longer because you are asked to assess the impact of your proposal on each group that is protected by the **Equality Act 2010**.

Click [here](#) for information about equality in Wales.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their age? (Click [here](#) for information)

Children and Young People up to 18	Positive
People 18-50	Positive
Older people 50+	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts.

We are utilising an allocation policy which is suitable for each stage of life from safe, warm homes for children through to adapted and independent homes for the elderly.

Furthermore, we are including and recognising Care Leavers within the Allocations Policy and ensure their local connection to the County is supported should they be placed in care outside of Ceredigion.

What evidence do you have to support this?

21% of households on the Ceredigion Housing Register have requested Older Persons' Accommodation.

Ceredigion's population is expected to age over the coming years, with significant increases in the numbers of people aged 65 and over, and more particularly in the 85+ age group. As life expectancy increases, the demand for housing which is suited to the needs of the elderly is likely to increase further.

Data from 2021 Census for Ceredigion:

Age Group	Population	%
0-18	12,572	18
18-50	26,168	37
50+	32,728	46
Total	71,468	100*

Figures do not sum to exactly 100% due to computer roundings

A higher share of the population in Ceredigion (26%) is of retirement age than in Wales in general (21%).

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

The Common Allocation Policy is open and available to all, assessments are undertaken to further identify eligibility in line with legislation.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their disability? (Click [here](#) for information)

Hearing Impairment	Positive
Physical Impairment	Positive
Visual Impairment	Positive
Learning Disability	Positive
Long Standing Illness	Positive

Mental Health	Positive
Other	Positive
Describe the positive or negative impacts.	
<p>The policy considers a full range of disabilities as future housing should address individuals needs as and when they occur.</p> <p>19% of households on the Ceredigion Housing Register have requested an adapted property, thus creating the Accessible Housing Register. The Accessible Housing Register needs are considered when planning social housing developments.</p> <p>There is a positive impact for the full range of disabilities as future housing should address individuals needs as and when they occur.</p>	
What evidence do you have to support this?	
<p>The 2021 Census identifies 22% of the population as having a long-term health problem or disability which limits their day-to-day activities.</p>	
What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?	
Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?	
<p>The Common Allocation Policy is open and available to all, assessments are undertaken to further identify eligibility in line with legislation.</p>	

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are transgender? (Click here for information)	
Trans Women	Positive
Trans Men	Positive
Non-binary people	Positive
Describe the positive or negative impacts	
<p>The policy will provide housing to suit the individual's needs. There will be no differential impact on transgender persons.</p> <p>Individual needs are identified through application and addressed accordingly.</p>	

What evidence do you have to support this?

Figures on gender reassignment are difficult to establish since most people experiencing gender dysmorphia are likely to wish to remain undetected.

One in eight people in Ceredigion aged under 35 years old identify with an LGBTQA+ sexual orientation, new census figures show.

The Census data shows 1,660 people aged between 16 and 24 years old in Ceredigion said they identified with a sexuality other than heterosexual when the Census took place in March 2021, alongside 500 aged 25 to 34.

In addition, the latest Census figures show that 1 in 8 people in Ceredigion, aged under 35 years old identify with an LGBTQA+ orientation.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

Individual needs are identified, and a person-centred approach taken to support applicants.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different sexual orientation? (Click [here](#) for information)

Bisexual	None / Negligible
Gay Men	None / Negligible
Gay Women/Lesbian	None / Negligible
Heterosexual/Straight	None / Negligible

Describe the positive or negative impacts

The policy will provide housing to suit and meet the individuals need irrespective of sexual orientation.

Individual needs are identified through application and addressed accordingly.

What evidence do you have to support this?

For the first time in 2021, information on sexual orientation was recorded in a Census. In Ceredigion, 85% identified as Straight or Heterosexual, with 10% choosing not to answer this question. A further 3% or 1,617 are bisexual, and 2% or 941 are gay or lesbian. Prior to the Census in 2021, it had been estimated that 5-7% of the population were lesbian, gay or bisexual.

The Housing Register and Allocations Policy are not impacted or driven by sexual orientation.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

The Common Allocation Policy is open and available to all, assessments are undertaken to further identify eligibility in line with legislation.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are married or in a civil partnership? (Click [here](#) for information)

People who are married	None / Negligible
People in a civil partnership	None / Negligible

Describe the positive or negative impacts

The policy will provide housing to suit and meet the individuals need irrespective of marital status.

What evidence do you have to support this?

According to 2021 Census Reports, the proportion of married people is at 43.1%, which is slightly less than 43.8% across Wales as a whole. The proportion of a same-sex civil partnership is at 0.2%, which is higher than the 0.1% across both Wales and England.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

Individual needs are identified, and a person-centred approach taken to support.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people who are pregnant or on maternity leave? (Click [here](#) for information)

Pregnancy	Positive
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Maternity	Positive
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Describe the positive or negative impacts

The policy will provide housing to suit the individuals need.

Pregnant women and women with dependent children are considered as priority need for homelessness, which recognised within the Policy.

What evidence do you have to support this?

Legislative requirement

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to positive impacts?

Individual needs are identified, and a person-centred approach taken to support.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people because of their ethnic origin? (Click [here](#) for information)

Asian / Asian British	None / Negligible
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Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	None / Negligible
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Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	None / Negligible
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White	None / Negligible
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Other Ethnic Groups	None / Negligible
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Describe the positive or negative impacts

Customs, beliefs and traditions within diverse communities will be respected and responded to accordingly in line with Policy and future housing developments.

Citizens who have migrated into the area, where another language is their primary language, and where they have limited or no Welsh/ English language skills, may require a translation service.

What evidence do you have to support this?

The majority of Ceredigion's residents (96.2%) are white, with the majority of those being White Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, English, or British. The next

largest ethnic group in Ceredigion is Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh with 1,096 people or 1.5% of the County's population. A further 867 or 1.2% of the population are from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, and 366 or 0.5% are Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

The use of interpretation services might be required for service users who are migrants and have limited or no Welsh/English language skills.

Consider the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan.

This proposal will impact on individuals in general. There is nothing that can be identified that would impact this group due to someone's race/disability/sexual orientation

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people with different religions, beliefs, or non-beliefs? (Click [here](#) for information)

Buddhist	None / Negligible
Christian	None / Negligible
Hindu	None / Negligible
Humanist	None / Negligible
Jewish	None / Negligible
Muslim	None / Negligible
Sikh	None / Negligible
Non-belief	None / Negligible
Other	None / Negligible

Describe the positive or negative impacts

The policy strives to provide suitable accommodation for all specified groups. Customs, beliefs, and traditions within diverse communities will be respected.

