

# Housing Matters

## Welsh budget 2025/26



# Introduction

## **Everyone should have the right to a safe and secure home.**

Housing support services play a vital role in preventing and alleviating homelessness, helping tens of thousands of people every year to recover from trauma and to live safely and independently in their home. However, services have been under constant pressure over the last decade, with funding constraints, huge growth in demand, and an increase in complexity of support needs.

Over the last few weeks we have been collecting evidence from providers of homelessness and housing support services in Wales. We received data from 36 organisations, including small charities operating in one or two local authorities, larger charities operating regionally or nationally, and housing associations. These organisations provide the majority of homelessness and housing support services in Wales and we are therefore confident that our data is representative of the sector.

The information we have collected evidences the significant pressure and challenges facing services and organisations. It highlights the growing complexity and risk that frontline workers are facing on a daily basis, the impact on their wellbeing, and the need to make further progress on ensuring they receive the recognition, reward and support for the incredible work they do.

Housing support providers should not have to continuously fight for fair funding, and fair reward and recognition for their workers. However, this situation is not new. The campaign for housing support funding has now been running for over a decade. Ultimately, we need to secure a long term, sustainable multi-year funding settlement that ensures these vital services continue for as long as they are needed in Wales.

**As the Welsh Government makes key decisions about its budget for 2025/26, the message from the homelessness and housing support sector is clear. The Housing Support Grant must be increased to ensure that services can meet growing demand and complexity, pay frontline workers at least the Real Living Wage, and cover the costs of increased National Insurance contributions.**

**Cymorth Cymru** is the representative body for providers of homelessness, housing and support services in Wales. Our members provide a wide range of services that support people to overcome tough times, rebuild their confidence and live independently in their own homes. We act as the voice of the sector, influencing the development and implementation of policy, legislation and practice that affects our members and the people they support. We want to be part of a social movement that ends homelessness and creates a Wales where everyone can live safely and independently in their own homes and thrive in their communities.

**Community Housing Cymru** is the voice of housing associations in Wales. We represent 33 not-for-profit housing associations that provide almost 174,000 homes to around 10% of the population across Wales. Our collective vision is to make Wales a country where good housing is a basic right for all. Home is central to all of our lives, which is why we and our members believe that helping people live healthy, fulfilled and connected lives should be at the core of Wales's national plans. We represent the views of housing associations on a national level, to ensure they can continue to carry out their vital work to sustain tenancies, support tenants through life challenges, and create sustainable communities.

# What is the Housing Support Grant?

The Housing Support Grant (HSG) funds the vast majority of homelessness and housing-related support services in Wales, including tenancy support, supported accommodation, domestic abuse refuges, Housing First, and much more.

It plays a key role in preventing homelessness, helping people who are at risk of eviction to overcome challenges and remain in their home. It also provides a range of emergency and supported accommodation for people who are homeless or fleeing abuse and violence. These services are critical to helping local authorities to respond to people's needs and meet their legal obligations to provide accommodation and support.

## Critical to ending homelessness

The pressure on the homelessness and housing support system has never been greater. Welsh Government [statistics](#) show that 173 people were sleeping rough and 11,363 people were in temporary accommodation on 30 September 2024. Ever since the pandemic, the number of people entering temporary accommodation has far exceeded the numbers who are moving out of temporary accommodation and into settled homes.

While the availability of suitable, affordable housing stock is critical to helping people to move swiftly out of temporary accommodation, housing support services also play a vital role. These services prevent more people from losing their homes and needing to enter temporary accommodation, as well as helping people to cope in temporary accommodation, and then move into and maintain a home from which they can rebuild their lives.

Last year's Ending Homelessness White Paper set out a series of legislative reforms that will improve the prevention of, and response to, homelessness in Wales. However, the Expert Review Panel that recommended these reforms has been very clear that an increase in housing support services will be required to support implementation.

## Reducing pressure on other public services

In addition to preventing homelessness, the Housing Support Grant also reduces pressure on a myriad of public services, from health and social services to criminal justice. [Research](#) conducted by Cardiff Metropolitan University found that every £1 invested in HSG services delivers £1.40 net savings to public services in Wales.

Based on the current £182m Housing Support Grant budget, this translates to a total gross saving of £442m, with £204m to the health service, £177m to social care services and £70m to criminal justice services.

- Reducing demand on GP, hospital and ambulance services
- Helping people to better manage their mental health
- Helping people to overcome substance use issues
- Helping families to escape domestic abuse
- Reducing re-offending, improving community safety
- Enabling people with learning disabilities to live independently
- Reducing safeguarding risks and pressures on children's services

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gross saving  
to social  
care

