Introduction

What do we mean by Equality and Diversity?

Equality is about ensuring that all people are treated equally. This does not mean treating everyone the same, but means recognising the differences in life situation, in experience and ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all people, taking their needs into account.

This definition recognises that:

- equality is an issue for all
- we don’t all start from the same position and to create a fair society we must recognise different needs.

Diversity can be defined as understanding and appreciating differences in individuals’ life experiences, skills and perspectives. This involves respecting the rights of others and promoting equality and tolerance amongst different communities. In relation to service delivery, this means that the services provided by housing agencies should meet the needs and aspirations of all service users, staff and partners and that services should be provided in an equitable way and be accessible to all.

Valuing diversity therefore involves:

- recognising and respecting differences
- striving to achieve equality of opportunity for an increasingly diverse customer and employee groups
- providing appropriate services that match differing needs and preferences
- promoting understanding and good relations between people who have different backgrounds and experiences.

Why are Equality and Diversity so important?

We live in an increasingly diverse society and our understanding of the importance of equality and diversity is developing. It is commonly accepted that the commitment to applying the principles of equality of opportunity is a central part of a fair and democratic society.

Housing plays an absolutely fundamental role in everyone’s life. Our homes and the communities in which they are located directly influence our access to critical opportunities such as employment and education and our ability to participate in the social and economic life of the community. These factors determine our basic sense of belonging and our feelings of health and wellbeing.

Equality and diversity are important because:

- being aware of and proactive about the diversity of customers will ensure that housing organisations are able to provide the right services and meet the right needs
- embracing diversity helps housing organisations recruit the best talent available
- housing organisations have to comply with the law on equality and diversity issues and meet the demands of social housing regulators
- a positive approach to diversity will promote understanding and good relations between people who have different backgrounds and experiences, and this enhances the quality of life in local areas.

Legislation in the UK has established seven ‘protected grounds’ or ‘strands of diversity’, these are:

- age
- disability
- gender
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- transgender.
This briefing:

- provides an overview of the legislation relating to equality and diversity
- sets out the policy context for equality and diversity in Wales
- sets out population data in respect of each of the seven strands of equality, identifies issues in relation to housing and provides a practice checklist for housing organisations
- highlights some examples of positive and innovative practice around the various equality strands
- provides a list a practical resources and where to find further information.

This briefing does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of all relevant policy, law and positive practice, but it is hoped that the information contained here is found to be interesting and informative to housing practitioners in Wales and beyond.

The Legislative Framework

The UK is a signatory of the European Convention on Human Rights, which gives people protection for a range of human rights. Several of the rights are relevant to housing providers, these are:

- Article 6: the right to a fair hearing in connection with civil rights and obligations and minimum rights for criminal trials
- Article 8: the right to respect for private and family life, the home and correspondence
- Article 14: the prohibition of discrimination
- Protocol 1, Article 1: the protection of property.

The Human Rights Act 1998 made it unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a Convention right. The Human Rights Act states that organisations and individuals within them, carrying out certain functions of a public nature will fall within the definition of a public authority. The courts are still deciding exactly what this means. The following are definitely public authorities:

- central government
- courts and tribunals
- local government
- planning inspectorate
- executive agencies
- prison and immigration services
- statutory regulatory bodies
- NHS Trusts.

A recent judgement in the Court of Appeal (R (on the application of Weaver) v London & Quadrant Housing Trust and the Equality and Human Rights Commission June 2009) determined that certain housing association functions, in particular the allocation and housing management functions, were functions of a public nature, and therefore subject to judicial review. It is understood that London & Quadrant intend to appeal the decision made at the Court of Appeal.

Over the last four decades, there have been a number of important laws introduced with the aim of reducing inequality and tackling discrimination, particularly in the workplace. These are as follows:

**Race Relations Act 1965**: the first piece of anti-discrimination legislation in Britain which outlawed racial discrimination.

**Equal Pay Act 1970**: gave men and women equal treatment in contractual terms and conditions of employment when they are employed on the same or broadly similar work, or on work which, although different, is of equal value.

**Sex Discrimination Act 1975**: outlawed discrimination on the grounds of gender. It also outlawed discrimination against married people in the field of employment.

**Race Relations Act 1976**: outlawed racial discrimination, direct or indirect, in employment, education, the provision of goods, facilities and services and the disposal and management of premises in England, Scotland and Wales.

**Welsh Language Act 1993**: introduced a statutory duty on public bodies in Wales to prepare a scheme specifying measures they will take in the conduct of their business to treat the English and Welsh languages equally. Local authorities and housing associations are covered by the Act.

**Disability Discrimination Act 1995**: outlawed discrimination against disabled people in employment and in the provision of services. It also specifically outlawed discrimination in the disposal and management of premises.

**Human Rights Act 1998**: extended the European Convention on Human Rights to public authorities, making it unlawful for public authorities to act in a way that is incompatible with a Convention right.
Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999: contained measures to prevent discrimination against transsexual people on the grounds of sex in employment and vocational training.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000: extended the application of the Race Relations Act 1976 to the police and other public authorities and strengthened the duty placed on local authorities and other public bodies to carry out their functions having due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003: made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of religion or belief. The regulations apply to vocational training and all facets of the employment relationship.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003: made it unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation. The regulations apply to vocational training and all facets of the employment relationship.

Civil Partnership Act 2004: gave same-sex couples the right to register a civil partnership, which means that the partnership is legally recognised. They have similar rights as a married couple in such areas as tax, inheritance and benefits.

Gender Recognition Act 2004: gave transsexual people the right to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate. This means for all intents and purposes, the holder is legally recognised in their acquired gender. Transsexual people can apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate if they have had a medical diagnosis of being transsexual, have been living full time in their acquired gender for a number of years and intend to remain permanently in that gender.

Disability Discrimination Act 2005: introduced a new duty for local authorities and other public bodies to carry out their functions in a way that eliminates discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people and widened the definition of disability. The Act also imposed a duty on those who manage let dwellings to make reasonable adjustments.

The Equality Act 2006: placed a statutory duty on all public authorities, when carrying out their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. The Act also established the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006: outlawed discrimination on the grounds of a person’s age in employment and vocational training.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006: created a new criminal offence of stirring up hatred against a person because of their religion.

The Equality Bill is currently making its way through the legislative process and when enacted will bring together the different strands of diversity within one piece of legislation which will apply to Wales, England and Scotland. The Equality Bill will strengthen equality law in the UK by:

- introducing a new public sector duty to consider reducing socio-economic inequalities;
- introducing a new equality duty for public bodies;
- ending age discrimination outside of the workplace;
- promoting the use of positive action to address inequality
- strengthening protection from discrimination for disabled people.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission, established under the Equality Act 2006, came into being on 1st October 2007. It combines the responsibilities and powers of the three previous equality commissions (the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality, and the Disability Rights Commission). The Equality and Human Rights Commission has the responsibility to protect, enforce and promote equality across the seven ‘protected grounds’ by:

- enforcing the law
- influencing the development of law and government practice
- promoting good practice
- campaigning
- fostering better relations
- developing understanding and evidence.
National Policy Context

Section 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 states that:

“The Welsh Assembly shall make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that its functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people”.

The Welsh Assembly Government’s statutory duty to promote equality has led to the development of a distinctive equality agenda in Wales. The principle that ‘no one should be denied opportunities because of their race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual orientation, age or religion’ underpins all their work. This is reflected in their vision as set out in Wales: A Better Country, which states that the Assembly will:

“promote gender equality, good race relations and race equality and tackle discrimination on the grounds of age and disability. We want to see people in public life reflecting the diversity in the population as a whole”.

In the One Wales Agreement, the ruling Labour / Plaid coalition sets out its vision of a fair and just Wales, one in which:

“all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives and to shape the communities in which they live.”

The ambition stated in the Agreement is to create a Wales where:

“everyone achieves their full human potential and everyone can live free from poverty, discrimination, fear or abuse.”

The Single Equalities Scheme adopted by the Welsh Assembly Government in March 2009 describes the actions that the Welsh Assembly Government will take to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination, setting a clear direction for all public bodies in Wales. It aims to integrate equality of opportunity principles, strategies and practices into the everyday work of the Assembly and other public bodies.

Equality is also one of the four main principles outlined in Making the Connections: Delivering Better Services for Wales, the Assembly Government’s approach to transforming public service delivery. Making the Connections seeks to encourage public services in Wales to become more responsive to the needs of individuals and communities. In placing greater participation by citizens and communities in public services as a goal, there are clear implications for equality of opportunity.

The National Housing Strategy ‘Better Homes for People in Wales also takes equality of opportunity as one of its three key themes. This is reflected in targeted initiatives to help particular disadvantaged groups achieve equality in accessing services and the housing that they need. The strategy states that:

“To realise our aim of a fully inclusive society, we must ensure that equality of opportunity is ingrained in all policies and guidance. By tackling the problems associated with specific disadvantaged groups, we aim to deal with the most evident examples of inequity among our people.”

The vision of the Welsh Assembly Government’s draft Community Cohesion Strategy is:

“To strengthen all our communities within Wales and encourage community integration for all individuals regardless of faith, race, age or background.”

The draft strategy emphasises the important role that housing agencies play in promoting community cohesion. Social landlords have extensive contacts with service users, knowledge of local areas that they manage homes in and the issues and problems that the areas face. Local authorities in discharging their strategic housing function have the ability to promote community cohesion through the regulation of the private rented sector and the provision of new social housing.
Housing Associations and Equality in Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government seeks to pass on the responsibilities contained in Section 120 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 to housing associations through its regulatory function. The National Assembly for Wales’s (2006) Regulatory Code for Housing Associations Registered in Wales includes a key expectation in relation to equal opportunities. It states that associations should actively promote respect for diversity, equality of opportunity, the elimination of discrimination in all their activities and good relations between people of different racial groups.

The Code sets out the following questions that are used to assess whether associations meet the Assembly’s expectations on equal opportunities:

Does the association ensure that it complies with all legislation relating to equality issues including: race equality, sex discrimination, disability discrimination and the Welsh language?

Does the association have clear arrangements to promote equality of access and to eliminate discrimination in all its activities?

Do those arrangements cover unfair discrimination on the grounds of all unjustifiable criteria including race, gender, disability, support needs, age, language, religion, marital status and sexual orientation?