What evidence do you have to support this?

The largest proportion of the population in Wales describe themselves in the 2021 Census as having no religion (47%), followed by Christian (44%). Muslim is the next largest group in Wales with 66,947 members representing 2.2% of the population. In Ceredigion, the largest proportion of the population state their religion as Christian (47%), followed by no religion (43%). Other religions, which includes Pagan, Spiritualism and Spiritualist are the next largest group at 0.9% of the population.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?

Customs, beliefs and traditions within diverse communities will be respected and responded to accordingly in line with Policy and future housing developments.

This proposal will impact on individuals in general. There is nothing that can be identified that would impact this group due to someone's race/disability/sexual orientation

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on men or women? (Click [here](#) for information)

Men	None / Negligible
Women	None / Negligible

Describe the positive or negative impacts

The policy aims to provide housing to suit the individuals need.

What evidence do you have to support this?

According to the 2021 Census, females (51%) account for slightly more of the population in Ceredigion than males (49%).

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between men and women?

The Common Allocation Policy is open and available to all, assessments are undertaken to further identify eligibility in line with legislation.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people from the Armed Forces Community? (Click [here](#) for information)

Members of the Armed Forces	Positive
Veterans	Positive
Spouses	Positive
Children	Positive

Describe the positive or negative impacts

The Common Housing Register gives additional consideration to this Group.

Information on this is collated, monitored, and shared at the AFCC quarterly meeting.

What evidence do you have to support this?

The Census 2021 tell us that 2525 people in Ceredigion (4.1%) have previously served in the Armed Forces, compared with 4.5% across Wales.

Local connection criteria are relaxed and amended slightly for Armed Forces Personnel/Veterans.

What action(s) can you to take to mitigate any negative impacts?

The Common Allocation Policy is open and available to all, assessments are undertaken to further identify eligibility in line with legislation.

Socio-economic Duty

Socio-economic disadvantage means living on a low income compared to others in Wales, with little or no accumulated wealth, making it more difficult to access basic goods and services.

Family background or where a person is born still affects their life. For example, a child from a wealthy family often does better at school than a child from a poor family, even if the poorer child is more naturally academic. This is sometimes called socio-economic inequality.

Do you think this proposal will have a positive or a negative impact on people experiencing socio-economic disadvantage?	Positive
Describe the positive or negative impacts	
The policy positively contributes to those experiencing socio-economic disadvantage, through opportunities included in the banding in recognition of the unaffordable housing in the County.	
What evidence do you have to support this?	
We know from our Housing Strategy and Local Housing Market Assessments that we have a housing affordability issue in Ceredigion.	
What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts?	
Is there an opportunity to use this proposal to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity or encourage good relations between people in this group and the rest of the population?	
Due to the acknowledgement of expensive and largely unaffordable housing within the County, a new banding factor has been added to the Allocations Policy. Should applicants be able to prove that they are spending more than 30% of their income on rent, priority banding will be awarded.	

National Well-being Goal: A Wales of Cohesive Communities

A society with attractive, viable, safe, and well-connected communities.

Click [here](#) for information about cohesive communities.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. <u>HINT</u>
The allocation policy will have a positive impact in creating attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities which includes the safeguarding of the Welsh language.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

Evidence indicates that socio-economic status and deprivation, access to services and facilities, and crime have the greatest impact on community cohesion and resilience. Provision of access to quality, affordable housing in the right location that meets residents need will have a positive impact on both socio-economic status and deprivation. Enabling local people to remain in their communities, will contribute towards sustaining cultural heritage and language.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?

No group is shown favour and the Policy encourages inclusivity. We aim to provide inclusive housing to all those in need and to encourage and support community cohesion within diverse communities.

National Well-being Goal: A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language

A society that that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and the Welsh language and which encourages people to take part in the arts, sports, and recreation.

Click [here](#) for information about culture and the Welsh language

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts.

The Policy will be available in Welsh and English.

Communities are changing in Ceredigion, and this is having an effect on language use. Within the policy we aim to

- (i) Ensure that there are affordable homes for local people so that they can remain in their communities and sustain the vitality of the language depending on their housing need.
- (ii) Ensure there is access to suitable homes for young people, should they wish to establish themselves in the County.

We are always mindful of language and culture and seek to provide homes for local people to enable them to remain in their communities in order for the language to thrive.

The Policy will aim to have a positive effect on local culture and heritage as it aims to increase affordable homes for local people.

What evidence do you have to support this view?

The Ceredigion housing options portal that is used to deliver the allocation policy is available Bilingually.

Ceredigion Welsh Language Profile.
47% (approx. 35,000) of the population over 3 years old are Welsh speakers according to Census 2011 returns.

We record applicants' language of choice on application.

Applicants can apply in either Welsh or English and receive a full service in their language of choice.

Actions and outcomes of the Policy will address the needs of local residents which includes language requirements and protects the cultural heritage of the County.

What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?

The Policy helps to eliminate discrimination by being accessible to all groups, and by making reasonable adjustments, whenever required.

With reference to the following, do you think this proposal will have a positive or negative effect on the Welsh language?

Click [here](#) for information

Opportunities for people to use the Welsh language

Positive

Treating the Welsh language, no less favourably than the English language

Positive

What evidence do you have to support this view?

The Ceredigion housing options portal that is used to deliver the allocation policy is available Bilingually.

Ceredigion Welsh Language Profile.
47% (approx. 35,000) of the population over 3 years old are Welsh speakers according to Census 2011 returns.

We record applicants' language of choice on application.

Applicants can apply in either Welsh or English and receive a full service in their language of choice.

What action(s) can you take to increase the positive impact or mitigate any negative impact on the Welsh language?

The Policy helps to eliminate discrimination by being accessible to all groups, and by making reasonable adjustments, whenever required.

National Well-being Goal: A Globally Responsible Wales

A society that considers how our actions might impact on other countries and people around the world.

Click [here](#) for information about global responsibility.

Does the proposal contribute to this goal? Describe the positive or negative impacts. HINT
There is a positive impact for a globally responsible Wales through encouraging and supporting energy efficiency schemes in both new build and existing properties whilst reducing peoples' carbon footprint.
What evidence do you have to support this view?
Direction of Ceredigion's Local Housing Strategy and RSL Partners.
What action(s) can you take to mitigate any negative impacts or better contribute to the goal?
N/A

Strengthening the Proposal

If you have identified any negative impacts in the above sections, please provide details of any practical changes and actions that could help remove or reduce the negative impacts.