£442m  
gross saving  
to public  
services

£70m  
gross saving  
to criminal  
justice

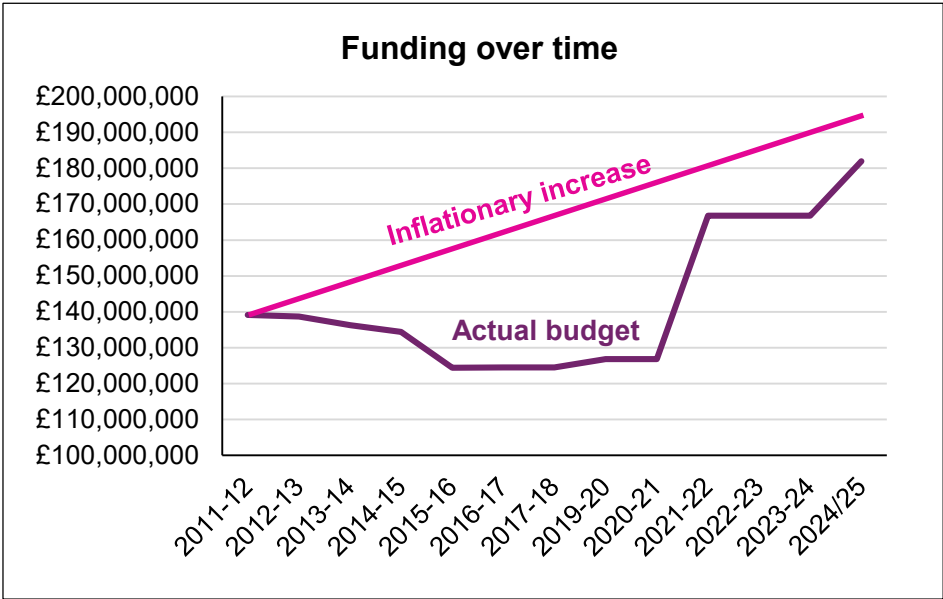
# Funding over the last decade

Once inflation is taken into account, the Housing Support Grant budget has reduced by £13 million since 2012.

In 2011/12 the Supporting People budget was £139 million. Over the next few years, it endured a series of cuts and was reduced to £124 million in 2015/16. In 2018, it was merged with two other grants to form the Housing Support Grant, with a total budget of £126 million. During the pandemic it was increased to £167 million to reflect the increased pressure on services as a result of the 'everyone in' approach. It remained at that level for three years, before it was increased by £13 million in 2024/25, with the intention of supporting the sector towards the Real Living Wage. Some of the smaller homelessness grants were also merged into the HSG in 2024/25, meaning the HSG current stands at £182 million.

**In real terms, the budget has reduced by £13 million since 2012. We have calculated this figure using the Bank of England inflation calculator, which shows that £139 million in 2012 equates to approximately £195 million in October 2024.**

This would be concerning if demand for homelessness and housing support services had remained the same. Unfortunately, we know that both demand for services and the complexity of support needs has increased significantly in the last few years, meaning that the current Housing Support Grant budget falls far short of what is necessary.



**£13m**  
real terms cut  
to HSG funding  
since 2012



## Impact of the 2024/25 budget

Last year the homelessness and housing support sector was in a very precarious position, with many services warning that they would be forced to reduce capacity or even close, if additional funding was not provided.

### A welcome uplift

Given the significant pressures facing the Welsh Government, we were delighted that the Housing Support Grant received a £13 million uplift in the final budget, which equated to a 7.8% increase. Providers warmly welcomed the additional funding and it enabled some organisations to reverse planned cuts to their services and avoid staff redundancies.

**17%**  
were able  
to reverse  
planned  
cuts

*"We had significant and advanced plans to reduce number of units (people we could support) as well as plans to lay off certain roles based on a static budget assumption. The increase was hugely well received as it meant these plans were never enacted."*

However, only 17% of providers said it enabled them to reverse plans (based on the draft budget) to reduce service capacity and/or make staff redundant.

### But insufficient to cover all costs

However, the evidence collected from providers suggests that the increase was not enough to cover all costs. Only 14% of respondents to our survey said the final budget settlement was sufficient to cover all of the costs of running a high quality, well-staffed service.

**14%**  
said the final  
budget was  
sufficient

*"The rise was welcomed (and will make a positive difference), however we are still struggling to cover the costs of support staff and running costs."*

*"In real terms, it has been cut dramatically - we are nearly at the same level of funding as we were receiving in 2011 but with inflation it is a huge reduction."*

### Announcement was too late for some

Unfortunately, the additional £13 million came too late for many services, as it was not announced until the final budget on 27th February 2024. Local authorities and providers based their financial planning for 2024/25 on the draft budget in December 2023, which featured a cash-flat HSG budget.

17% of respondents to our survey said it was announced too late to avoid some service reductions and/or staff redundancies.

**17%**  
said it was  
too late to  
avoid cuts

*"The announcement was also made very late in the budget setting process, therefore decisions about service priorities had already been made."*

## Subsidising services due to funding shortfall

Despite the increase in the budget, 81% of support providers are running HSG services at a deficit - i.e. costing more to run than the funding they receive from local authority commissioners.

The following table shows the proportion of support providers currently subsidising their housing support services from other sources, including 52% which are doing so from their own reserves.

Have you had to subsidise your HSG services from any of the following sources?	
Fundraising revenue	27%
Reserves	52%
Income from other parts of the organisation (e.g. rental income, training income)	64%

**81%**  
of providers  
are running  
services at a  
deficit

**52%**  
are using  
reserves to  
prop up  
services

**Support providers are clear that this is not sustainable.** Most organisations cannot afford to subsidise services in the future and will need to hand back contracts if the funding deficit is not resolved. The boards of these organisations are becoming increasingly concerned about these deficits and some have told their leadership teams to hand back contracts if this continues.