Does the association have an equal opportunities strategy with an action plan containing clear targets?

Does the association monitor outcomes against these targets and take appropriate action?

Do Board members, staff and key residents demonstrate an awareness of equal opportunity issues?

Does the association work with persons having specialist knowledge of or representing minority groups?
The Population of Wales

In this section of the briefing we investigate the profile of the population of Wales in respect of the seven strands of equality. The data in this section is drawn from a number of secondary sources, including the 2001 Census to develop a picture of the diversity of the population of Wales. A summary of the key issues that have been evidenced to affect individuals or groups within the relevant equality strand is also included along with a practice checklist.

Age

At the time of the 2001 Census Wales had a population of just under 3 million people (2,903,085). The age profile of the population of Wales at the time of the 2001 Census is shown in figure 1.

Figure 1. The Population of Wales by Age.
Source 2001 Census. ONS, Crown Copyright

Any consideration of age as an equality strand needs to take into account the demographic changes that are occurring in Wales both now and in the future, particularly in relation to an aging population. The age profile of the population is constantly changing, as birth rates reduce and life expectancy increases. Over the next 20 years we are likely to see a growth in the proportion of the population aged 65+ from 17% in 2001 to 23.6% in 2029. The Strategy for Older People in Wales recognises that over the next 20 years demographic changes will alter the balance of the population and mean that future policies and programmes in Wales must reflect the needs of an ageing society. In this context there is a need to improve the quality, quantity and responsiveness of services for older people.

Younger and older people have very different needs but often experience similar levels of discrimination and disadvantage and a similar sense of alienation or social exclusion.

Research has shown that that occupation of tenure types varies with age, this is shown in figure 2. The 2001 Census indicated that one in five older households live in social housing and that the proportion of older households living in social rented accommodation increases with age.

Figure 2. Housing tenure by age group in 2006.
Source Table 2.12 in Rugg and Rhodes 2008, drawn from further analysis of data from the Survey of English Housing

Issues for housing organisations:

- demographic changes and an aging population are important considerations both in terms of the delivery of services and employment practices of housing agencies
- negative attitudes and common stereotypes about both younger and older people can lead to discriminatory behaviour towards them and can contribute to their ongoing social and economic disadvantage
- younger people are more likely to become homeless than people in other age groups
- some young people may require help and advice on setting up home, and support in maintaining their tenancies
- family relationship breakdown is often a factor in the housing problems experienced by young people and mediation services have been shown to be effective in resolving relationship difficulties
- some young people might have multiple support needs, including drug or alcohol abuse and mental health issues

1 J Rugg a D.Rhodes 2008 The private rented sector: its contribution and potential. Centre for Housing Policy University of York
• care leavers might be particularly vulnerable and require extra support
• generally older households are more likely than all households to live in under-occupied homes
• housing quality is a particularly important issue for older people, especially for those who spend a lot of time at home
• frail older people are often in receipt of services from a variety of agencies (including health and social care) and the coordination of these services can be important
• the size, position and location of their home can become problematic for older people as their circumstances change
• energy efficiency and fuel poverty are often issues of concern to older people
• crime and fear of crime can play a significant part in undermining the well-being of older people and can contribute to making them feel isolated and excluded from their communities
• access to clear, understandable information and advice is crucial to meeting the needs of older and younger people
• older people with mental health issues or dementia may have more specific housing needs.

Practice checklist: Age and housing
• make sure all staff recruitment policies and procedures do not discriminate against candidates on the basis of age
• make sure all publicity and information material produced by your organisation uses inclusive language and images which are positive about age
• include age discrimination issues in all staff training on equality and diversity.

Disability
Disability is a difficult factor to measure for a number of reasons. People's understanding of definitions of disability and the concept of disability itself vary. It is possible for one person to define themselves as disabled when another person with an identical condition would not.

The information that can be gained from the 2001 Census and other surveys is primarily based around the question on ‘limiting long terms illness’ (LLTI), which for the purpose of the census was defined as ‘self assessment of whether or not a person has a limiting long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the work they can do, including problems that are due to old age’.

The 2001 Census suggests that 23% of people in Wales have LLTI, 27% of adults and 5% of children. The Welsh Health Survey 2004 shows LLTI rates of 28% of adults and 5% of children; and the General Household Survey 2003 suggests that 22% of people in Wales have LLTI. Whilst there may be a lack of clarity about the precise number of people who have a LLTI, it is apparent that a significant proportion of the population have conditions which limit their daily activities, which could potentially impact on the type of housing they are able to occupy and if employed, the environment they are able to work in.

Issues for housing organisations:
• housing organisations can help to provide the necessary support, assistance and care to disabled people to enable them to lead independent lives
• information about housing services provided by agencies needs to be accessible and provided in a range of formats
• people with physical or sensory impairments require good quality, well equipped housing so that they can live their every day lives independently
• for disabled people it is not only the suitability of the housing itself that is important but also its location, the wider community, proximity to amenities and transport and other facilities and services
• the housing situation of someone with a disability can impact on opportunities to gain employment, social life and leisure
• not all impairments are visible. People with mental health problems often require extra support to help them to maintain their tenancies
• disabled staff may need to work more flexible hours; rigid working hours can discriminate against staff who have specific needs
• disabled staff and those applying for work may require adaptations to equipment and/ or the working environment in order to carry out their work/ maximise their potential.

Practice checklist: Disability and housing
• have an up-to-date Disability Equality Scheme which is monitored for effectiveness
• engage with partner agencies at strategic and operational levels. A multi-agency approach can enable better planning and co-ordination of services, making it easier for residents to access the services they need
• undertake positive action for disability to address inequalities in the labour market
• ensure points of customer access are accessible for people with disabilities: for example, wheelchair access, impairment hearing loops and visual aids. Train staff to use them
• be creative and proactive in designing, implementing and reviewing disability equality action plans and impact assessments; and implement, monitor and act on the results.

Gender

In 2001 51.6% of the population of Wales were female. Whilst some of the housing issues and concerns of women equally effect men there are issues that are more specifically relevant to women, often because they are over represented in a particular group, such as lone parents. In addition, women’s experiences of particular housing problems can be exacerbated because of their gender, for example, the issues identified for BME women are similar to those of BME groups generally but may be compounded depending on specific gender and cultural needs.

The equality strand of gender is different to many of the other strands in terms of measuring the numbers and location of ‘target’ populations in that the gender split of tenants tends to be more or less equal. It is the interrelationship of gender with other socio-economic factors that is often of more significance in assessing how to meet the housing needs of women. For example, the 2001 Census revealed that:
• nine out of ten lone parent families are headed by a woman and nearly half of lone mothers are single (never married)
• lone parents are more likely than any other type of household to be renting from the social housing sector and half of lone mothers with dependent children live in social housing.

Women are affected by domestic violence in significantly greater numbers than men, and women are more likely to be the victims of sex trafficking.

It should be noted that there are instances when certain housing needs and concerns can disproportionately affect men. For example, according to the 2001 census there were around 17 times as many men as women in prisons and over seven times as many men in defence establishments, circumstances which could potentially have an impact on housing need.

Women are represented in greater numbers than men within the housing profession, in 2009 57% of members of the CIH were female. However, men have traditionally been represented in greater proportions in more senior level of housing organisations.

Issues for housing organisations:
• women experience discrimination and social and economic disadvantage in the same way as many other groups, but this is often overlooked or not recognised
• women suffer disproportionately from domestic violence but recognition that there are male victims of domestic violence is starting to emerge
• for older women, there is often a need for either smaller or larger accommodation (due to the death of a partner, children moving, or the need for a more manageable size of property)
• women generally rely on support networks such as relatives, and seek accommodation near to these networks
• women assume disproportionate responsibility for dealing with needs which may arise from illness and disability within their family, which can impact upon their housing and employment situation
• female staff and single parents (women or men), may need to work more flexible hours; rigid working hours can discriminate against staff who have caring and/or significant domestic responsibilities
• housing agencies need to take account of the social and economic disadvantage that women often suffer, as well as their disproportionate responsibilities for childcare and caring in meeting the needs of female staff and customers.

Practice checklist: Gender and housing
• have an up-to-date Gender Equality Scheme which is monitored for effectiveness
• raise awareness of gender issues and gender stereotyping amongst residents and staff
• set challenging and realistic gender equality goals and objectives and consult and involve stakeholders in the process
• be creative and proactive in designing, implementing and reviewing gender equality action plans and impact assessments and implement, monitor and act on the results
• promote positive action and work with a range of partners to achieve it.
Race

Table 1 shows the ethnicity of the population of Wales. At the time of the 2001 Census, 4% of people in Wales described their ethnicity as non-white British and 2.1% of people described their ethnicity as non-white. People of Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and Bangladeshi heritage formed the largest minority ethnic populations in Wales and they tended to be concentrated in Cardiff, Newport and Swansea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Number of Persons</th>
<th>% of the total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White: British</td>
<td>2,786,605</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Irish</td>
<td>17,691</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White: Other White</td>
<td>37,211</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>5,996</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Black African</td>
<td>2,410</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: White and Asian</td>
<td>5,001</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed: Other Mixed</td>
<td>4,251</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian: Indian</td>
<td>8,262</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian: Pakistani</td>
<td>8,287</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian: Bangladeshi</td>
<td>5,437</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian: Other Asian</td>
<td>3,464</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: Black Caribbean</td>
<td>2,597</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: Black African</td>
<td>3,730</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British: Other Black</td>
<td>743</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Chinese</td>
<td>6,269</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese or Other Ethnic Group: Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>5,135</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The inter-relationship of race with other socio-economic factors is of critical importance in assessing how to meet the housing needs of BME groups. There are significant differences between different BME groups but generally unemployment, high number of single-earner households, low levels of educational attainment and lower incomes predispose many BME groups to poverty and influence their ability to meet their housing needs in the market.

BME groups disproportionately live in some of the most economically deprived areas which contain some of the poorest quality housing.

Issues for housing organisations:
• Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups are, on the whole, overrepresented in the social sector housing. However, there are significant differences between different BME groups, and some are in fact underrepresented.