What will you do?	When?	Who is responsible?	Progress
If no action is to be taken to remove or mitigate negative impacts, please justify why. (If you have identified any unlawful discrimination then the proposal must be changed or revised.)			
How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the proposal?			
The impact and the effectiveness of the policy will be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure compliance by partner social landlords.			

Sustainable Development Principle: 5 Ways of Working

Describe below how you have implemented the five ways of working in accordance with the sustainable development principle of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

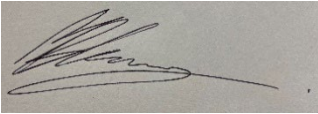
<p>Long term Balancing short-term needs with long-term need and planning for the future.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The policy will be reviewed at regular intervals by both the Local Authority and its partners to ensure it is still meeting residents needs and amended accordingly as and when appropriate.</p>
<p>Collaboration Working together with other partners to deliver.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The Policy has been developed in conjunction with Partners and we will continue to work collaboratively in order to maximise the success of allocations to those identified as being in most housing need.</p> <p>Meeting set up between the Local Authority, Barcud, Wales and West to work through and agree the changes to the policy.</p>
<p>Involvement Involving those with an interest and seeking their views.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>A full public consultation has been undertaken. We received in the region of 100 responses and our findings have been shared in an Appendix.</p> <p>Discussions have already taken place with our RSL Partners, interested CM's and CLO's and appropriate members of the housing team.</p>
<p>Prevention Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The policy will have a positive impact ensuring the allocation of housing which is suitably located which can enable people to live at home for longer; it has the potential to create more resilient and connected communities and improve people's health and wellbeing. With a high density of Welsh speakers within the County, there is a need to ensure, as far as possible, that housing needs fosters and strengthens the language.</p>
<p>Integration Considering the impact of your proposal on the four pillars of well-being (social, economic, cultural and environment) the objectives of other public bodies and across service areas in the Council.</p> <p><u>HINT</u></p>	<p>The Policy relies on collaboration and partnership working to ensure the most suitable allocations are made.</p> <p>The Policy has been developed with partners and will continue to be monitored by the Senior Housing Officer – Strategy & Monitoring</p>

Risk

Summarise the risk associated with the proposal.

	1	2	3	4	5
Impact Criteria	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Likelihood Criteria	Unlikely to occur	Lower than average chance of occurring	Even chance of occurring	Higher than average chance of occurring	Expected to occur
Risk Description	Impact	Probability	Score (Impact x Likelihood)		

Sign Off

Position	Name	Signature	Date
Corporate Manager	Llyr Hughes		09/09/2024
Corporate Lead Officer	Greg Jones		10/09/2024
Corporate Director	Barry Rees on behalf of James Starbuck		10/09/2024
Portfolio Holder	Clr. Matthew Vaux		09/09/2024

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¹ Last updated 20/10/2023

Common Allocations Policy – Consultation Summary

The Common Allocations Policy Consultation ran for a period of 6 weeks up to, and including, 15th November 2024.

The Consultation was available online, with paper copies available upon request. The Consultation was shared with all 2000 active housing register applicants, together with a social media campaign, Elected Members, Town & Community Councils and a variety of groups and forums. This resulted in over 100 responses, with over 80% coming from housing register applicants. This is good news, as these are the people we are most keen to hear from and most likely to be affected by the change in policy.

We asked a series of questions, and the statistical outcomes are available separately. Below is a summary of findings to the questions where a written response was required. Please note that the questions were not mandatory.

Are there any other circumstances you think we should take into consideration?

We received 51 comments to the above question. The common themes raised were:

- Medical and/or disability
- Affordability
- Local connection

We believe that the policy appropriately addresses these areas and groups and therefore we do not feel that the Policy needs to be amended based on the responses to this question.

Are there any other groups that you think we should include as a housing need?

There were 36 additional comments received for this question. A variety of groups were raised and summarised below, again, we feel that the policy covers all of these areas and no additional requirements need to be considered in the Policy:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Housing Response</u>
ALN/ Autistic/Neurodiversity	This group will be covered under the medical priority, where housing is exacerbating condition
Overcrowding	Overcrowding and underoccupancy is already considered as a priority group
Disabled	This group will be covered under the medical priority, where housing is exacerbating condition

Domestic Abuse	This is considered in line with homelessness legislation
Care Leavers	This group is considered in the new policy
Hardship	Any household suffering from hardship will be considered in the new Policy
Carers/ needing support	These groups are considered in the new policy
Separated families/ Single Parents	These households will be considered as part of the wider housing need and not in isolation
Age	These households will be considered as part of the wider housing need and not in isolation
Local connection/ Nationality	These are considered in the new policy and in line with legislation
Mental Health and/or Substance Misuse	These are considered in the new policy, as part of the wider housing need
Prison Leaver	This group is considered in line with homelessness legislation

We believe that the policy appropriately addresses these areas and groups and therefore we do not feel that the Policy needs to be amended based on the responses to this question.

Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?

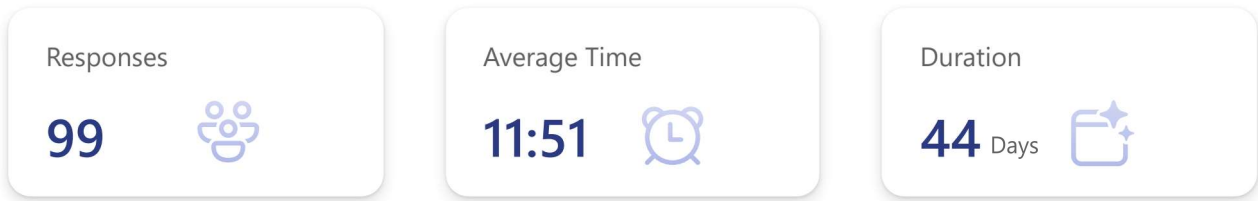
There were 37 responses to this question. Again, there were common themes throughout the responses, summarised below:

	<u>Housing Response</u>
Sheltered housing	Sheltered housing is just one element of social housing and this Policy aims to address all areas and therefore has not focused in any one area of detail
Website	Some responses claimed that the Housing Options website is not “user friendly.” However, support is available for anyone experiencing difficulty with the application process. The website will be reviewed as part of the Policy upgrade works to the system. It must be noted though, there are some limitations and restrictions beyond our control in this area.
Local Connection	There were a lot of responses commenting on the local connection. However, in line with local need, demands and legislation, we believe the new policy fairly deals with this and no further amendments are required.
Affordability	A fair number of responses highlighted a variety of affordability concerns and complications. The housing team echo concerns in this area and believe it is appropriately dealt with in the new policy.