When asked how long they could continue to subsidise HSG projects with funding from other sources, the most common answer was **one year or less** (15 respondents). The maximum length of time quoted by respondents was 3 years (4 respondents).

*"We are currently in negotiation with a local authority. Unless they can find the additional funding required, we will have no choice but to serve notice and terminate the contract."*

*"Cost of living rises over the past three years have impacted on our reserves. Our reserves are now at a level where we cannot use them to sustain operational costs."*



## Fair Work and the Real Living Wage

Homelessness and housing support workers in Wales do incredibly challenging and skilled work, but funding constraints mean they do not receive the reward and recognition they deserve.

In December 2023 we gathered data on the salaries of more than 3,000 workers funded by the Housing Support Grant. This showed that:

- 41% were being paid below the upcoming (April 2024) minimum wage of £11.44 per hour
- 67% were being paid below the 2023/24 Real Living Wage of £12.00 per hour

In January 2024, we [wrote](#) to the First Minister and highlighted the disconnect between the wages in the homelessness sector and the Welsh Government's commitment to Fair Work and the Real Living Wage. We called for an increase in the HSG budget to enable support providers to increase frontline worker wages. Once the £13 million uplift to the 2024/25 budget was announced, we were delighted that the Minister for Climate Change [wrote](#) to local authorities to state her 'very clear expectation' that this should be used to address pay pressures and support providers to deliver the Real Living Wage:

*"This increase equates to a c7.8% increase on 'core' HSG funding of £166,763,000 and I have allocated this additional funding with the very clear expectation that this should be used to address pay pressures in the first instance, and assist commissioners in supporting providers to deliver on our broader commitment to Fair Work and the Real Living Wage."*

Letter from Minister for Climate Change to local authority leaders and chief executives, 12th March 2024

While we, and the Welsh Government, recognised that this was unlikely to be enough funding to cover the full costs of paying the Real Living Wage, it was viewed as the first step towards achieving this aim. Over the next few months, we worked with providers, local government and the Welsh Government to try and ensure that the uplift was passed onto providers to enable them to increase wages.

In our most recent survey of providers (October 2024) we asked them to share whether they had been able to pay staff the Real Living Wage, and whether they had received enough HSG funding to cover the whole cost of this.

- 91% of organisations say they are paying frontline staff the RLW
- However, only 21% are able to pay for this wholly with HSG funding. The remaining 79% are having to subsidise the Real Living Wage using their reserves, fundraising or other income.
- Only 20% said that their HSG funding enables them to maintain appropriate differentials for immediate managers.

**It is clear there needs to be further increases to the HSG to cover the costs of the Real Living Wage in homelessness and housing support services. We hope the Welsh Government maintains a commitment to ensure this becomes a reality in next year's budget.**

On average, providers say they would need a **17% increase** in their Housing Support Grant funding to cover the costs of paying the Real Living Wage next year and maintaining appropriate differentials for immediate managers.

**91%**  
of HSG  
providers are  
paying the  
RLW

**79%**  
do not receive  
enough HSG to  
cover the full  
RLW cost

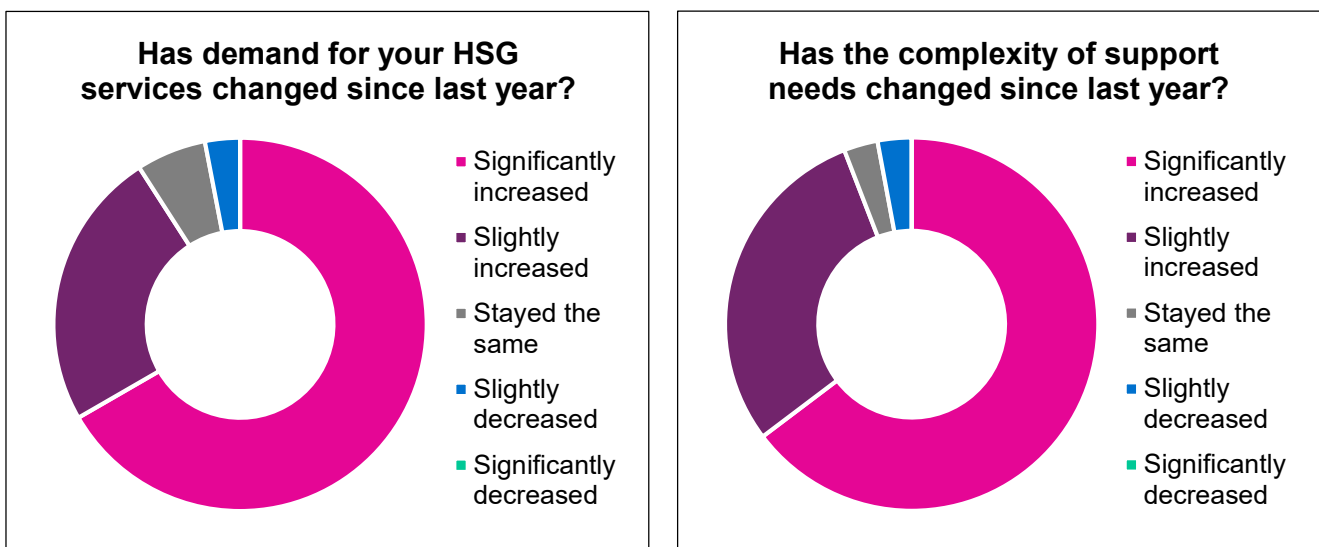
**17%**  
increase  
needed to pay  
RLW next  
year

## Increased demand and complexity

The pressure on the homelessness and housing support system has never been greater. Welsh Government [statistics](#) show that 11,363 people were in temporary accommodation on 30 September 2024. Many of these people will need support to help them cope in temporary accommodation and then move into a settled home. Housing support services are also playing a key role in preventing even more people from entering temporary accommodation.