Poverty is a major factor affecting the need for social housing. Higher poverty rates amongst BME populations increase their need for social rented housing
• large families and lone parent families are particularly common amongst some BME groups. Household size and composition impact upon the size and type of housing they require
• a combination of historical factors and cultural aspirations can explain some of the difference in BME groups’ tenure patterns. However, recent rises in house prices have turned home-ownership into largely unrealisable aspiration for many young BME households
• Although BME populations often live in cities where they have sizeable ethnic communities and access to places of worship and specialist markets/shops, proximity to good schools and relative safety of the area are becoming increasingly important to BME households
• BME groups form a visible community and are exposed to hate crimes. Fear of racism continues to impact upon the locational choices of many non-White BME groups
• aspirations and preferences regarding the design of the dwelling are affected more by household size and type than by ethnicity, although certain preferences are stronger amongst some BME groups
• ethnic community and bilingual/ culturally sensitive services are of great importance to recent migrants and foreign-born elderly.

Practice checklist: Race and housing
• have an up to date Race Equality Scheme in place, which is regularly tested for its effectiveness
• ensure that information about housing services are translated into all languages used within the community and that translation facilities are available in offices
• develop positive relationships with organisations who represent BME communities and develop an awareness of the ethnic groups within areas of operation. Investigate and respond to the service needs of BME groups, in particular the needs of more diverse BME communities, especially hidden or emerging migrant communities
• ensure that service users from BME communities are provided with information about how the organisation defines and responds to hate crimes.
• strive to have a workforce which reflects the ethnic mix of the customer base and the areas served and promote positive action to achieve this.

Religion or belief

Religion can be a powerful factor in personal and community identity. It is important to recognise that multicultural communities are also multi-faith communities, and while religion is often linked to ethnicity, this is not always the case and it should therefore be considered separately. The Equality Act 2006 defines religion as serious and cohesive belief compatible with human dignity. ‘Belief’ relates to philosophical beliefs such as humanism or pacifism but not to other sorts of belief such as supporting a political party.

Table 2 shows the religious affiliations of the population of Wales at the time of the 2001 Census.

Table 2. The religious beliefs of the population of Wales.
Source 2001 Census. ONS, Crown Copyright

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>% of the population of Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other religion</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having an understanding of religious or other beliefs is important for housing because:

• religious or other beliefs influence preferences and behaviours, such as negotiating relationships between men and women, washing requirements and facilities, and dietary needs. It is important for housing organisations to be sensitive to these in order to provide culturally appropriate services
• disagreements over religious or other beliefs can potentially cause conflict in the community and damage good relations.

Issues for housing organisations:

• care should be taken not to confuse religion with ethnicity
• overcrowding disproportionately affects some religious groups and is linked to household size
• monitoring of belief is not as well established as some of the other equality strands
• the design of homes can be an important factor for some religious groups. For example, issues around the living and kitchen area being part of the same room can be important
• the location of housing is important in relation to closeness of places of worship or the ability to reach them easily
• religious tensions and harassment can emerge within communities.

Practice checklist: Religion or belief and housing

• treat discrimination on grounds of religion or faith as seriously as you would racial discrimination
• be aware of the needs of staff of different religions and beliefs in the workplace. For example, appointments or meetings should be sensitive where possible to avoid days of religious significance and be sensitive to dietary or dress requirements of customers and staff
• audit services to ensure they are culturally appropriate which will enhance customer satisfaction and promote wider good relations
• in making plans for new housing or regeneration, consider religion and belief as factors to take into account, for example, in house design.

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation is a combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person. It is not the same as sex or gender. Some people have a sexual orientation towards people of the same sex. Unfortunately, there are no UK population statistics for the number of people who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) because the opportunity to self-identify has never been given in any census, and even if there were such an opportunity, evidence from other research indicates that a reluctance to identify for fear of discrimination would be likely to affect the degree of response.

In the 2003 Government consultation paper on Civil Partnerships, the DTI estimates that LGB people constitute 5-7% of the total adult population which, based on the 2001 Census, would equate to between 145,150 to 203,216 people across Wales.
Recent research has found that there is a lack of LGB specific services within Wales (particularly rural Wales) and a general lack of knowledge about the services that do exist both among housing service providers and LGB communities.2

Issues for housing organisations:
- A person’s sexual identity can play an important role in triggering housing problems and creating certain housing needs, often due to the intolerant actions and attitudes of others.
- A disproportionate number of young people are made homeless due to hostile reactions to their sexuality either by parents or carers.
- Privacy and confidentiality are important issues for LGB people and the initial contact an LGB service user makes with a service provider has a significant impact on whether they feel comfortable disclosing their sexual orientation.
- Older and disabled LGB people suffer isolation when where they know few other LGB people and where homophobic attitudes are common.
- Many LGB people suffer homophobia or harassment in their homes and local neighbourhood.
- There is a tendency for people in LGB relationships to be treated as single. Housing organisations often fail to acknowledge the variety of households that LGB people form or are part of.

Practice checklist: Sexual orientation and housing
- Be sensitive around lettings policies to ensure LGB people feel safe in their homes and neighbourhoods.
- Respond quickly to incidences of harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation and provide remedial options e.g. transfer options.
- Create a safe environment at work and with service providers so LGB people feel comfortable about ‘coming out’ if they want to, but also feel as though they do not have to discuss their sexual orientation at work: no one should have to answer a question about their sexual orientation if they do not want to.
- Monitor sexual orientation in the workplace and in the provision of housing and housing related services.
- Make links with national LGB organisations such as Stonewall and local groups offering support to LGB people.
- Strictly maintain confidentiality around a person’s sexual orientation.

Transgender
The word transgender is an umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from their birth sex. The term may sometimes include transsexual which refers to a person who wants to or who has already changed their physical sex from the one which they were born with. Transgender is not a sexual orientation and it is not the same as transvestism.

The term trans is a generic term generally used by those who identify themselves as transgender, transsexual or transvestite. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically. Some people have not, and do not intend to, undergo gender reassignment.

The Gender Trust estimates between 1 in 4000 and 1 in 10,000 people are actually transsexual. Many transgender people can identify as female-to-male (FtM) or male-to-female (MtF).

Issues for housing organisations:
- Trans people experience a lot of social stigma and discrimination. They may be vulnerable to harassment and ‘hate crime’ in their communities.
- Housing workers need to be aware of how to provide appropriate treatment and services to transgender people.

Practice checklist: Transgender and housing
- Consider monitoring your staff and service users on gender identity, taking into account advice and research published by organisations such as the Gender Trust and the EHRC.
- Make links with organisations such as the Gender Trust or Press for Change and local groups offering support to transgender people.
- Strictly maintain confidentiality around a person’s transgender status.
- Have a clearly understood data protection policy and data disclosure policy and adhere to the privacy provisions in the Gender Recognition Act 2004.

---

2 The housing needs of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people in Wales, Stonewall, Triangle Wales, Tai Trothwy (October 2006)
Welsh Language

At the time of the 2001 Census just over 580,000 of the population of Wales aged 3 or more were able to speak Welsh. This showed an increase in the use of Welsh from the previous Census in 1991, most notably among children aged between 3 and 15 (37.7% of whom can speak Welsh). Figure 3 shows the distribution of the population aged 3 or more who were able to speak Welsh in 2001.

Figure 3. Percentage of the Population of Wales able to Speak Welsh in 2001.
Source Welsh Language Board.

Issues for Housing Organisations

- Local Authorities and Housing Associations in Wales are required by the Welsh Language Act 1993 to have a Welsh Language Scheme in place to demonstrate how, in the conduct of their business, they will treat the English and Welsh languages equally.

Practice Checklist: Welsh language and housing

- ensure that an up to date Welsh Language Scheme is in place and is monitored for compliance
- monitor the preferences of service users, in respect of their preferred language and ensure that arrangements are in place to communicate with them in their preferred language.
Positive Practice

Many local authorities, housing associations and partner organisations demonstrate positive and innovative practice in relation to equality and diversity. In this section of the briefing, we set out some examples from Wales and across the UK under the following headings:

- General equalities work
- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Transgender
- Welsh Language.

The examples were identified by researching the HouseMark Knowledge base, calling for examples through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Welsh Housing Notice Board, HouseMark and Chartered Institute of Housing e-zines and the Community Housing Cymru monthly briefing, and referring to relevant publications.

General Equalities Work

To demonstrate the Association’s commitment to Equality and Diversity issues, United Welsh has established an Equality and Diversity Forum. The membership of the forum includes a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT), a Union representative and a representative from all departments.

The terms of reference for the forum include:

- overseeing the Association’s approach to equality and diversity
- where barriers to equality and diversity have been identified advising others on the possible remedial action needed to promote change
- monitoring progress against Equality and Diversity Action Plans
- reporting to the Senior Management Team on equality and diversity issues and where appropriate, making recommendations for change
- promoting the activities of the forum internally, both at departmental level and during all staff meetings.

As a part of the promotion of equality and diversity within the Association the forum has developed web pages on the Association’s intranet. These pages, backed by a quarterly awareness-raising bulletin, contain a wide range of useful information in relation to equalities issues, such as:

- a multi-faith calendar
- details on different religions
- the dates and details religious festivals and how they might impact on service users or colleagues
- links to external websites such as Stonewall
- information on how to better communicate with deaf people
- Association specific information such as Equality and Diversity Polices and action plans and minutes of the forum meetings.

The intranet pages provide staff across all the Associations sites with a useful and accessible tool which can be easily updated with a range of information on equality and diversity issues.

Contact Details
Gareth Hexter at United Welsh Housing Association
e-mail: ghexter@uwha.co.uk
In 2008 Newydd Housing Association engaged consultants CEDC to develop an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process for the association and undertake an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of existing customer facing services. The process developed by CEDC involved:

- the completion of a self assessment questionnaire by staff and board members
- a policy screening process involving service users, staff and board members which sought to establish whether individual policies had an adverse impact on particular groups
- consultation with affected groups, where it was believed that policy had an adverse impact on particular groups to seek their views on how the policy could be amended to eliminate or reduce the adverse impact
- consideration of policy amendments by a working group of service users, staff and board members, in the light of comments received from the consultation exercise
- consultation with external agencies on proposed amendments to policy in the light of the Equality Impact Assessment
- consideration of changes to policy by the Association’s Board.