Finally, we asked the question, “**Do you have any other comments?**” The common themes which we feel need acknowledging and responding to are:

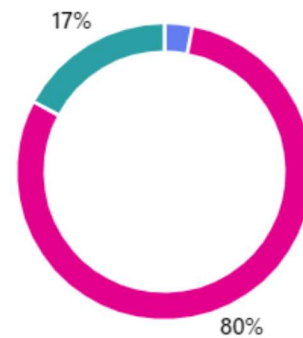
	<u>Housing Response</u>
More social housing!	We recognise this as a need and a priority and therefore this is address through our Local Housing Strategy.
Communication	A number of responses stated they felt they lacked communication from the Housing Register Team. Unfortunately, with over 2000 active applications and an average caseload of over 500 cases (per officer) it is not possible for Officer to keep in regular contact with applicants. Applicants are welcome to contact the Team via Clic. However, as this is a waiting list process, there is often no information to offer, and allocations and matches will be made directly by the Housing Association.
Positive feedback	We received a number of positive comments, in feedback to the process in its entirety, the policy, allocations and staffing. We feel it is important that this is also recognised in the consultation responses process. These were also noted on the Social Media pages.

Responses Overview Closed



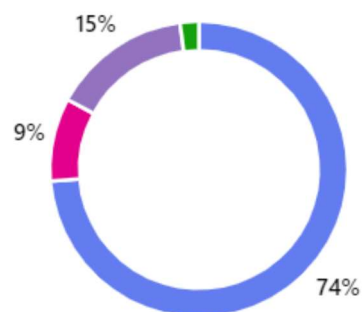
1. Which of the following categories applies to you as a responder?

Professional (working in the Housing/Homelessness industry)	3
Current Housing Register Applicant	79
Member of the public	17
Town Council	0
Councillor	0

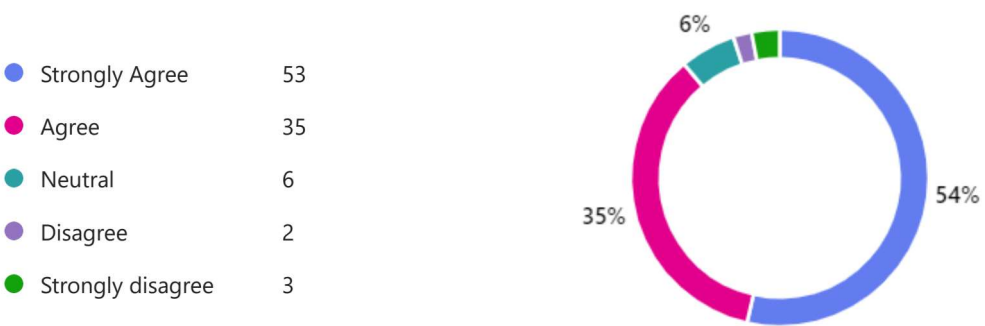


2. Households usually apply to the housing register through our web-based application or by phoning our Contact Centre, Clic. Which of the following would be your preferred method of applying?

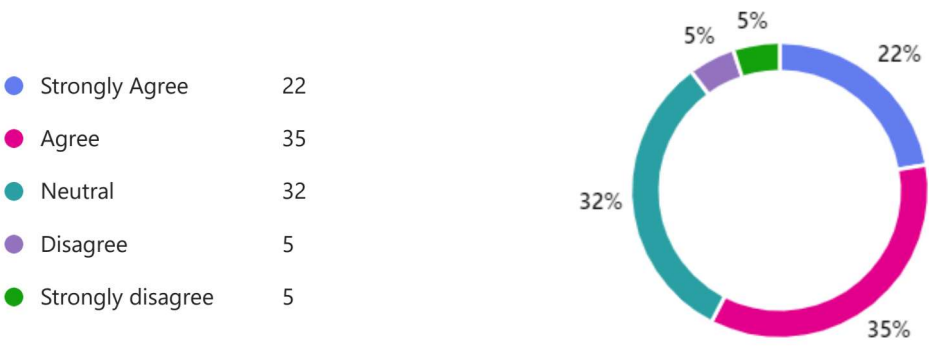
Website	73
Telephone application	9
Video Call application	0
Face to Face	15
Other	2



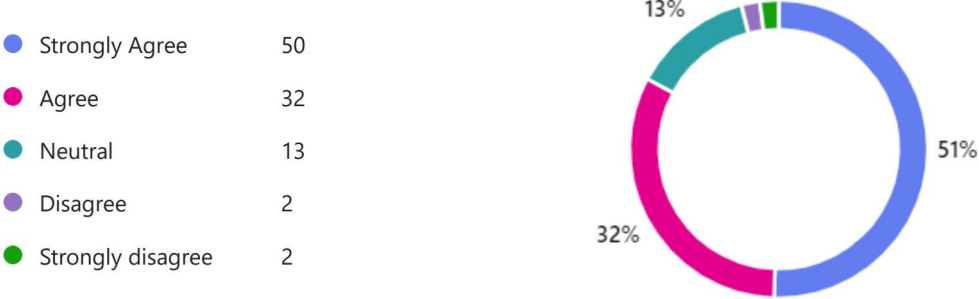
3. The high level aims of the policy are to provide secure housing for those most in need and to ensure that social housing is embedded as part of a sustainable community.



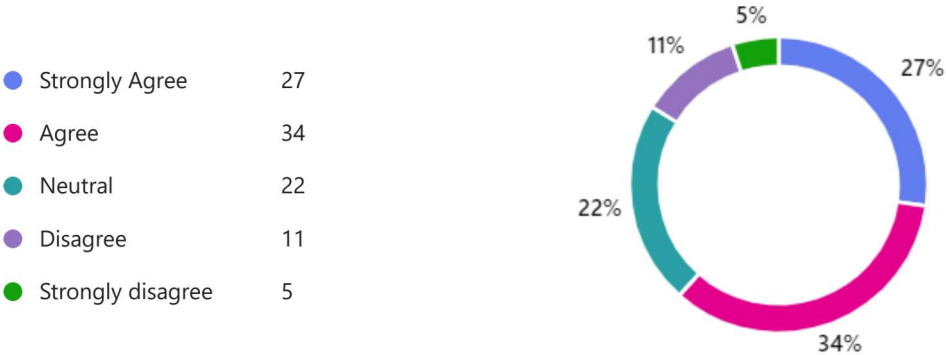
4. Do you agree or disagree that consideration needs to be given to mixed communities to enable them to be sustainable?



