

Oral Statement: Priorities for Local Government, Housing and Planning (Wales)

To: all local authorities in Wales

For info: England, Scotland, Northern Ireland

1 Overview

On 30 June 2026, the Cabinet Secretary for Local Government, Housing and Planning, Sian Gwenllian MS, set out her priorities for the portfolio.¹ The statement places housing at the centre of wider public service delivery, highlighting the importance of a safe and warm home as the foundation for health and wellbeing, economic participation as well as community cohesion.

The Cabinet Secretary emphasised tackling the housing crisis, driven primarily by a shortage of homes, as a key priority, alongside strengthening partnerships with local government and reforming planning and funding systems.

2 Key Announcements

Housing Supply

- Commitment to accelerate delivery of 20,000 new social homes by 2030.
- Establishment of Unnos, a new national development body to support delivery.
- Focus on high-quality, energy-efficient homes.

Private Rented Sector

- New measures to improve tenant security and housing quality.
- Progress towards fair rent arrangements to improve affordability.

Housing Rights and Affordability

- Intention to legislate for a right to adequate housing.
- Focus on reducing homelessness, aligning housing costs with local incomes, and supporting communities and the Welsh language.

¹ <https://record.senedd.wales/Plenary/16072#A106451>

Fuel Poverty and Housing Quality

- Commitment to reduce energy bills through improved energy efficiency.
- Review of the Warm Homes Programme within 100 days.
- Continued support for households in fuel poverty.

Communities and Local Assets

- Introduction of a Community Right to Buy Bill.
- Establishment of a Town Centres Taskforce to support residential development and regeneration.
- Renewed focus on second homes and short-term lets.

Planning and Legislation

- Implementation of the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Act 2026 and Building Safety (Wales) Act 2026.
- Further reform to simplify the planning system and strengthen community input.

Local Government

- Commitment to renew the strategic partnership with local authorities within 100 days.
- Review of the local government funding formula.
- Focus on reducing bureaucracy and empowering councils to deliver locally driven solutions.

3 APSE Comment

APSE welcomes the commitment to strengthening partnerships with local authorities and reviewing funding arrangements. Successful delivery will depend on sustained investment as well as meaningful engagement with councils. The commitment to renew the strategic partnership with local government is particularly important given the central role councils will play in delivering housing and regeneration objectives. [APSE's recent polling with Survation](#) found that public trust in councils remains significantly higher than trust in national government, providing a strong mandate for local authorities to lead place-based solutions.²

The emphasis on reducing bureaucracy and empowering councils is positive. However, clarity will be needed on how reforms translate into action at a local level. Continued dialogue with local government will be essential to ensure policy ambitions are deliverable, particularly as APSE / Survation polling shows many residents still feel their voices are not consistently heard in local decision-making.

The strong focus on increasing housing supply also aligns with wider public priorities. APSE's annual polling with Survation found affordable housing to be among the public's preferred areas for additional local investment, while a clear majority of councillors support increased housebuilding in their local areas.

APSE also welcomes the emphasis on energy-efficient homes and tackling fuel poverty. As highlighted in [APSE's 2025 analysis of public finances and growth](#), investment in housing, energy efficiency and community regeneration can deliver wider economic and social benefits, supporting healthier communities while reducing longer-term pressures on public services.³

Overall, the statement reflects the growing recognition that housing, regeneration and local government investment are key components of economic growth and community wellbeing. The challenge now will be ensuring councils have the resources and long-term funding certainty needed to translate these ambitions into reality.

² <https://apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/members-area/briefings/2026/26-03-apse-and-survation-2026-annual-polling-of-councillors-and-the-public/>

³ <https://apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/members-area/briefings/2025/25-42-public-finances-pre-budget-analysis-on-investment-and-growth/>

Sign up for APSE membership to enjoy a whole range of benefits

APSE member authorities have access to a range of membership resources to assist in delivering council services. This includes our regular network meetings, specifically designed to bring together elected members, directors, managers and heads of service, together with trade union representatives to discuss service specific issues, innovation and new ways of delivering continuous improvement. The networks are an excellent forum for sharing ideas and discussing topical service issues with colleagues from other councils throughout the UK.

Networks are a free service included as part of your authority's membership of APSE and all end with an informal lunch to facilitate networking with peers in other councils. If you do not currently receive details about APSE Network meetings and would like to be added to our list of contacts for your service area please email enquiries@apse.org.uk.

Our national networks include:-

- FM and Building Cleaning
- Catering (School Meals)
- Cemeteries and Crematoria
- Highways and Street Lighting
- Housing, Construction and Building Maintenance
- Social Value, Procurement and Commercialisation Network
- Parks, Horticulture and Grounds Maintenance
- Renewables and Climate Change
- Roads, Highways and Street Lighting
- Sports and Leisure Management
- Vehicle Maintenance and Transport
- Veterans and Military Champions Network
- Local Government Reorganisation Network
- Waste Management, Recycling and Street Cleansing

Visit www.apse.org.uk for more details.



Association for Public Service Excellence
3rd floor,
Trafford House,
Chester Road, Manchester M32 0RS.
telephone: 0161 772 1810
web: www.apse.org.uk