Importantly the Association now has a process in place to undertake EIAs of all new policies.

Contact Details
Paul Roberts, Chief Executive, Newydd Housing Association
e-mail: paul.roberts@newydd.co.uk

Getting contractors to understand exactly what is required of them in terms of customer service, and particularly around equality and diversity issues can sometimes be a challenge. Taff’s Maintenance Team came up with the idea of a ‘Big Breakfast’ at 7 am, to go through new contract arrangements linked to consortium working, customer service issues, and equality issues. This was well received, as contractors were encouraged to ask questions about race, religion etc that they had previously felt awkward about. They said it gave them more confidence in dealing with different groups, and led to an understanding of why some of their calls to lone Muslim women for example, resulted in being unable to obtain access. We gave each contractor a supply of bright yellow laminated cards to give to their operatives, to remind them of the issues around customer service.

Contact Details
Elaine Ballard, Chief Executive, Taff Housing Association
e-mail: e.ballard@taffhousing.co.uk

In recent years the Wrexham area has seen a substantial growth in the number of migrant workers moving to the area, to live and work. The rapid growth in the number migrant workers who found accommodation in the private rented sector, including some former council houses, let to the creation of a widely held view that all council housing was being allocated to migrant workers.

To counter this mistaken, but widely held view, the Council produced information in its Tenants’ Newsletter ‘Housing Hotline’ which gave facts and figures on people who were housed by the Council in the period October 2006 to September 2007, including their ethnicity, age and family type. The information provided in the Tenant’s Newsletter has helped to dispel this myth.

Contact Details
Gwyn Jones, Wrexham CBC
e-mail: gwyn.jones@wrexham.gov.uk
Wales & West Housing Association – ‘Understanding our Residents’

WWHA is committed to equality and diversity, and felt it was essential that it gained a better understanding of their residents in order to understand their diversity and develop services which were customer driven.

In 2007 the association developed a resident profiling project, the aims of which were to:

- gain better information about the residents to tailor their services to meet their needs
- provide them with sufficient information to monitor whether their services are accessible and delivered in a fair manner.

The Association developed a comprehensive monitoring form with its residents, ‘Understanding Our Residents’. The questionnaire asked the standard equality questions but also detailed questions including disability related need and cultural requirements to ensure the Association was aware how to best tailor services to meet individual needs. The Associations IT system had to be fully utilised to ensure that the information collected was used in a meaningful way which would enhance services. The system was modified to ensure that, when profile data is available, a pop up box appears each time the residents’ details are accessed. The Association promoted the project in a range of ways:

- resident profiling became a corporate business objective, showing strong corporate commitment and a clear message to all staff that this was a top priority. This was then filtered down to individual staff, whose performance objectives for the year included collecting resident profiling data
- articles in the residents magazine ‘In Touch’
- forms were sent out to all residents
- targeted door knocking exercises
- prize draws.

Currently the Association holds information on almost 70% of its residents, and this figure is ever increasing. The Association now has a much clearer picture of the profile of its residents and their particular requirements and have begun the process of tailoring services to meet residents’ needs:

- residents have requested information in over 17 languages and the Association is meeting this need through the use of language line and translations
- over 1500 residents have stated they have a mobility impairment and staff know to give these residents extra time to answer the door
- over 650 residents requested information in large print. In response to this the font size on all of the Associations letters increased by 2 sizes to make sure the information they send out is accessible to all residents
- the Association has worked closely with a number of residents who have identified particular needs to ensure the services provided are right for them. For example, the Association is aware of what information to produce on CD for residents who have requested this format
- works orders to contractors include residents’ particular needs, where permission has been given by residents. This is downloaded directly from their IT system. They have devised a practical short guide for contractors on diversity issues and back this up with training.

The success of the project was recognised when the Association were winners at the Welsh Housing Awards 2008 in the category of ‘Delivering Customer Driven Services.’

Contact Details
Kevin Howell, Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, WWHA
e-mail: kevin.howell@wwha.co.uk
Cardiff Council – Hate Crime Procedures

Cardiff Council has developed comprehensive policies and procedures for dealing with racial and homophobic harassment in its housing estates.

Key principles set out in the document include a commitment to investigating all cases, however isolated; adopting a victim-centred approach through an acceptance that an initial report is racial or homophobic harassment if the victim so defines it (and until further investigations prove otherwise) and a commitment that those suffering harassment will be encouraged to play their full part in taking action to deal with it.

Four key elements are emphasised:

- dealing with each case in the timescale specified
- ensuring case notes are up to date and comprehensive
- ensuring everyone is kept informed at each key stage
- ensuring that appropriate action is taken at the right time.

The document includes a checklist for immediate action and good practice ‘does and don’ts’ for interviewing the alleged perpetrator. The procedure has recently been updated and is now called the ‘Racial, Homophobic and Disabilist Procedure’.

Contact Details
Heather Price, Cardiff Council
e-mail: heprice@cardiff.gov.uk

TPAS Cymru and Tai Pawb – “Are you Being Equal?”

There is widespread recognition that despite the changes in policy and practice in many housing providers equality of opportunity for involvement to all tenants remains an issue. During 2008, TPAS Cymru in partnership with Community Housing Cymru, Tai Pawb and the Welsh Tenants’ Federation delivered a series of Welsh Assembly Government funded seminars to enable the implementation of Local Tenant Participation Strategies (LTPS). One of the major issues identified during the seminars was that social landlords across Wales had failed to engage with traditionally “under-represented” tenants from across the different equality stands.

The purpose of “Are you Being Equal?” project, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government’s Housing and Equality Small Grant’s Programme, is to provide a framework for social landlords in Wales to identify and address issues of inequality in opportunities for tenant involvement. The research report has investigated projects in Wales which have successfully involved groups of tenants who have not been traditionally involved or are underrepresented in tenant participation activities with their landlords.

These are groups of tenants who may be excluded as a result of limited methods of participation, poor choice of times and venues, lack of cultural awareness, or differing needs and interest.

Good practice has been gathered from project work that TPAS Cymru and Tai Pawb has undertaken with their membership and from Nominees and Winners of the TPAS Cymru Participation Awards over the last 2 years. The research has also included Good Practice Case Studies from around the UK which have been identified by TPAS sister organisations in England, Scotland and Supporting Communities in Northern Ireland and those identified through Tai Pawb’s extensive network within the UK. The report will be launched at the Housing and Equalities Conference in October 2009 and will be available to download from both TPAS Cymru and Tai Pawb websites www.tпасcymru.org.uk and www.taipawb.org shortly after the conference.

Contact Details
Amanda Oliver, TPAS Cymru
e-mail: amanda.oliver@tpascymru.org.uk
Age

Wales & West Housing Association Age Employer Champion Status

Wales & West Housing Association has become the first Housing Association in Wales to receive ‘Age Employer Champion’ status. This status is awarded by the Department of Works and Pensions to organisations which are committed to tackling age discrimination in their workplace by taking practical steps to change employment practices. The Association has shown that is goes above and beyond generally expected work practices to prove why they are a ‘champion’ amongst British employers. To become an Employer Champion the Association had to provide in depth information including evidence of their commitment to Age Positive practices, statistics, examples of the benefits results from employing an age diverse workforce and also examples of individuals within their workforce who demonstrate our age positive practices. After being assessed and becoming Employer Champions the Association has received a certificate from the Department of Works and Pensions and also will now be using the official Employer Champion Logo on its publicity.

Contact Details
Kevin Howell, Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, WWHA
e-mail: kevin.howell@wwha.co.uk

Taff Housing Association Involving Young Minority Ethnic (ME) People

The Association has close contacts with the Somali Youth Association (SOYA) through their Red Sea House project, and were asked to help them fundraise to go to a ‘Somali World Cup’ which is held every year in Canada. They came up with an idea that could be a ‘win-win’ solution for a number of organisations. They asked the locally based contractors who were in the Integrate framework to attend a Construction Jobs Information Evening, where they could talk to local young people about job opportunities in the sector. They each agreed to donate £100 towards the football trip, and found lots of potential candidates for future recruitment. They also learned a lot about Somali culture, which will assist them in future employment and service delivery issues.

Locally based housing associations were also invited to provide information on how to present good application forms and also interview tips. Around 70 young people attended, many of whom were unaware of the opportunities available for training and work in the construction sector.

Contact Details
Elaine Ballard, Chief Executive, Taff Housing Association
e-mail: e.ballard@taffhousing.co.uk
Shelter Cymru and Contact a Family Wales – Access to information and advice on housing: The needs of disabled young people in Wales

Research has reported on the difficulties disabled young people face in making the transition to independent living, and yet the problem still appears to be given limited priority by service providers. In Wales, the National Service Framework for Children (NSF) provides useful information on the state of current services and shows that many local authorities do not have an inter-organisation system for identifying children who will require transition into adult services and that even fewer currently appoint a key transition worker to all disabled young people at age 14. Provision of information on housing is also relatively poor across local authorities and it is clear that transition services are not effectively meeting the needs of young people.

Shelter Cymru and Contact a Family Wales, funded from the Welsh Government Housing and Equality Small Grants Programme, have conducted research on disabled young people’s access to information and advice on housing. Through small group discussions with both young people and parents, and telephone consultation with key stakeholders, the project explored perspectives in relation to:

- the housing information required by disabled young people
- the points in time that housing information and advice is required by disabled young people
- the methods of information and advice delivery preferred by disabled young people.

The research aimed to establish the key barriers that young people face in making the transition to independent living in Wales, with a particular focus on how these barriers might be overcome through the effective provision of information and advice.

The research findings will be published in a final report and summary report in October 2009 and will be launched at the 2009 Housing and Equality Conference.

Contact Details
John Pritchard, Shelter Cymru or Keith Bowen, Contact a Family
e-mail: johnp@shelter.org.uk or keith.bowen@cafamily.org.uk
Charter Housing – Learning Links – Intergenerational Project

This work although started in 2002 as a three year European Funded project now forms a major part of the Association’s approach to working with older people and their communities. Charter own a number of sheltered housing schemes in which residents can be extremely isolated from the rest of the community and which were becoming increasingly unpopular as places to live. The initial project was set up in May 2002 with funding from the European Social Fund (ESF). It was part of a U.K. wide Development Partnership under the European funded EQUAL programme coordinated by the Centre for Sheltered Housing Studies (CSHS) under the theme ‘Lifelong Learning and Active Aging, involving older people in the regeneration of their communities’.