5. The policy aims to combat the effects of Ceredigion’s lower than average pay levels, and enable Social Housing to support the lowest paid working families. Households who can demonstrate that the median local rent for the type of house they need is more than 30% of their income will now be eligible for an allocation.

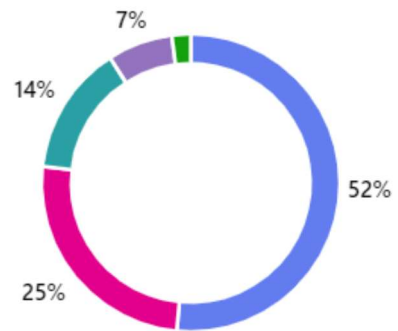


6. We propose that in terms of housing need, one type of need won’t be greater than another, but that the allocation of housing will be spread equally across needs. This will enable us to maintain mixed communities in social housing. (Please see the section on Assessing Housing Needs and the Bands, for further information)



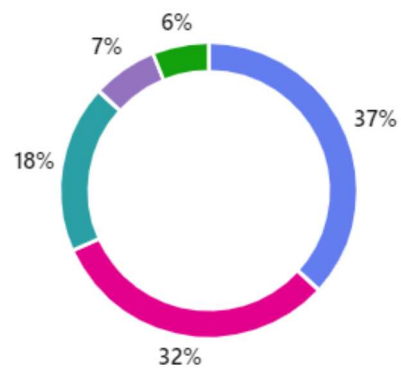
7. We will give additional preference to households with a local connection. (See Stage 3, Assessing for Local Connection).

● Strongly Agree	51
● Agree	25
● Neutral	14
● Disagree	7
● Strongly disagree	2



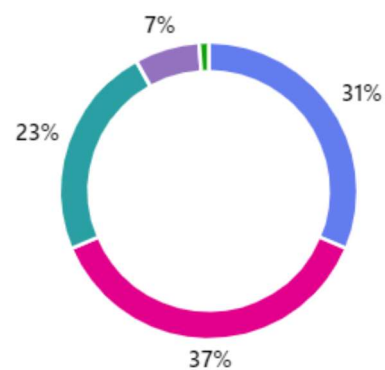
8. Do you agree or disagree with our local connection criteria?

● Strongly Agree	36
● Agree	31
● Neutral	18
● Disagree	7
● Strongly disagree	6



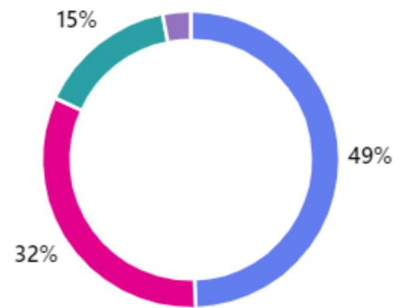
9. Do you agree or disagree that we include those households who can demonstrate a local connection via the specific border villages should also be considered eligible?

● Strongly Agree	31
● Agree	37
● Neutral	23
● Disagree	7
● Strongly disagree	1



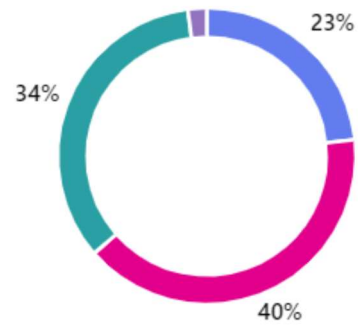
10. We will give reduced preference to applicants who demonstrate that they have behaved poorly in past tenancies or have misled the Council in their application. This means they won't be eligible for an allocation for the period. This will be reviewed annually

● Strongly Agree	49
● Agree	32
● Neutral	15
● Disagree	3
● Strongly disagree	0



11. Do you agree or disagree with the reasons for reduced preference as set out in Stage 2 – assessing for reduced preference?

● Strongly Agree	23
● Agree	40
● Neutral	34
● Disagree	2
● Strongly disagree	0



12. Are there any other circumstances you think we should take into consideration?

48

Responses

Latest Responses

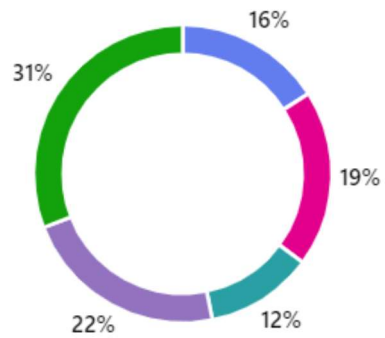


13 respondents (27%) answered need for this question.

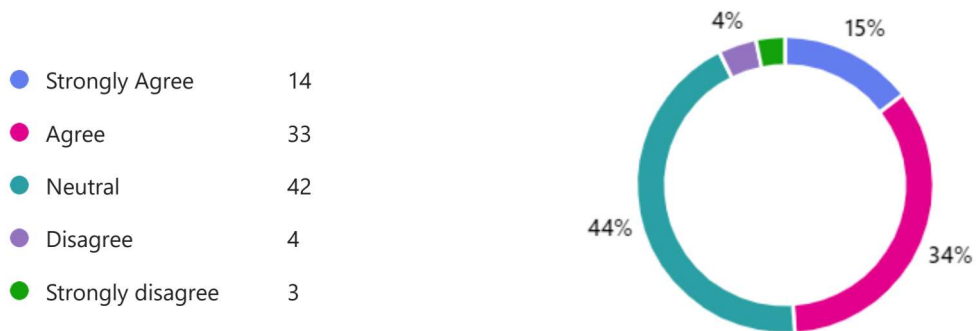


13. Properties will be allocated according to needs and area choice, and then by waiting date. This means people who have been waiting longer will be offered first. Your waiting date is allocated at point of application.