Evidence we have collected from support providers demonstrates that demand for homelessness and housing support services has increased over the last year, as well as the complexity of people's support needs.

- **91% said demand for their services had increased since last year**
- **94% said the complexity of support needs had increased since last year**



A number of homelessness and housing support providers have shared how the increased levels of complexity and risk is affecting services.

*"Increased incidents involving alcohol. Increased incidents involving mental health. Increased incidents of suicide attempts. Increased incidents involving violence."*

*"Recently 62% of residents have experienced suicide ideation and have attempted suicide and/or are self-harming in response to the trauma they have experienced. For some, this is coupled with substance usage, chaotic lifestyles and no support networks."*

*"Staff in services are dealing with significant issues. Within the last quarter, staff have had to deal with suicide attempts, self-harm, violent crime."*

*"We are working with far more young people and women with significantly higher mental health needs, including serious self-harm and suicide ideation. For the first time ever, we are seeing many young people we support threaten staff with weapons and are carrying weapons."*



## Impact of on staff wellbeing

We have become increasingly aware of the impact of increased demand and complexity, coupled with restricted funding and job uncertainty on staff health and wellbeing.

91% of providers who responded to our survey said there had been a negative impact on staff wellbeing, sickness and burnout, with 41% saying this had been extremely negative. Many provided further detail about how this was affecting staff, with some hugely concerning comments about staff mental health.

**91%**  
reported  
negative impact  
on staff  
wellbeing

*"I have sadly lost a staff member through suicide, I have also had more significantly more staff off work for long periods citing stress, anxiety and compassion fatigue/ burn out."*

*"Staff are tired. One member of staff recently said 'it shouldn't be this hard to help people' and that's how it feels. Everything is a challenge due to shrinkage of services."*

*"Higher staff turnover, shorter tenure in role. Increased staff sickness absence due to work related stress and anxiety."*

*"We believe staff wellbeing has been negatively impacted by increased complexity. We have seen higher numbers of staff leaving than previous years. Further to this, numbers of staff referrals to our counselling services have doubled."*

*"We have a high staff sickness rate with the majority of cases being stress-related."*



## Impact of staff sickness and turnover

50% of respondents to our survey said there has been an increase in staff turnover over the last year. Of those who said that turnover had stayed the same, several wanted to highlight that turnover had increased significantly in previous years and still remained very high.

Support providers were keen to outline how high staff turnover affects people using services, who have often experienced a lifetime of trauma and system failure.

*"It has had significant impact - support is based on relationships and staff turnover directly negatively impacts the person we support through having to repeat stories and build trust over and over again."*

*"The quality of the support received by a service with high turnover is much decreased, the client is continually having to work to trust a new person and possibly tell their story again and there is a high chance of disengagement."*

*"The people we support rightly complain about not seeing the same people delivering support when we have to use agency. This inevitably makes it hard for them to build positive relationships, feel safe and achieve their outcomes."*

We also asked about the impact on remaining staff members, who are already under significant pressure:

*"Higher workloads during vacancies, increased risk of burnout."*

*"Puts pressure on other staff to cover rotas, having to work additional hours. Cant take their annual leave."*

*"Staff remaining also cite higher workloads, lack of psychological safety and burnout."*

*"Staff shortages are significantly burning out the rest of the team. Therefore when one person is off long term sick we often find other staff are impacted and more sickness occurs. It is a constant strain and battle."*



## Looking to the future: HSG budget 2025/26

We asked support providers to consider the impact of a cash flat settlement (real-terms cut) for 2025/26. The data paints an incredibly concerning picture, with a large proportion of service providers likely to reduce capacity, hand back existing contracts and choose not to bid for new or re-tendered contracts if there is no increase in funding.

### The likely impact of a cash-flat settlement:

- 74% said they were extremely likely or likely to have to reduce service capacity
- 47% would be extremely likely or likely to have to hand back existing contracts
- 61% would be extremely likely or likely to not bid for new or re-tendered contracts
- 52% would be extremely likely or likely to make staff redundant
- 73% would be extremely likely or likely to have a recruitment freeze