The aim of the project was to identify the knowledge, skills and experience within the older retired members of the community and enable those attributes to be transferred to younger members of the community increasing their knowledge base, life-skills, confidence and self esteem in order to improve their opportunities for employment and training. The following are examples of some of the intergenerational work that began to build the partnerships and relationships which continue to this day.

- Jim, 73, taught 16-25 year old Iraqi asylum seekers to build their own bicycles so they had transport around Newport and they learnt some English and local knowledge in the process
- Ta’aleem Alnyeesa womens group learned sewing and computer skills in a almost all white sheltered housing scheme which improved community relations
- Seniors taught kids just out of care how to cook and shop for themselves.

From these beginnings developed a creative writing group, an Asian women’s social enterprise, work with refugees on a get cooking project with older people from the indigenous population, intergenerational project with schools near sheltered schemes, IT projects and much more. The initial project steering group has evolved into a nexus of people more directly involved in the activities of the project including volunteers and partners who had a real interest in making things happen, many of whom are still involved.

This is work that involves and empowers one group of vulnerable people to build the skills, knowledge and self esteem of other equally vulnerable groups. It has truly awakened in older people a sense of confidence and feeling of being valued once more within their community. They have led this project bringing in ideas and a sensitivity to their community that we as professionals can only hope to. It has contributed enormously to community cohesion by beginning to break down barriers between an older white generation and a newer and frequently younger ethnic minority population within the community.

In 2005 the project won the UK Housing Award, the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Housing in Wales and the TPAS Cymru Awards.

Contact Details
Alison Starling, Skills Development Manager, Charter Housing Association

e-mail: alison.starling@charterhousing.co.uk
Disability

Cardiff Accessible Homes

In order to seek ways to best meet the accommodation needs of people requiring adapted properties in the Cardiff area, a project was set up in 2002 called Cardiff Accessible Homes. The project was initially due to run for three years and was supported and funded by the National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff County Council, Cadwyn Housing Association, Taff Housing Association and Cardiff Community Housing Association. In 2005 after much success Cardiff Accessible Homes secured funding for a further five years with the expansion of partners to include the following housing associations; Linc-Cymru, Hafod, Wales and West and United Welsh.

The aims and Objectives of the project:

• manage a joint register of households needing adapted accommodation
• manage a joint register of adapted properties
• implement a common procedure for identifying potential adapted properties
• manage a common lettings policy that incorporates marketing and advertising properties to households needing adapted accommodation
• identify further gaps in provision and recommend how these areas may be developed.

Since the official launch of Cardiff Accessible Homes in 2003 the project has successfully let over 560 properties to disabled people in Cardiff.

The project now employs an Occupational Therapist (OT) for 1 day a week, whose costs are met by the housing association partners. The OT’s role is to undertake assessments of housing association tenants who have applied for a Physical Adaptation Grant (PAG), to enable their application to be fast tracked.

Contact Details
Rob Baker, Project Manager, Cardiff Accessible Homes
e-mail: CAH@ccha.org.uk

Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC – Pathways to Adapted Housing

Pathways to Adapted Housing is a Disability Housing Register in Rhondda Cynon Taf which was established in 2002/03 originally funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and more recently core funded by the local authority. As well as matching people to properties, the register also plays a role in informing the composition of new developments in the area by providing details of the demand for adapted housing to the Housing Strategy Team.

Pathways to Adapted Housing is based in the local authority’s Housing Advice Centre. It operates alongside the authority's common housing register which doesn’t as yet include all registered social landlord partners, solely the community-based ones. Disabled people can chose whether to go on the common housing register or the AHR.

Pathways to Adapted Housing has been actively working with social landlords to encourage them to refer their adapted homes to the project and to consider referring properties that would be easily adaptable as well. One of the barriers encountered is the length of time that properties can be empty while adaptations are being carried out.

Since it was established, the project has received 1,453 referrals from people wanting accessible housing and 1,482 accessible properties are recorded. Savings of £1.5million in Disabled Facilities Grants have been made in relation to the 584 households rehoused by Pathways to Accessible Housing. This number of households does not include applicants who have taken up options in the private rented sector or those who have moved out of the local authority area.

A review of all aspects of Pathways has recently been undertaken and an improvement plan is being implemented which will include the further development of the housing options approach to encompass accessible housing options across all tenures.

Contact Details
e-mail: PTAH@rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk
Over the last 5 years RNIB Cymru has been working with, and listening to the housing sector, but also working with and listening to older people with sight loss throughout Wales. It is from this intensive, innovative, and world leading partnership development that Visibly Better Accreditation has risen. RNIB Cymru’s Visibly Better is a scheme that allows RNIB Cymru to support housing providers: Supporting them to achieve inclusive design and services for an improved quality of life for older people with sight loss living in sheltered accommodation and Extra Care homes.

A Visibly Better partnership with RNIB Cymru will enable housing providers to deliver not just on the imposed legislative frameworks, such as DQR, DDA, Building Standards, Disability Equality to name a few. It is a system that is fit for future purpose and involves the residents and people who live in the accommodation as part of the process. It covers areas of training, inclusive design, consultation and communication, linking to the health and social care services as well as empowering older people and people with sight loss to be more involved in the decisions made on housing that they live in.

It’s not a normal accreditation system. It provides all this through a gradualised system of improvement. It’s about steady growth and development. Visibly Better also tackles the standard stereotype of old age and sight loss as a simple drift into dependency. It also challenges, for older people with sight loss, the notions of silence, isolation and invisibility. Visibly Better enables the empowerment of people with sight loss through communication, consultation and inclusion which are embedded in its core. Numerous studies have linked poor housing to poor mental and physical health. The most severe of these document the numerous deaths from falls. There are over 4500 hip fractures in Wales each year. A third of all those will die within six months of their accident. The majority of the survivors will not regain independence within their own home, whether that is owner-occupier or social housing. The majority of these accidents are linked to older people with low vision. Visibly Better’s principles are set deeply within the prevention and early intervention agenda, ensuring cost effective adaptations and well managed maintenance plans that are linked to inclusivity and adaptation.

Contact Details
Janet John, RNIB Cymru
e-mail: janet.john@rnib.org.uk
Disability Wales commissioned a project whose aim was to promote the benefits of Accessible Housing Registers (AHRs):

- as a tool to deliver equal access to housing
- to promote independent living
- to help the Welsh Assembly Government and public bodies in the housing sector to meet the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 Disability Equality Duty
- to identify evidence to support making AHRs mandatory in all areas.

The project involved a survey of Welsh local authorities a review of literature, research and practice and the development of pen pictures of Welsh AHRs.

The review of literature, research and practice in England and Scotland identified that AHRs are an effective tool in delivering equal access to housing for disabled people and can assist organisations in meeting the Disability Equality Duty. It also identified a range of good practice in the development and implementation of AHRs.

10 out of the 20 Welsh local authorities that responded to the survey stated that they had an AHR in place, while a further 8 were considering developing one. Amongst the 10 AHRs, practice varied significantly.

The majority of the 10 authorities considered that the impact of AHRs was very important in relation to delivering the local housing strategy, promoting independent living and the social model of disability and delivering equality of access to housing for disabled people. Just 1 authority noted the lack of a statutory requirement to implement an AHR as one of the main barriers to not doing so.

The pen pictures of Welsh AHRs and the case studies collated as part of the project demonstrate that Welsh AHRs are effective practical tools in delivering equal access to housing for disabled people, promoting independent living and the social model of disability.

The project, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government's Housing and Equality Small Grant's Programme, generated a range of recommendations for the Welsh Assembly Government and local authorities and their registered social landlord partners. The report will be launched at the Housing and Equality Conference.

Contact Details
Miranda Evans, Disability Wales
e-mail: miranda.evans@disabilitywales.org

Disability Wales – Promoting Accessible Housing Registers in Wales
Gender

**Newydd Housing Association – Women Connect First (WCF) Empower Women Project**

WCF is a voluntary community organisation established to empower minority ethnic women in Cardiff and South East Wales by providing them free training for employment, advice and counselling service, job shadowing and work placement, volunteering service and interpreting and translation service. WCF gained funding from the Big Lottery fund ‘People and Places’ to extend their job shadowing/work placement programme into diverse working environments such as the statutory, voluntary and private sectors. The purpose of the scheme is to help participants gain confidence in accessing services and employment offered by the employers, and to narrow the gap between BME communities and mainstream society and to integrate BME women into Welsh society by playing a positive role in the country’s economy.

Newydd Housing Association have taken 5 work placements to date since June 2007 as part of this project. The association has also worked with partner organisations to deliver training to the women on effective interview skills and completing application forms as this can be a barrier to gaining employment.

**Contact Details**
Claire Davies, HR Officer, Newydd Housing Association
e-mail: claire.davies@newydd.co.uk

---

**Trothwy Cyf – Domestic Abuse Project**

Trothwy Cyf runs a domestic abuse project for men escaping abuse or violence. The project is based in a property in Cardiff which contains 4 self-contained flats, with support to the residents provided by Trothwy.

The aim of the scheme, is first of its kind in South Wales, is to provide a temporary safe and secure environment for men escaping abuse. As the accommodation is temporary, the focus of the support is to assist service users to find alternative safe accommodation, away from any threat they may have fled.

Trothwy works closely with other agencies with defined referral routes into the project including the Dyn Project who specialise in working with men fleeing abuse in the Cardiff area. Trothwy is, however, establishing referral routes into the scheme from all across South Wales.

**Contact Detail**
Kevin Singleton, Trothwy Cyf
e-mail: kevin.singleton@gwalia.com
Gender budgeting is a tool that has been developed to mainstream gender equality into economic policy. They are not a separate budget for women and men. Instead, it is an analysis of a government's or an organisation's budget to find out if economic policies will have a differential impact on women and men. Women as users of publicly funded services might have different needs and priorities than men because they tend to have different social roles and responsibilities. Gender responsive budget initiatives can investigate if women and men benefit equitably from economic policy.

The overall principle of gender budgeting is to bring together two areas of expertise that are normally kept separate, knowledge of gender equality and knowledge of finance, policies and programmes. Gender sensitive budget initiatives have been carried out around the world.