● Strongly Agree	15
● Agree	18
● Neutral	11
● Disagree	21
● Strongly disagree	29



14. The law states certain groups of people have a reasonable preference for allocation. We also propose a dditional groups of applicants who we would give a reasonable preference to. (See Stage 1, Identifying housing need)



15. Are there any other groups that you think we should include as a housing need?

34
Responses

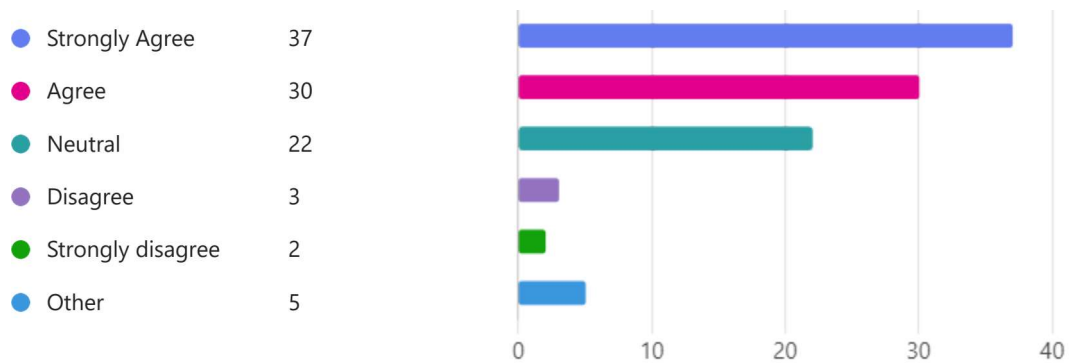
Latest Responses



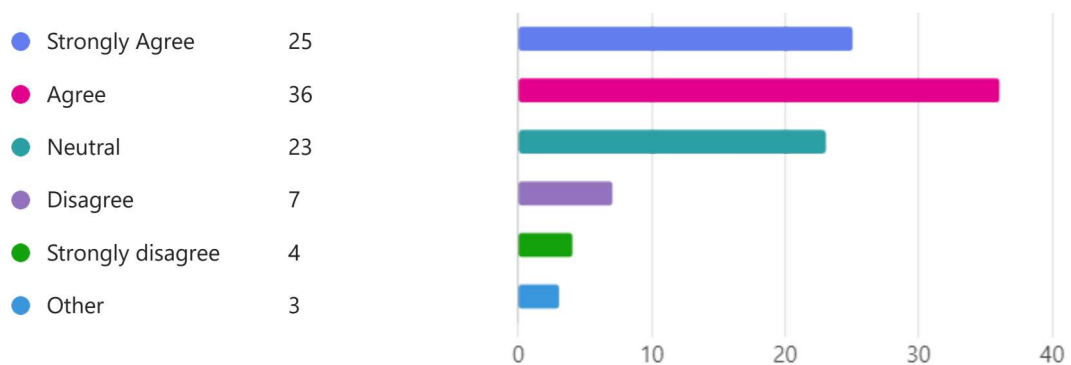
10 respondents (29%) answered need for this question.



16. People who have assets or a high income are considered better able to resolve their own housing needs. As such they will be placed in Band D, from which there will be a smaller chance of allocation.



17. In general applicants will need a local connection of 5 years (with some exceptions). Households who are experiencing homelessness need further assistance, and therefore we propose that where a homeless household has been working with the Council for a period of time, the local connection criteria will be amended.



18. Can you suggest any gaps or improvements?

36
Responses

Latest Responses

"Some applicants who have moved to the area for work, then I... "

...

10 respondents (28%) answered people for this question.



19. Do you have any other comments?

26
Responses

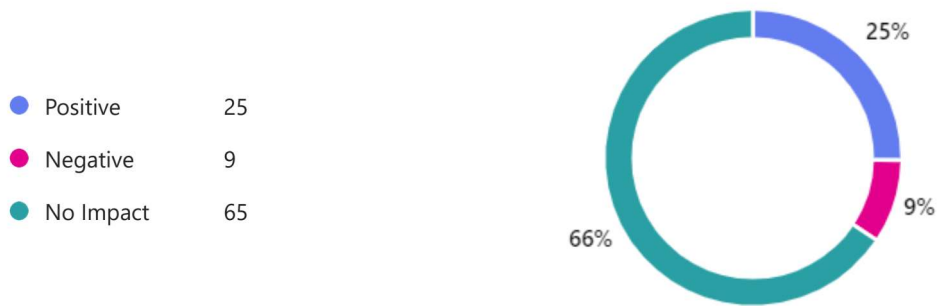
Latest Responses

...

6 respondents (23%) answered needs for this question.



20. Do you feel the proposal will have a positive or negative impact on the Welsh Language?



21. Do you have any suggestions as to how this proposal could be revised to increase any positive effect and minimise any negative effect on the Welsh Language?

27
Responses

Latest Responses

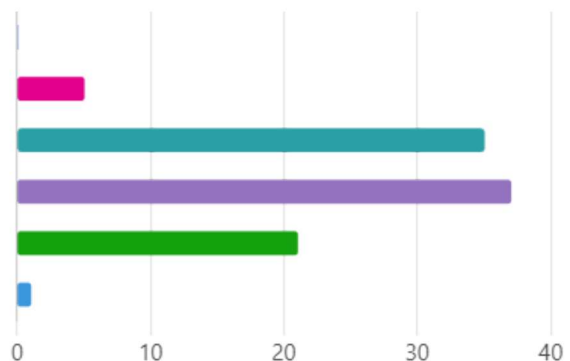


5 respondents (19%) answered Welsh for this question.

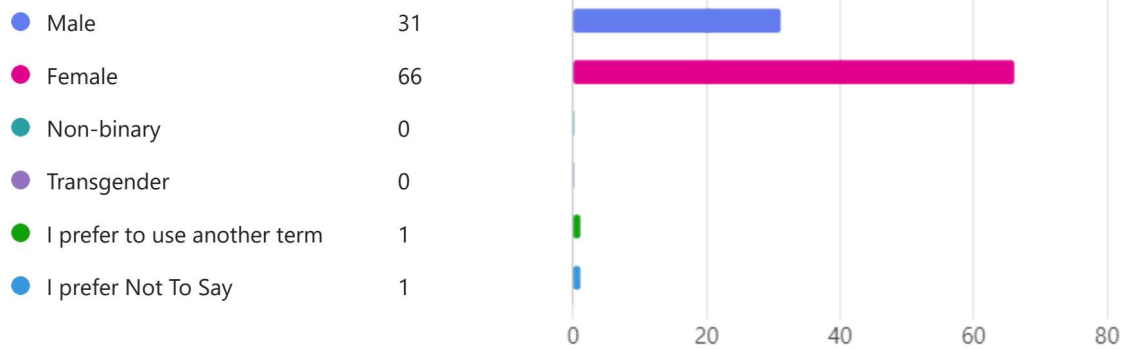


22. How old are you?

Age Group	Count
Under 16	0
16 - 24 years	5
25 - 44 years	35
45 - 64 years	37
65+	21
Prefer not to say	1

