



Building Safety in Wales

**Welsh Government response to Public Accounts and Public Administration
Committee consideration**

03/10/2024

Summary

The Committee considered the Auditor General for Wales' report on building safety in Wales, which raises a series of issues that merit further examination and reflection by the Welsh Government. They made a series of recommendations for Welsh Government to progress. This document is the Welsh Government response to those recommendations.

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1. Introduction

The Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee made seven recommendations in the report.

- 1.** Welsh Government thanks the Committee for their scrutiny of the Auditor General for Wales' report on Building Safety in Wales. The recommendations have been considered with all recommendations either accepted or accepted in principle to accept all. The detailed response is below.
- 2.** Welsh Government would also like to note that since the issue of this report and the scrutiny session a further report has been produced on the findings of the [Grenfell Tower Inquiry](#) and as such Welsh Government will be taking these findings into account when proposing future actions in this area.

2. Recommendation 1

The Welsh Government should develop a national building safety workforce plan which is codified in a document that sets out its aim and aspirations for the sector. A copy of this national building safety workforce plan should be shared with the Committee, once available.

Response: Accept

Welsh Government are working with Local Authority Building Control (LABC) and WLGA to develop a workforce plan. The plan will be shared with PAPAC once complete.

3. Recommendation 2

The details of any further match funding for recruiting trainees for 2024-25, and beyond, should be shared with the Committee, along with details of the approach being taken by the Welsh Government to ensure that trainees remain within the industry, after their training

Response: Accept

Welsh Government are working with LABC to establish how many trainees would be needed to meet the requirements of the local authority workforce over the next few years (see response to Recommendation 1).

We are in regular discussions with LABC, to understand the incentives they have developed within the training contracts to encourage trainees to remain. The details of this work and any match funding will be supplied to the Committee once complete.

4. Recommendation 3

The Welsh Government should work with stakeholders in the building control sector to implement a nationwide scheme for the recruitment of trainees and apprentices, to ensure a consistency of approach across Wales. This national scheme could be coordinated by the Welsh Government and underpinned by the national building safety workforce plan

Response: Accept

Welsh Government are engaging with LABC and ABCA (Association of Building Control Approvers), and relevant stakeholders to take this forward as this work which will require a coordinated effort from all relevant bodies.

This project will be developed alongside the workforce plan.

5. Recommendation 4

The Committee requests that any work relating to models of collaboration, including regional hubs by the Welsh Government, Local Authority Building Control and the Welsh Local Government Association be shared with us, once it's available. When this is sent, the Committee would also like to learn more about how the Welsh Government intends to implement any proposals contained within the output of that work.

Response: Accept

Welsh Government are working with LABC to produce a report outlining options for regionalisation of the building control service in Wales. This will form part of the further conversations in relation to regionalisation to be undertaken between Welsh Government and WLGA.

6. Recommendation 5

The outcome of the review of the mixed market should be shared with the Committee once it's available, along with a statement of intent from the Welsh Government about any changes and reforms they wish to make to the system as a consequence. There should also be a consideration of whether a Scottish-style hub model, either as part of a mixed market or local authority approach, is beneficial and could be implemented in Wales.

Response: Accept

In addition to Recommendation 5, The Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 Report recommends that the government appoint an independent panel to consider whether it is in the public interest for building control functions to be performed by those who have a commercial interest in the process.

Both recommendations look to consider the appropriateness of a mixed market approach to building control, and we will work with UK Government and key stakeholders to identify the most appropriate way to take forward both recommendations.

Future iterations of the workforce plan would need to take account of any decisions made following the conclusion of the mixed market review.

The outcomes of any mixed market review will be shared with the Committee once available

7. Recommendation 6

The Welsh Government should work with Welsh Councils to evaluate their fee-setting processes, to ensure they fully comply with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010, as well as the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's guidance, in light of the Auditor General's conclusion. Any work in this area should be shared with the Committee.

Response: Accept in principle

The Welsh Government will engage and communicate with the local authorities to remind them of their financial obligations in complying with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010.

8. Recommendation 7

The Welsh Government should monitor the implementation of the national performance framework for building control and building safety services and report back to the Committee on this in early 2025

Response: Accept

Welsh Government have designed a monitoring framework and standards but have yet to commence monitoring of the Local Authority building control teams. This is planned to commence during 2025.