The research project, funded by the Welsh Assembly Government's Housing and Equality Small Grant's Programme, evaluated the impact of adopting a gender budgeting approach in housing, and the final report will be launched at the Housing and Equality Conference.

Contact Details
Jemma Bridgeman, Wales Women’s National Coalition
e-mail: jemma-bridgemen@wwnc.org.uk

As part of Flintshire County Council’s homelessness prevention toolkit, Flintshire’s Neighbourhood Wardens, on receipt of a referral from partner agencies such as the Police, Victim Support Unit or Women’s Aid, visit survivors of domestic violence within a target time of eight hours of the referral.

During the visit, home security is assessed and ‘target hardening’ work is carried out to improve household security - upgrading locks, windows and fitting alarms if necessary. In addition, Neighbourhood Wardens provide a visible presence which can generate a greater sense of security for individuals. The service provided is tailored to the needs of the individual as far as is possible, e.g. female or male.

The scheme received just over 200 referrals in the period March 2008 to March 2009, and the eight hour response time was achieved in 98% of cases. Survivors of domestic violence have benefited from the additional security measures. Enabling them to remain in their homes has positive effects on the family life of people who have experienced domestic violence, preserving community links and access to support networks. The service also reduces their need to access emergency or temporary accommodation.

In late 2007, the scheme received £10,000 funding from the Home Office. It was featured by BBC Wales in November 2007 as part of their “White Ribbon Day” programmes.

Contact Details
Francis Illing, Flintshire County Council
e-mail: francis.illing@flintshire.gov.uk
Transgender

**Broken Rainbow – LGBT Domestic Violence Helpline**

Broken Rainbow provide a domestic violence helpline for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. The helpline provides an opportunity for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence to talk to trained staff who can provide a confidential listening, information and signposting service.

**Contact Details**

0300 999 5428 or 08452 604460

Religion or Belief

**Portsmouth City Council – One City, Many Cultures**

Portsmouth City Council has a 140 page ring-bound guide to minority cultures and faiths in Portsmouth called One City, Many Cultures… The ‘faiths’ section covers the following faiths:

- Baha’i
- Buddhism
- Christianity
- Confucianism
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Rastafarianism
- Sikhism
- Taoism.

“One City, Many Cultures” provides practical advice and guidance for staff to help them avoid causing unwitting offence. Local communities were consulted to make sure the information given reflects the cultures in Portsmouth.

Hyperlink to booklet [http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/CPT_strmkt_OCMC.pdf](http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/CPT_strmkt_OCMC.pdf)
Race

Cardiff Housing BME Project

This is a joint project involving Taff Housing Association, Cadwyn Housing Association, Cardiff Community Housing Association and the Welsh Assembly Government. It follows a number of reports produced over recent years which have highlighted the inequality of housing services in relation to Black and Minority Ethnic Communities. The project is monitored by a group which is made up of representatives of the three Associations and Tai Pawb. The aims of the project were to:

• find out exactly what such experiences were like for BME people
• find new ways of engaging with and getting feedback from them
• use the information gained to re-shape services and their methods of delivery
• ensure there was a means of sustaining dialogue and updating information.

The first part of the two year Project was spent assessing services currently available. An anonymous survey was distributed to all recorded BME tenants. On the spot interviewing took place within the three reception areas on random days in order to speak to people visiting the office. The BME Officer engaged with as many community groups as possible in order to find out the problems experienced by BME service users. Groups consulted included the Welsh Refugee Council, the Sudanese Community, Refugee Voice Wales, the United Arab Association, the Yemeni community, the Somali Advice Centre and the Somali Integration Society. Housing personnel were also consulted.

The major outcomes of the Project have been:

1. BME Advocates Handbook – this was developed to assist those working with people from BME backgrounds. It has information relating to housing and related matters and signposts to other organisations who are sensitive to the needs of BME communities. The book is unique in that it encourages advocates to discuss issues surrounding customer service and addresses differences in culture and mannerisms and how these can affect services. It also promotes discussion about Wales and the Welsh language and culture.

2. Cultural Diversity Awareness Training – developed using real life experiences of BME individuals obtained during research. This has received excellent evaluation from recipients. The training has raised awareness and promoted changes to services. It now forms part of core training at Taff. The training takes form of a workshop and is also delivered to tenant groups, young women’s hostels and contractors.

3. BME Volunteers in the Workplace – volunteers who were refugees were introduced to the workplace at Taff. This enabled individuals to improve their language skills, learn new skills and develop an interest in working in housing. To date, one volunteer originating from DR Congo has been successful in securing a position at Taff. Volunteers gained confidence whilst staff gained insight into other cultures. The volunteers also bring with them many languages now spoken in Cardiff such as Lingala, Kikongo, Swahili which are useful skills to have when dealing with customers from similar backgrounds and adds to the bank of languages already spoken at Taff.

4. BME Contact Group – this is a constituted group of 25 people from various cultural and religious backgrounds. They are a ready made consultation group who are happy to meet with organisations and help to shape policy and procedures. This group has proved invaluable when consulted in relation to equalities monitoring, cultural festivities, housing, homelessness and contractors. Group members have received training in areas such as Housing Benefit and receive regular visits from organisations offering information which they can disseminate to their communities.

5. www.bmehousingplus.com – a newly developed website which offers free webspace to BME groups and community organisations. It is a good starting point for new BME individuals coming to Wales. It has signposting to many BME sensitive organisations including those dealing with culturally sensitive issues such as drug and alcohol mis-use, domestic violence for both men and women, race relations and others.

The Project won the Pat Chown award for Innovation in Housing in 2008 and has been short listed for the UK Housing Awards in 2009.

Contact Details
Annette Kerr
e-mail: a.kerr@taffhousing.co.uk
Grŵp Gwalia Housing Society – Positive Action Training

As part of its commitment to ensuring equality and to reflect the diversity of the communities in which the association operates in its workforce, Gwalia has recently taken on another BME trainee under its Positive Action Training Scheme. This training position allows the trainee to gain wide-ranging work experience in the housing field from housing management to community development to technical services and supported housing. The trainee is also supported by Gwalia to study for a relevant professional qualification. At the end of the training programme the trainee can apply for any job opportunities within Gwalia along with other interested candidates. The first BME Trainee Gwalia supported under the PATH scheme went on to secure a permanent position within the Chief Executive’s Department after the training was completed.

Contact Details
Farid Ali, Policy & Research Officer, Grŵp Gwalia
e-mail: farid.ali@gwalia.com

Housing Employment Workshop

In February 2007, a group of Housing Associations, namely Wales & West Housing Association, Cardiff Community Housing Association, Grŵp Gwalia Cyf and Hafod decided to develop a workshop to build the skills and capacity of people from minority ethnic (ME) backgrounds. The partnership was joined by Cadarn Housing Association in 2008.

The workshop was borne out of the recognition from members of the Working Group of a shortfall of volume and successful applications from ME people. The principal aim of the workshop was to assist ME candidates bridge the gap between applying for a job, being invited to attend an interview, and ultimately securing a job within the sector.

The workshop demonstrated how partnership working can be beneficial not only to the organisations but to the minority ethnic community in general. The workshop was offered on a free of charge basis, ensuring that the workshop was as accessible and as inclusive as possible.

The two day event was highly interactive and provided practical assistance in completing application forms and developing interview skills. The support does not end at this point as participants are offered work placement opportunities as well as 6 months of mentoring to aid them in securing employment. Following the success of the above project the group won the Welsh Housing Awards 2007 and were finalists in the UK Housing Awards 2008.

Contact Details
Kevin Howell, Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, WWHA
e-mail: kevin.howell@wwha.co.uk
Launched in May 2004, **Accommodate – the Refugee Housing Partnership Project** is hact’s flagship refugee project. Accommodate develops and supports local partnerships to focus on improving the housing situations of refugees and act as models of best practice to others. The project supports 5 multi-agency partnerships in England delivering practical solutions to refugee housing needs in areas of dispersal. In 2006, hact secured funding from the Welsh Assembly Government to establish an Accommodate project in Wales. The project was established in Newport in a partnership led by Charter Housing Association with partners Wales Refugee Council, The Red Cross, Refugee Voice Wales and Newport City Council. Since then additional partners have joined including Newport Private Landlords Forum, Communities First BME Community of Interest, SEWREC and Solas Bond Board.

The focus of the Newport Accommodate project is to increase the amount of private rented sector accommodation available to refugees. It is about facilitating access to the private rented sector and identifying and overcoming the obstacles that private landlords see as reasons why housing refugees does not make business sense. The project has involved persuading private sector landlords to let good quality accommodation to refugees and encouraging more landlords to register with the Bond Scheme. It has acted as landlord liaison with partner agencies and their refugee clients. Another aim of the project is to ensure long term sustainability through to building the capacity of refugee organizations to find housing for themselves and increase their understanding of the housing market and housing policies.

The response from private landlords has been very positive with the private sector landlords forum joining the steering group. The project has subsequently found it relatively easy to source accommodation within the private sector but this has chiefly been in shared/HMO type housing, as self contained properties in the private sector are more expensive and often beyond the budget of the single homeless client group (although this is beginning to change in the current housing market). The project found that there was a resistance to shared housing with people preferring to continue to ‘sofa surf’ rather than share with strangers. The project is tackling this in a number of ways through training community leaders, simple information leaflets, a more coordinated approach from refugee agencies and the development of a refugee social networking site. One of the biggest impacts the project has had is on the working of the partner agencies. A series of process mapping days have identified the gaps in knowledge and services of agencies and enabled better working processes and better understanding of how each agency operates. For example, a seminar for agencies and refugee community organisations on how homelessness legislation and how priority need is determined was delivered by the City Council.

The project is due to end in December 2009 so the focus of the partnership is on the sustainability of the relationships with private sector housing and the partnership working developed by the agencies and filling any gaps that the project has identified.

**Contact Details**
Ann Hayman, Project Co-ordinator, Charter HA
e-mail: ann.hayman@charterhousing.co.uk
Sexual Orientation

Triangle Wales

LGBT Excellence Centre – Housing Service
In August 2009 Triangle Wales merged to become part of the LGBT Excellence Centre for Wales. Triangle Wales offers help, advice and support to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people with housing needs across Wales. The services include a helpline, one-to-one mentoring and, in partnership with Trothwy Cyf, floating support which is available to LGBT people of all ages.