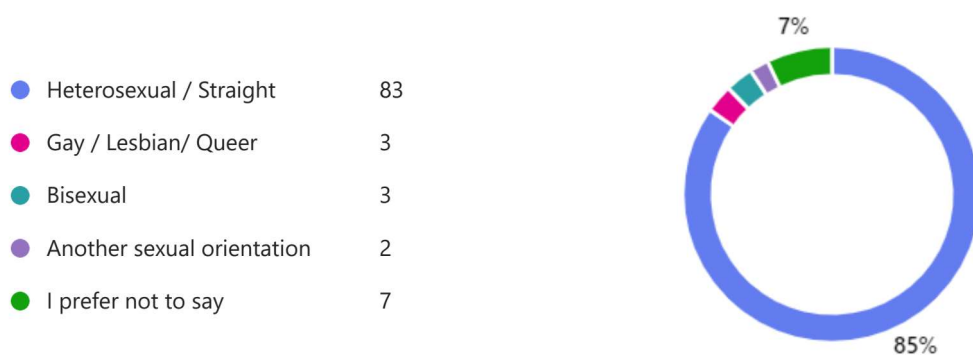


23. What gender do you identify as?

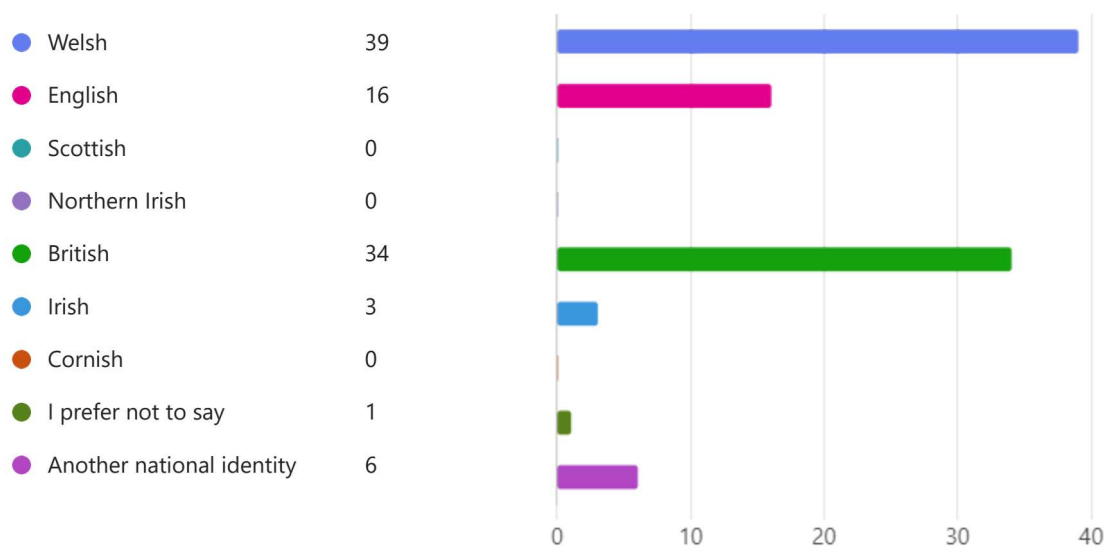


24. Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

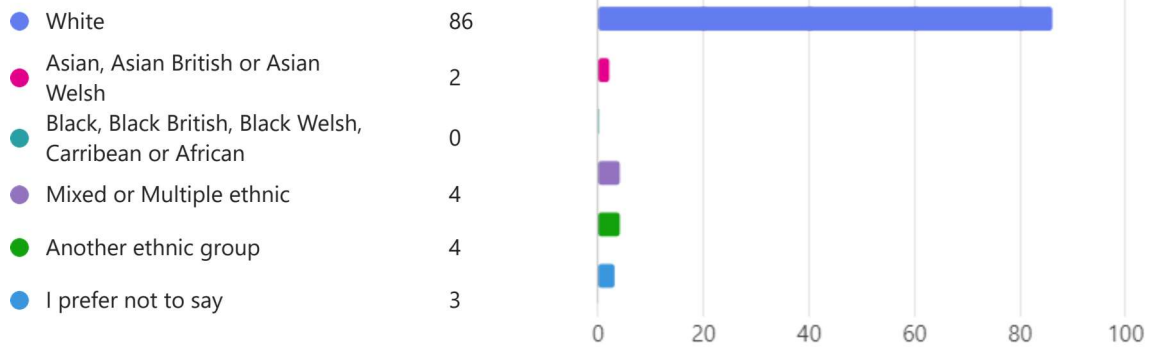
* Note - this question should only be answered by people aged over 16.



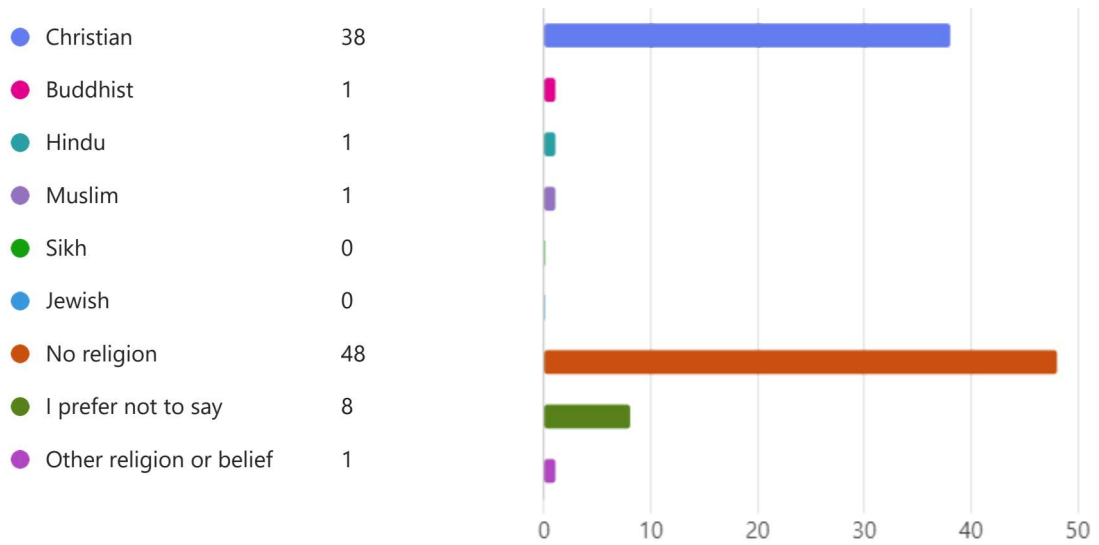
25. National identity: How would you describe your national identity?