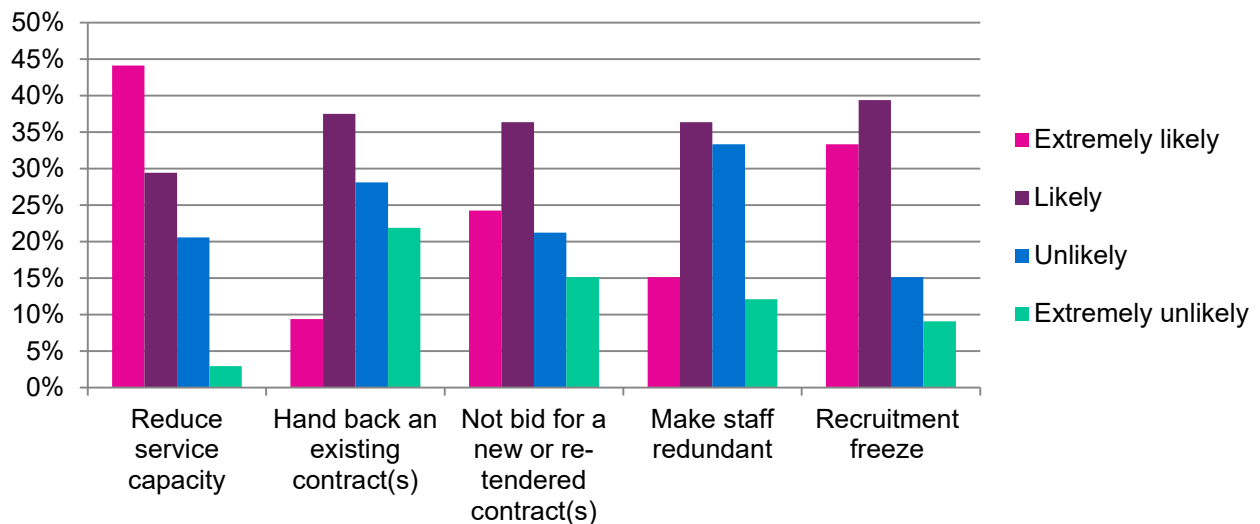
**74%**  
extremely  
likely or likely  
to reduce  
capacity

**47%**  
extremely  
likely or likely  
hand back  
contracts

**61%**  
extremely  
likely or likely  
not to bid for  
contracts

**52%**  
extremely  
likely or likely  
to make staff  
redundant

If there is no inflation-linked increase in HSG funded contracts next year, how likely is it that you will need to:



## Changes to employer National Insurance contributions

The survey referenced throughout this report was conducted before the UK Government Autumn Budget, and there are now significant concerns about the impact of the increase in National Insurance contributions. This poses an additional huge risk to the sustainability of high-quality services, which could leave local government without the tools they need to prevent and alleviate homelessness. Most crucially it could result in people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness being unable to access the housing and support they desperately need.

In the last two weeks, we have collected further data from 22 providers of HSG funded services about the increase in costs resulting from the changes to employer National Insurance contributions. **The costs are significant. The highest figure quoted is £621,000 and the average estimated cost is £120,162.**

Given the financial pressures outlined earlier in this report, the risk facing the homelessness and housing support sector is huge. We also asked providers how much their HSG funding would need to be increased in order to cover the additional NI costs. **The average response was 8.8%.**

**Average  
cost to  
providers of  
NI changes:  
£120k**

*"The impact of the NI increase and a commitment to the RLW will cost us £859k. This is a significant sum."*

*"Charity's long term viability at risk due to employer NI changes coupled with National Minimum Wage increase."*