The aims of the LGBT Excellence Centre are:

• to advocate on behalf of, and provide support and information to, vulnerable lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender people in housing crisis
• to promote awareness of the specific issues for LGBT people in housing need and act as a resource for the housing sector on lesbian and gay homelessness
• to campaign and lobby wherever instances of inequalities in housing and service provision are identified.

LGBT Excellence Centre provides:

• a signposting service for LGBT people with benefit and debt issues
• advocacy and legal advice on housing and other issues
• a community mediation service
• the Rainbow Mark – a training, toolkit and accreditation for registered social landlords
• consultancy, research and liaison work with public and third sector agencies on LGBT housing-related issues.

The LGBT Excellence Centre operates according to a client-focused holistic approach and plans over the coming year to expand its services to further address the housing, health, social and financial needs of LGBT people. It plans to:

• negotiate nomination rights with housing associations for move on accommodation
• maintain an active list of ‘gay friendly’ private landlords for LGB people looking for accommodation
• re-launch the Triangle brand as a Housing Society providing emergency accommodation, preventing homelessness and other housing solutions for LGBT people
• recruit a specialist Benefit and Debt Advisor who will assist, advise and advocate on financial matters
• recruit volunteers to cover all Welsh counties in order to provide a befriending and mentoring service for socially isolated LGBT people
• provide a 24-hour telephone reception and counselling service
• work in partnership with Age Concern in order to address clearly identified housing needs of the older LGBT population
• conduct research into Transgender peoples housing and other needs in line with Home Office recommendations.

Contact Details
Tim Entwistle, Director of Housing,
e-mail: tim@ecwales.org.uk
Swansea Youth Single Homeless Project (SYSHP) – Challenging Homophobia

Swansea Youth Single Homeless Project monitors its clients by sexual orientation. A positive outcome of identifying sexual orientation of clients is that clients can choose to have a lesbian, gay or bisexual support worker, which in turn engenders confidence within the individual young person. Due to the openness of the organisation, clients asked for the establishment of a LGB service user group, to assist in providing feedback on the organisation’s policy and practice consultation exercises.

Homophobia among clients is actively and creatively challenged in a number of ways:

• at the interview stage, levels of discrimination are evaluated and talked through. If the potential client demonstrates homophobic views and is unprepared to address these, they are not taken into the project
• the tenancy agreement makes clear that homophobia towards clients and staff members will not be tolerated, whether it is from a client or a guest of a client
• LGB clients are empowered by the guarantee that they will be protected from, as well as supported in addressing any homophobic behaviour they face
• posters advertising LGB services (e.g. helplines, health services, peer support groups, social events) are displayed in communal areas. Magazines, including LGB-interest, are available to be borrowed
• where homophobic attitudes or behaviour are displayed, staff take swift action against the perpetrator, who will risk eviction or being banned from the building if not a tenant.

Contact Details
Sharon Hopkins ,Operational Manager for Accommodation, Swansea Young Single Homeless Project
e-mail: s.hopkins@syshp.org.uk

Wales & West Housing Association – Stonewall Diversity Champions

In 2008 Wales & West Housing Association became the first Welsh Housing Association to join the Stonewall Diversity Champions programme. Stonewall’s Diversity Champions programme is Britain’s good practice forum in which employers can work with Stonewall, and each other, to promote lesbian, gay and bisexual equality in the workplace. The Association has been working closely with Stonewall since this time to improve their work in this area of equality.

The Association has carried out outreach work with the lesbian, gay and bisexual community. The main forum for this work has been a stall at the Welsh Mardi Gras, which the Association has attended on a number of occasions. The event is an opportunity for the association to promote its services to the lesbian, gay and bisexual community and also an opportunity to learn about the housing issues facing lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

This outreach work complements other strands of the Association’s approach to equality. It also complements the role of the organisation’s Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, whose role is it to champion equality issues at a strategic policy level.

Contact Details
Kevin Howell, Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, WWHA
e-mail: kevin.howell@wwha.co.uk
Welsh Language

Grŵp Gwalia – Welsh Language Scheme

As part of the continual improvement and assessment of the Welsh Language Scheme undertaken by Grŵp Gwalia, the Association has a list of Welsh speakers working within each part of the organisation who are able to take telephone calls for those people wishing to communicate in Welsh. When a call is received and the caller wishes to speak in Welsh, the call will be passed to the nominated Welsh speaker in the department. If none of the Welsh-speaking staff are available, this can be explained to the caller and arrangements made for a Welsh speaker to return their call within 24 hours.

Contact Details
Farid Ali, Policy & Research Officer, Grŵp Gwalia
e-mail: farid.ali@gwalia.com

Wales & West Housing Association – Welsh Language Scheme

The Association has a comprehensive Welsh Language Scheme which was prepared in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993 (the Act) and the Regulatory Code for Housing Associations in Wales, Welsh Assembly Government, March 2005.

The Scheme is supported by a comprehensive action plan outlining annual targets. In addition to these documents, the Association has set up a ‘Welsh language group’ who monitor the Welsh Language Scheme and action plan. The group also suggest methods to promote Welsh in the Workplace.

In 2007, the Association launched its Welsh Language Training Scheme with great success. Staff in North and South Wales completed a six week introduction to the Welsh Language. They have further rolled out this training, including more advanced modules for those who are continuing their Welsh language learning.

In order to celebrate St David’s Day and raise the profile of the Welsh Language, Wales & West Housing Association holds an annual ‘Welsh in the Workplace Day on St Davids Day’. The event is an opportunity to promote the use of Welsh throughout the Association. It gives staff who are currently learning Welsh the opportunity to put in some practice, with Welsh posters, poetry and words appearing around the office as well as a quiz on welsh culture. Staff have embraced the opportunity to dress down ‘Welsh Style’ as well as making and selling a range of Welsh themed cakes. Money raised is then donated to the staff charity.

This event is also used as a forum to encourage staff to come up with ideas for the Welsh Language Action Plan.

Contact Details
Kevin Howell, Sustainability and Diversity Co-ordinator, WWHA
e-mail: kevin.howell@wwha.co.uk
Glossary

**Assistive technology**
A range of technology, mainly electronic which is used to monitor or enable people. It can also be used to eliminate risks in the home: for example by falling.

**Community cohesion**
The active involvement and development of diverse communities as part of neighbourhood renewal initiatives.

**Disability Equality Duty**
This legal duty requires all public bodies to actively look at ways of ensuring that disabled people are treated equally. It came into force in December 2006.

**Disability Equality Scheme**
A framework or strategy to assist public authorities to plan, deliver, evaluate and report on their services to meet the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty.

**Discrimination**
Making a positive or negative judgement about someone based on bias, assumptions or prejudice. Discrimination can either be direct or indirect: **Direct discrimination:** When you treat someone unfairly or differently just because they belong to a particular group of people. For example, if an employer refuses to employ someone just because they are a woman. **Indirect discrimination:** When you treat someone the same way as everyone else but, doing this disadvantages more people from one group than other groups.

**Diversity**
An appreciation that each individual is unique giving recognition to individual differences. For example, age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief. An appreciation of diversity moves beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating diversity as beneficial for communities, wider society and the economy.

**Equal opportunity**
Not excluding individuals from the activities of the society in which they live: for example, employment, education and health care. This also includes positive action and capacity building. Simply removing barriers does not always provide equal opportunities.

**Equality Impact Assessment**
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process by which organisations examine their activities in order to minimise the potential for discrimination. The process is also used to monitor interventions designed to have a positive impact on a particular group.

**Gender**
The different social or cultural roles attached to being a man or a woman.

**Gender dysphoria**
Anxiety, uncertainty or persistently uncomfortable feelings experienced by an individual about their assigned gender which is in conflict with their gender identity.

**Gender Equality Duty**
A legal obligation which came into force in April 2007. It places the legal responsibility on public sector organisations, authorities and institutions to promote equality between men and women and eliminate unlawful sex discrimination. They must also demonstrate that they actively promote equality between men and women.

**Gender Equality Scheme**
Public bodies have a duty to publish a gender equality scheme showing how the public authority will meet its general and specific duties, and setting out its gender equality objectives.

**Genuine Occupational Requirement**
In some circumstances exceptions to the law regarding discrimination are possible in cases where someone’s gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or age is genuinely needed for them to be able to carry out their duties. This is called a genuine occupational requirement. It is the responsibility of the employer to clearly demonstrate that the characteristic concerned is a genuine requirement for the job, crucial to the job's performance, and that it is proportionate to apply the requirement in the case in question.

**Glass ceiling**
A phrase used to describe the barriers which people feel are in place which prevent women and other minority groups from being promoted. The phrase ‘double-glazed glass ceiling’ is sometimes used to refer to barriers which exist for lesbians.
Harassment
Attention or behaviour by an individual or a group which is unwanted by the person or group against whom it is directed. For example, touching a colleague, sexist or explicit jokes or making personal comments about someone’s appearance or personal life.

Homophobia
An irrational fear of, or prejudice and discrimination against gay men, bisexuals and lesbians.

Independent Living
Independent living aims at empowering people with a disability to live in their own homes with support.

Institutional Racism
The failure to provide at an organisational or institutional level an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin.

Islamaphobia
An irrational fear of, or prejudice and discrimination against Islam and Muslims.

Lifetime Homes Standard
These standards incorporate 16 design standards that apply to homes and require that homes are designed to be both accessible and adaptable to the changing needs of people at different stages of their lives. In 2008, the government announced that all new-build social housing in England should be built to LHS by 2011 with a voluntary arrangement for private sector homes to be built to LHS by 2013.

Medical model of disability
This model of disability seeks to explain disability by focusing on the disabled person’s impairment: seeing it as a ‘problem’ that requires diagnosis and medical treatment.

Positive Action
Lawful measures used by an organisation to address under representation of particular groups. For example, schemes to encourage more women to work in building and construction.

Prejudice
Where a view about someone is based on a lack of knowledge, a pre-conceived idea or on social pressure.