26. How would you describe your ethnic group?



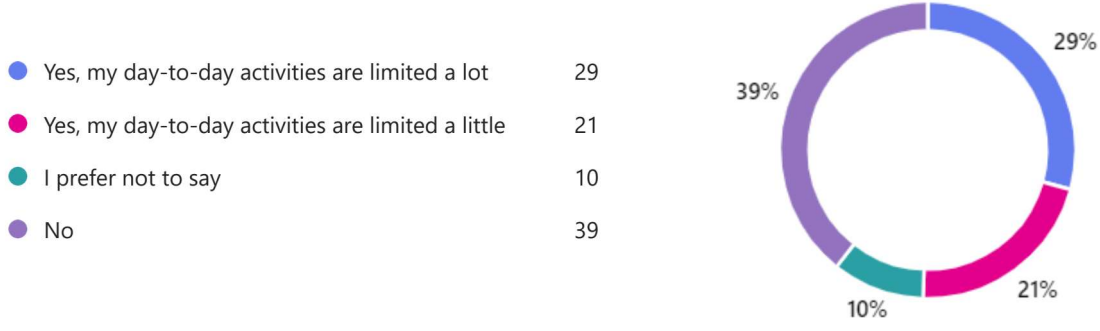
27. Religion or Belief: What is your religion?



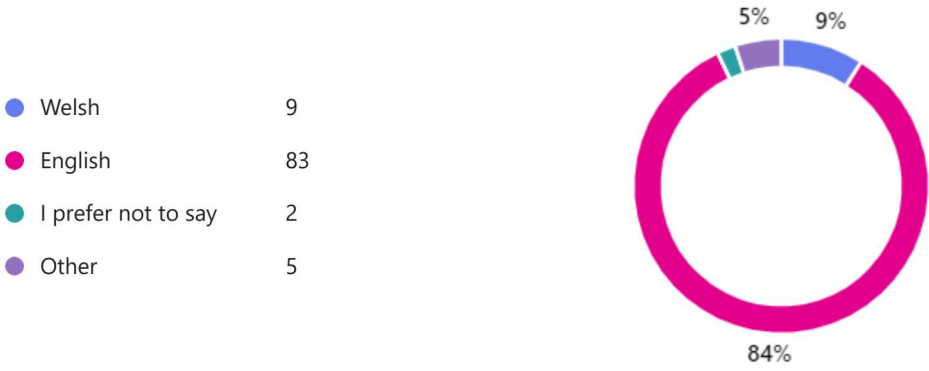
28. Have you previously served in the UK Armed Forces?



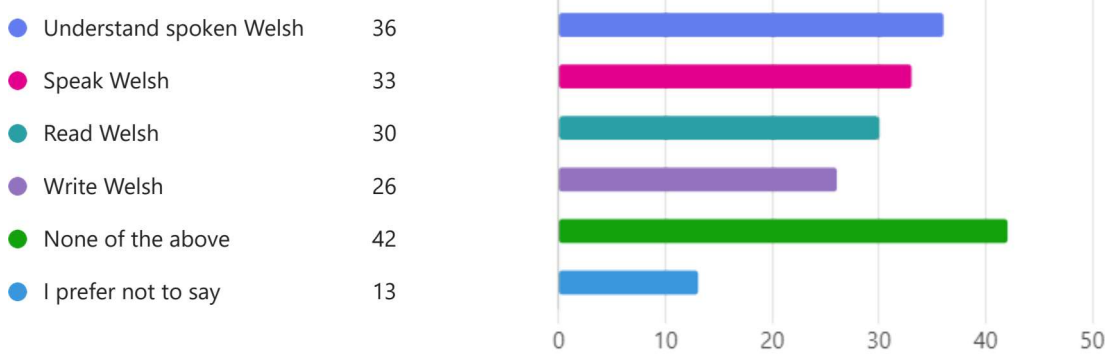
29. Disability: Do you have a long term physical or mental health condition or illness that reduces your ability to carry out day to day activities?



30. What is your preferred language?



31. Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?



CYNGOR SIR CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

<u>Report to:</u>	Cabinet
<u>Date of meeting:</u>	18th February 2025
<u>Title:</u>	Common Allocations Policy
<u>Purpose of the report:</u>	To provide feedback following the meeting of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 22nd January 2025.

Background:

The Council has worked with its partners to jointly review the Allocations Policy. Times have changed and this needs to be reflected in a revised allocations policy. The growing demand on Social Housing coupled with the desire to maintain and strengthen local communities has led us to conduct a thorough review of the way housing is allocated in the County.

The current policy has been in use since 2016 and was reviewed in 2019. Since then, there has been a change in landscape, most notably the cost of housing, cost of living, a Welsh Government focus on homelessness and the increase in demand on the housing register and homelessness service.

Current Situation:

Officers outlined the current situation referenced in the report published included in the 22nd of January 2025 agenda papers.

Next steps:

Officers also explained with agreement from the Healthier Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, the new policy will be implemented from the 1st of April 2025. To reach this deadline, there are requirements to make changes to the Housing Services IT system, and an internal decision has been made that the Housing Register will close to new applicants during 1st March until 31st March 2025. Allocations of social housing will continue to take place from the original Register during March. However, no allocations would be made between 1st April and 14th April 2025 to allow the waiting list to build back up from applications assessed against the new Policy. This has been agreed with the Housing Association Partners, due to the impact on their allocations.

Recommendation(s):

Following a discussion, Committee Members were asked to consider the following recommendation:

To approve the Common Allocations Policy and accept the recommendations following the end of the consultation period and approve for full adoption.

Committee Members agreed to recommend that Cabinet:

1. approve the Common Allocations Policy and accept the recommendations
2. following the end of the consultation period and approve for full adoption.

It was suggested and agreed that the Housing Associations would be invited to attend a future Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to discuss anti-social behaviour in the County.

Councillor Amanda Edwards
Vice-Chair of the Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee