

P-05-864 Ban the use of 'Hostile Architecture': Correspondence: Petitioner to Committee, 25.02.19

Dear members of the Committee

We write to you ahead of our petition (P-05-864) in which we call on the National Assembly for Wales to put a moratorium on the use of "Hostile Architecture" by organisations to deter homeless people from seeking shelter and any other street structures designed to impede or hide the homeless, we appreciate your time is limited so we shall keep this brief.

Hostile architecture, exclusionary design, or defensive urban design by which ever name you choose amount to the same thing, an appalling attempt to "design out crime" and to hide the homeless. These are design practices made specifically to exclude, harm or otherwise hinder the freedom of a human being. Quite often they aim to remove the vulnerable from a public space all together and should have no place in a society which holds compassion as a founding principle.

Whether through purposeful design or by retrofitting, we feel that the aims of hostile architecture is not one conducive to principles laid out in Edition 10 of the Planning Policy of Wales which in sections 1.8 states that the planning system "should not discriminate against or favour any particular group or members of society" nor of the general policy of placemaking and it's focus on community well-being.

It is a system of displacing what many business and local authorities see as "surplus humanity", hiding the homeless from public view essentially to improve a locations aesthetic and economic value at the expense of the well-being of some of the most vulnerable in our communities.

Both state and non profit sector services which support the homeless community such as the Rough Sleepers Intervention Teams utilise knowledge of the regular sleeping spaces to monitor and provide ongoing aid to specific homeless people and it's in many popular spots that new homeless people are found and subsequently provided with support sooner.

Creating hostile environments that force the homeless to find respite elsewhere puts a direct threat to their lives, increases crime and for the

temporary homeless increases the duration of their time on the streets. This is an act of social violence against the homeless and puts their safety at risk.

We believe that it is to the Welsh Assembly government to implement this moratorium on a national level and to place a strong and firm position on the usage of such infrastructure whether at the hands of local authorities or private organisations.

At the end of the day, no one should have to sleep on benches and doorways, however this is the reality of many people in Wales and we must respond in a caring manner rather than seek to hide people or by inaction allow local authorities or businesses to do so.

We hope you make the compassionate choice and look forward to further progression.

Kind Regards

People Over Profit