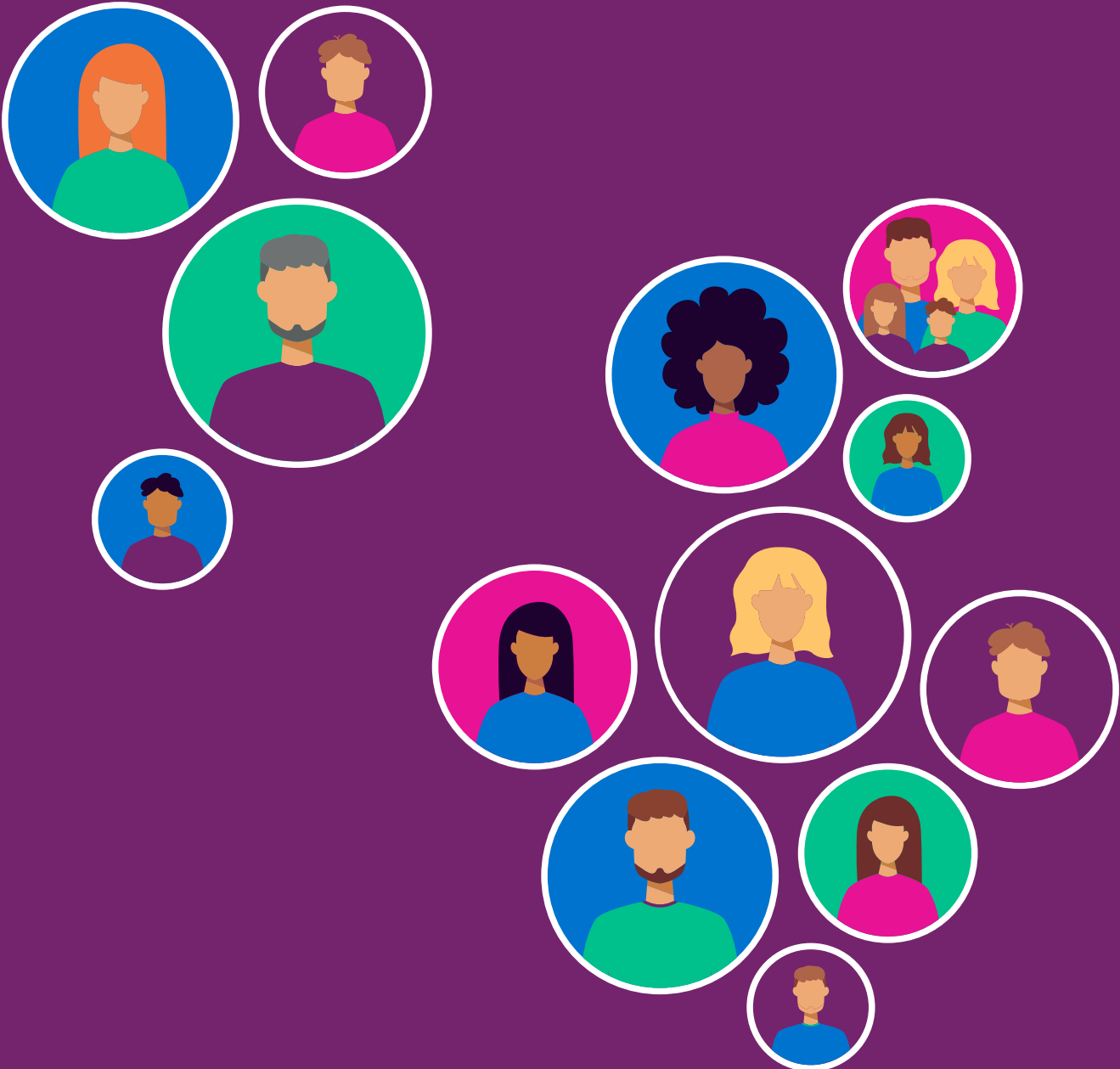
*"The NI Increase and lowering of the threshold has a significant negative impact upon our organisation. [...] Should no budget increase be forthcoming, we would have to reduce our workforce and a proportion of support hours to make the projects financially viable."*

*"We are extremely worried about these additional costs. We want to pay RLW next year but at this point it looks extremely unlikely. However we will legally have to pay the NI increases and NLW - how on earth are we expected to fund this? The NLW increase and the NI increases will cost us an extra £700,000 next year (4%). Paying NI, RLW and keeping salary differentials would cost us an additional 8%."*

*"As an organisation, the total cost as a result of the increased contributions for the whole organisation will cost us £50,000+ per annum. We are having a budget review meeting next week and tough decisions may need to be made to reduce staffing [...] We are in a very precarious position because we are unable to reduce frontline staff due to the increased demand for all our services. It is proving very difficult to access revenue funding from other sources and we feel we are on the verge of crisis point. It feels very unstable at the moment and very concerning."*

# Case studies:

## The stories behind the services





## Case study: Platform

A young woman who has faced significant trauma in the past, was living with her family after several stints of residency in both short-term and crisis housing. She has a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder - and during her residency here with Platform was diagnosed with complex PTSD

following a short stay in a mental health unit.

She was referred to Platform's 24-hour supported accommodation through her CPN, with whom she has a strong relationship. External support services saw that she needed further support than a 9-5 approach and was therefore referred to the project where she now resides. She moved into the supported accommodation at the end of 2023; this was the start of a new chapter in her life. After taking a few months to settle in, battling huge ups and downs in her mental health as she adjusted to a new living environment with new faces and new additions to her support network, she finally feels settled in with the structured constant support she now receives.

Her Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale score has increased by a huge 40% since she moved in, highlighting how constant structured support has led to a significant improvement in her mental health. She has now greatly improved her skills in living independently, always keeping her room in perfect condition and rarely leaning on staff support, indicating her progression towards living independently. Since residing in the supported accommodation, she has also been discharged from the community mental health team, as her progress with her mental health has improved significantly.

She actively engages in a weekly social group ran in Barry by the Community Mental Health Team support group network. She participates with support workers who have previously supported her, and finds the sessions not only fun but useful with her confidence. She pro-actively engages and checks in on other residents demonstrating her empathy and caring nature. She has even held the title of 'quiz master' several times, creating her own quizzes for the group. She now keeps up with her physical fitness through boxing whilst recovering from a leg injury at Ely Community Centre. She also volunteers every Friday with her mum in a community centre, providing for the homeless community during the festive season giving out hot meals and essentials. This level of community support and helping others has led her to feel a strong sense of self-worth.

Since moving in, Platform staff members have provided guidance and assistance in aspects of living independently. She now possesses the skills to manage a schedule through the creation of staff created assets such as a personally tailored calendar and habit tracker which she constantly uses. She additionally now utilises staff created assets in managing her mental health through gratitude diaries and documents that help handle her irrational thoughts and feelings. She maintains a high level of cleanliness through her flat and no longer requires prompting to manage her room which she thoroughly enjoys decorating.

Her support network has always identified that she loves having responsibility and purpose. She is now learning the skills in leadership and peer support through a weekly programme from the Wallich and is soon to move onto a training programme in Cardiff where she will learn what it takes to be a support worker. She is both excited and anxious for these next few steps in gaining skills for future employability but knows staff will always be there to support her through it.