Race Equality Duty
In 2001, the Race Relations Act was amended to give public authorities a new statutory duty to promote race equality. The aim is to help public authorities to provide fair and accessible services, and to improve equal opportunities in employment.

Race Equality Scheme
A framework or strategy to assist public authorities to plan, deliver, evaluate and report on their services to meet the requirements of the Race Equality Duty.

Sexism
Attitudes or actions which discriminate against women and men purely on the grounds of their sex or gender.

Sexual orientation
A combination of emotional, romantic, sexual or affectionate attraction to another person.

Social model of disability
This model of disability argues that the way in which society organises housing, access and services discriminates against disabled people. The social model recognises that society has a responsibility to break down obstacles created by society and social attitudes towards disabled people.

Stereotypes
A generalised or one-sided view of an individual or a group based on limited impressions or pre-conceived ideas.

Trans
A short-hand term used by transgender people to describe being transgender.

Transgender
An umbrella term used to describe people whose gender identity or expression differs from their birth sex.

Transphobia
The irrational fear, hatred, and discriminatory treatment of people who are transgender.

Victimisation
Situations where people are targeted with abuse, or experience less than equal treatment in their employment conditions.
## Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisations</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Brief Description of Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age Concern Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.accymru.org.uk/en/1.htm">http://www.accymru.org.uk/en/1.htm</a></td>
<td>All-Wales charity working with and for older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAWSO</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bawso.org.uk">www.bawso.org.uk</a></td>
<td>Established in 1995, BAWSO is an all Wales, voluntary organisation, providing specialist service to Black and Minority Ethnic women and children, made homeless through a threat of domestic violence or fleeing domestic violence in Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Red Cross</td>
<td><a href="http://www.redcross.org.uk">www.redcross.org.uk</a></td>
<td>The British Red Cross helps people in crisis, whoever and wherever they are. They are part of a global voluntary network, responding to conflicts, natural disasters and individual emergencies. They enable vulnerable people in the UK and abroad to prepare for and withstand emergencies in their own communities. And when the crisis is over, they help them to recover and move on with their lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Rainbow</td>
<td><a href="http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/index.html">http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/index.html</a></td>
<td>A telephone helpline for LGBT people who are the victims of domestic abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care and Repair Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.careandrepair.org.uk/">http://www.careandrepair.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>National body whose purpose is to ensure that all older people have homes that are safe, secure and appropriate to their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cih.org/cymru">www.cih.org/cymru</a></td>
<td>The CIH is the professional body for people working in housing across the UK. Our purpose is to maximise the contribution that housing professionals make to the well being of communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chwarae Teg</td>
<td><a href="http://www.chwaraeteg.com/">http://www.chwaraeteg.com/</a></td>
<td>Chwarae Teg was established in 1992 to support, develop and expand the role of women in the Welsh economy. Chwarae Teg commissions research to gain a greater understanding of the current situation in Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cymorth Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cymorthcymru.org.uk/">http://www.cymorthcymru.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>Cymorth Cymru is the representative body for support providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Wales</td>
<td><a href="http://www.disabilitywales.org/index.html">http://www.disabilitywales.org/index.html</a></td>
<td>The national association of disability groups striving to achieve rights, equality and choice for all disabled people in Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality and Human Rights Commission</td>
<td><a href="http://www.equalityhumanrights.gov.uk/wales">http://www.equalityhumanrights.gov.uk/wales</a></td>
<td>Working for a just and integrated society, where diversity is valued. Use both persuasion and powers under the law to give everyone an equal chance to live free from fear, discrimination, prejudice and racism. Formed by the merger of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Disability Rights Commission and the Commission for Racial Equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hact</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hact.org.uk">www.hact.org.uk</a></td>
<td>hact pioneers housing solutions for people on the margins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT Excellence Centre Wales</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ecwales.org.uk">www.ecwales.org.uk</a></td>
<td>The LGBT Excellence Centre Wales is a social enterprise and a charity that promotes equality, diversity and human rights through connecting people and organisations and that focuses on developing collaborative models for delivering LGBT equality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Diversity Network</td>
<td><a href="http://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk">http://www.housingdiversitynetwork.co.uk</a></td>
<td>The Housing Diversity Network work in partnership with housing providers to help them develop products and services to meet the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities they serve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEWN Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mewn-cymru.org.uk">www.mewn-cymru.org.uk</a></td>
<td>Minority Ethnic Women’s Network Wales (MEWN Cymru) is an umbrella body representing ethnic minority (visible and non visible) women across Wales, regardless of their age, religious observance, ethnicity or life choices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press for Change</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pfc.org.uk/">http://www.pfc.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>Press for Change, established in 1992, is a lobbying and educational organisation, which campaigns to achieve equality and human rights for all trans people in the United Kingdom, through legislation and social change. Press for Change provide legal advice, training and consultancy for employers and organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refugee Voice Wales</td>
<td><a href="http://www.refugeevoicewales.org/">http://www.refugeevoicewales.org/</a></td>
<td>An umbrella organisation that represents Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) in Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RNIB Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rnib.org.uk">www.rnib.org.uk</a></td>
<td>Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) Cymru offers information, support and advice to over 100,000 people in Wales with sight loss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk">http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk</a></td>
<td>Shelter Cymru works for the prevention of homelessness and the improvement of housing conditions in Wales, and the right of everyone to a safe, suitable, affordable home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonewall Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/">http://www.stonewallcymru.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>The LGB Forum Cymru was established in 2002 through the joint support and funding of the National Assembly of Wales and Stonewall (UK). In 2003 the LGB Forum Executive Committee changed the name to Stonewall Cymru to gain increased support from Stonewall (UK) and access to their expertise and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tai Pawb</td>
<td><a href="http://www.taipawb.org/">http://www.taipawb.org/</a></td>
<td>Organisation set up to promote race equality and social justice in housing in Wales. Tai Pawbs remit has recently been broadened to incorporate the seven strands of diversity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPAS Cymru</td>
<td><a href="http://www.tpascymru.org.uk">http://www.tpascymru.org.uk</a></td>
<td>TPAS Cymru is the leading tenant participation organisation in Wales, helping to make effective participation a reality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales Audit Office (WAO)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wao.gov.uk/">http://www.wao.gov.uk/</a></td>
<td>The Wales Audit Office (WAO) provides an audit and inspection service across a wide range of public services in Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales Domestic Abuse Helpine</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wdah.org/">http://www.wdah.org/</a></td>
<td>The Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline is the national free support and information service for women, children and men in Wales who are experiencing or who have experienced abuse at the hands of someone close to them. Helpline number 0808 8010 800.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wlga.gov.uk">www.wlga.gov.uk</a></td>
<td>The Welsh Local Government Association represents the interests of local authorities in Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Refugee Council</td>
<td><a href="http://www.welshrefugeecouncil.org/">http://www.welshrefugeecouncil.org/</a></td>
<td>Welsh Refugee Council is an independent charity that empowers refugees and asylum seekers to rebuild their lives in Wales. It provides advice, information and support for asylum seekers and refugees in four offices in Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Tenants Federation (WTF)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.welshtenantsfed.org.uk/">http://www.welshtenantsfed.org.uk/</a></td>
<td>Rights based organisation representing tenants in Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh Women’s Aid</td>
<td><a href="http://www.welshwomensaid.org/index.html">http://www.welshwomensaid.org/index.html</a></td>
<td>Welsh Women’s Aid is the leading provider of services aimed specifically at helping vulnerable women and children who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse in Wales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women Connect First</td>
<td></td>
<td>WCF is a voluntary community organisation established to empower minority ethnic women in Cardiff and South East Wales by providing them a free service of training for employment, advice and Counselling service, Job Shadowing and work placement, volunteering service and interpreting and translation service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A substantial amount of data used in this document is drawn from the 2001 Census and official statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics. Crown Copyright Material is reproduced with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Queen's Printer for Scotland under click-user licence no. C2007001417.

Author: Simon Inkson
Contributors: Victoria Hiscocks
Designed and Printed by Carrick
Translated by Cerys Jones

© copyright Chartered Institute of Housing

The Chartered Institute of Housing is the professional organisation for people who work in housing. Its purpose is to maximise the contribution housing professionals make to the wellbeing of communities. The Chartered Institute has over 19,500 members across the UK and the Asian Pacific working in a range of organisations - including housing associations, local authorities, arms length management organisations, the private sector and educational institutions.

In Wales, the organisation aims to provide a professional and impartial voice for housing, to emphasise the particular context of housing in Wales and to work with organisations to identify housing solutions.

Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru
4 Purbeck House, Lambourne Crescent,
Cardiff Business Park,
Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5GL
Tel: 029 2076 5760
Fax: 029 2076 5761
Website: www.cih.org

This CIH Cymru Key Information briefing is the ninth in a series which explores issues faced by housing professionals today. The previous Key Information briefings are available from the CIH Cymru.

We would like your input on topics for future briefings. If you have any suggestions, please contact Victoria Hiscocks, Policy & Public Affairs Officer, CIH Cymru on 029 2076 5760, or email victoria.hiscocks@cih.org

This briefing paper has been produced with the support of the Welsh Assembly Government Equalities Small Grants Programme.

CIH Cymru is grateful to the following organisations for their support through the Wales levy subscription scheme:

Aelwyd Housing Association
Bro Myrddin Housing Association
Cadarn Housing Group
Cadwyn Housing Association
Caerphilly County Borough Council
Cardiff City Council
Carmarthenshire County Council
Cartrefi Conwy
Cartrefi Cymru
Ceredigion County Council
Coastal Housing Group
Cymdeithas Tai Cantref
Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd
Cymdeithas Tai Eryri
Cymdeithas Tai Hafan
Cyngor Sir Ynys Môn
Cynon-Taf Housing Group
Denbighshire County Council
Family Housing Association
First Choice Housing Association
Foundation Housing
Gŵp Gwalia
Hendre Housing Association
Linc-Cymru Housing Association
Melin Homes
Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association
Merthyr Valleys Homes
Mid Wales Housing Association
Newport City Homes
North Wales Housing Association
Pembrokeshire Housing Association
Pennaf Housing Group
Powys County Council
Rhondda Housing Association
Swansea City Council
Taff Housing Association
Tai Pawb
United Welsh Housing Association
Vale of Glamorgan Council
Valleys to Coast Housing
Wales and West Housing Association
Wrexham County Borough Council