

Inquiry into rough sleeping in Wales: visit to Wallich Ty Croeso and Elim Night Shelter, Caerphilly

Date: 2018

ELGC(5)-07-18 Papur 2/ Paper 2
Oddi wrth: Rhianon Passmore AC
from: Rhianon passmore AM

Attendees: Rhiannon Passmore AM

Points raised by Lee Powell, Caerphilly Projects Manager for the Wallich on the problems they face:

- A lack of move on accommodation for clients who require an accessible property due to mobility restrictions. At present 45% of our Ty Croeso clients have mobility issues, the average ages of these clients is 49 years old.
- Lack of affordable accommodation in the Private Rented Sector. It is difficult to find landlords that will accept Housing Benefit without insisting on a Guarantor. If a suitable property is identified, Caerphilly Council Housing Dept. are a fantastic help with providing initial financial assistance to overcome barriers. It is a concern that the introduction of Universal Credit will negatively impact on the number Landlords willing to accept our clients.
- Most supportive accommodation is short term which is suitable for the majority of clients. However, there is still a need for medium and long term accommodation for individuals with highly complex and challenging needs who have difficulty in sustaining traditional models of supported or independent accommodation. The increasing move towards shorter term accommodation is leading to cycle of homelessness for some very vulnerable clients.
- The Arrears Policy introduced by Caerphilly Council, can be additional barrier to our clients in accessing move on accommodation particularly for those clients who are in receipt of a very low income

Key issues raised during discussion

Following the visit in September, the Wallich also raised some opinions on the Welsh Government's Supporting People scheme:

"We hope that we demonstrated the value of the Supporting People Programme in your constituency. Supporting People helps the most vulnerable in society access the support and help they need. Without this vital fund many people would be unsupported and the number of those forced into homelessness would soar. We would appreciate it if you could speak to your Welsh Government colleagues about the



importance of the Supporting People Programme and ask them not to cut the programme's funding in this year's budget."

The feedback from Reverend Sue at the Caerphilly Borough Churches Night Shelter on the issues they face

- Access to Mental health services – we still find we have guests who seem to fall between the cracks – with sufficient mental health issues that make it difficult to accommodate them in a volunteer run night shelter but who do not seem to have sufficient difficulties to be picked up by the mental health teams – generally seems to be a lengthy and cumbersome referral process.
- More work could be done with prison leavers prior to release so that they could come out knowing they have a NS spot (if possible) on release.
- There is little provision for those deemed as 'Too High Risk' for the Night Shelter Project
- There remains a lack of options for rough sleepers during the day – especially in cases of extremely poor weather and on days public buildings such as libraries are not open.
- Not all Rough sleepers can manage to sustain a tenancy even with added support – what might alternative ways of accommodating people look like? If not housing then what else?
- Storage of Donations and equipment all year around – many churches have little extra space to accommodate all the beds, bedding, clothing etc. that are needed each season and then store it during the months NS is not open. Storage facilities would be a great help.
- The night shelter runs on an 8 bed provision and we are able to take couples. We are not always full particularly during the first few weeks and would be willing to take guests from other local Authorities if this could be agreed at that level.