Her time at Platform's 24-hour supported accommodation has been a necessary stepping stone for her future. She has experienced a lot in her past and the support in her day-to-day life as allowed her to come to terms with her mental health and gain further insight, reporting to staff she feels less anxious and now knows how to fight her depressive episodes, finally breaking the cycle she was stuck in for almost her entire adult life.



## Case study: Llamau

H is a young lady in her early 20s who had experienced significant breakdown in relationships with family members following the death of her father and other close family members when H was in her formative years. H struggled to cope with her trauma and started to use alcohol and drugs to dull her emotions and feelings. This led to frequent breakdown of accommodation, constant engagement with police, courts, community psychiatric teams, and local authority homelessness teams. All of this led to H being homeless, estranged from family networks, banned from the city centre (therefore unable to access key agencies such as DWP) and every bridge in the local area. This created a significant safeguarding concern and cost to the public purse on multiple agencies.

H came to Llamau following another placement breakdown where she had been evicted following an altercation with staff that required further police intervention. She moved into a Llamau project with 5 other young people, and was previously supported by our floating support team who worked with her around her offending, housing, and financial issues. H settled into project life initially with some minor disruptions, this was in reality boundary testing, and we treated her as an adult, gave her consequential actions to behaviours that are proportionate and reasonable. Colleagues developed an open, honest, and respectful relationship with H and conducted support sessions centred on empowering H to start to feel a sense of safety and focus on engaging in support.

H was supported to define achievable goals, what they looked like and what was needed to achieve them. We also utilised other Llamau teams such as education and our in-house psychology team to help us provide a more holistic approach to supporting H. An open, honest and no blame culture was adopted by all teams working with H, using a trauma-informed approach, building on successes, and reflecting and learning from times that had not been so successful. During the early weeks of H being accommodated in supported accommodation Llamau were invited to attend several large scale s115 meetings with police, health, probation, children's services and other partners, where the burden and impact that H and a group of her peers were having on emergency services was highlighted (frequent attendance at A&E, welfare concerns at places of danger, emergency services call outs to projects and in the community). Criminal justice action was being taken against H as a result of her behaviours and the pressure placed on the system.

With intensive support from Llamau colleagues, in conjunction with partnership agencies, H has learned better ways of expressing her distress and an understanding of the need to only use emergency services as they are designed. This resulted in a significant reduction in H's engagement with blue-light services. In the following 18-months H has taken strides to move to less intensive supported accommodation, recognised the impacts of harmful relationships around alcohol and drug use, and also peer relationships in terms of impact on her emotional harm and distress. We are extremely proud to say that H has reduced her offending behaviour to zero, has self-elected to engage with CAMHS for the first time ever and we are seeing a positive reduction in self-harm behaviour/thoughts. Most importantly, H has restored her relationships with close family and will soon be engaging in bereavement-based services.



## Case study: The Wallich

This individual, whose name is withheld for privacy, has a long history of substance abuse that began in their early teenage years. Their initial use of substances was as a coping mechanism for childhood trauma and a difficult social environment. Over time, their substance use escalated, leading to significant disruptions in their life, including job loss, relationship breakdowns, and legal issues.

The individual's substance use history began in early adolescence, around age 13-14, with the consumption of petrol, weed, and alcohol. By age 16, their drug use escalated to include ecstasy, speed, and LSD. Throughout their late teens and early twenties, they continued to abuse substances, primarily alcohol, while holding various jobs. Despite joining the army in their early twenties with the intention of getting clean, they relapsed into heavy drinking and developed an addiction to painkillers. In their late twenties and early thirties, their struggles with alcohol addiction intensified, leading to relationship breakdowns and homelessness.

By their mid-thirties, their addiction had progressed to heroin and alcohol, resulting in multiple overdoses and periods of homelessness. The cycle of substance abuse and its consequences continued into their late thirties and early forties, marked by numerous arrests and prison sentences. The individual's substance abuse issues have led to multiple encounters with the criminal justice system, including arrests and convictions. These experiences have had a profound impact on their life, exacerbating their addiction and hindering their ability to maintain stability.

Despite these challenges, the individual was referred to Derwen Newydd, a specialist supported accommodation, in November 2023. Upon arrival, they exhibited signs of alcohol withdrawal, requiring medical attention and an unplanned community detox. This experience marked a turning point in their recovery journey. Since their initial struggles, the individual has made remarkable progress. They have maintained abstinence from alcohol and have been actively participating in recovery programs, including emotional coping skills work, counselling, and SMART recovery. Their dedication to their recovery is evident in their willingness to support others, as they now serve as a peer mentor and are training to be a SMART facilitator.

The individual's journey has not been without challenges. They have had to confront their past, including their criminal justice involvement, and distance themselves from harmful influences. By avoiding their previous environment and carefully managing relationships, they have created a healthier and more supportive social network. Despite facing legal difficulties, the individual has shown a commitment to positive change. Their progress and the support they have received from Derwen Newydd have played a crucial role in mitigating the potential consequences of their past actions. This individual's story is a testament to the power of recovery and the importance of supportive communities. Through perseverance and dedication, they have transformed their life and are now making a positive impact on others. Their journey serves as an inspiration to those struggling with addiction and criminal justice involvement, demonstrating that recovery is possible with the right support and a strong commitment to change.



### Case study: Stori

Mabel has a history of unhealthy relationships, substance use, and poor mental health. She was identified as needing support to learn the skills necessary to manage a tenancy and was referred from refuge to access Stori's HSG-funded supported accommodation. Ahead of her moving into the Stori property, Mabel's needs and risks were fully assessed by her Stori Support Worker. On the day she moved in, she was greeted by her Support Worker and the Stori Housing officer to settle her in. This included setting up all utilities and ensuring she was in credit, as well as access to a foodbank. Support sessions were agreed, and a robust support plan was created with Mabel within the first 10 days of support. Initially Mabel's engagement in support was good. She engaged with day to day living skills, such as shopping on a budget and cooking. However, her engagement started to decrease due to controlling and coercive behaviour from a new relationship.

Staff's concerns for Mabel's safety escalated due to a decline in her appearance and suspected substance use. Staff continued frequent check-ins which eventually led to Mabel then making a domestic abuse disclosure on her front door while her partner was in the house. Staff immediately removed Mabel and took her to safety, carrying out a Safelives DASH-RIC and Mabel was supported to provide a police statement. It was recommended by the police and Stori that it was unsafe for her to remain in the property. Mabel moved in with her mother temporarily while alternative accommodation was sought due to the risk to her life to stay in the borough. Her Stori Support Worker visited every day and supported to improve relationships within the family home. Mabel was finally offered and signed for a property near her family in Caerphilly after two months of multi-agency meetings and collaboration. Mabel also received support from an IDVA in the area, floating support, accessed programmes around healthy relationships, and improving her well-being.

Since Mabel has disclosed the domestic abuse and fled out of the area, Mabel's well-being has improved, and she is fully engaged with support services. Without the daily check in by Stori support staff and identifying the risks being posed, she may not have had this positive outcome. She has stated: *"Stori's support has been life changing and has saved me"*.





## Case study: Salvation Army

The Compass Project is an intensive support specialist 4 bed landing, within the Salvation Army's Ty Gobaith Life House. It is a HSG-funded service, which is designed to support individuals who have struggled to leave inpatient mental health support, and therefore helps to reduce pressure on acute mental health provision.

Many of the individuals that we work with have been inpatients for several years.

Anna\* was referred to the Compass Project in January 2023. Anna had several diagnoses of anorexia, borderline personality disorder, emotional regulation disorder, complex PTSD, anxiety, depression, paranoia and body dysmorphia. Anna would regularly harm herself cutting her arms, legs, throat, face and stomach as well as taking daily (often multiple times) overdoses of pain medication. During the beginning stages of Anna's stay with the project staff had to make regular calls to the emergency services due to Anna's self-harm. The situation was extremely concerning and the need for emergency services was at times almost daily. During this time staff also worked collaboratively Anna and the team around her, the community mental health team, social worker, community psychiatric nurse, and Cynnwys, a specialist service which aims to improve the care received by people who experience severe emotional, behavioural and relationship difficulties.

A robust and shared risk management plan was established for Anna to try to help her to stay safe at Ty Gobaith and reduce the frequency of calls to emergency services. In July 2023 Anna was admitted as a voluntary mental health inpatient where Anna was able to receive the medication that she needed. The Compass Team supported her during her time in hospital, visiting regularly. Working collaboratively with the hospital a discharge plan was created which enabled Anna to move onto Cadoc House, React, a long term community accommodation for individuals with mental health needs. Later in the summer Anna was successfully discharged from acute inpatient services and moved into her new home with React. Anna was supported to move and settle by the Compass Team. Anna is now longer harming herself; her physical and mental health are improving. Anna is no longer reliant on emergency services. Anna said that this is the safest she has ever felt.



## Case study: Salvation Army

Laura\* was referred to our Salvation Army Open Door Project Newport service in July 2024 after being evicted from hostel accommodation in the city. Laura was street homeless and desperately needed medical attention for an infected abscess in her leg. Laura found it hard to engage with the support on offer.

Due to previous and current traumatic experience Laura would often behave assertively and aggressively towards our team and other professionals. This meant that she was in contact with city centre police and PCSOs often daily. After persistent and positive engagement from our Early Morning Outreach and daytime outreach teams, a rapport was slowly but successfully built. Our drop-in also provided Laura\* a space to come in the daytime, to engage in more therapeutic support away from street based activities. It was clear that without support to access a GP, Laura's infection would be soon likely to require more experience and intensive emergency medical treatment. Laura has a dog and arranging fostering for the dog was an essential step in enabling Laura to attend the GP and begin to seek medical support. Upon accessing her GP, it was identified that inpatient health treatment would be needed. Laura stayed in hospital for a week, during this time she was also able to physically detox and well as resolve the long-standing issue with her leg. Working collaboratively with Newport City Council appropriate temporary accommodation was then secured for Laura upon discharge.

By working collectively as support and housing services we have been able to support Laura to reduce her overall contact with statutory services, mainly the police. Laura's reliance on reactive and emergency health services has also now been reduced through her GP access and a short hospital stay. Having secure accommodation to move on to also ensured that Laura did not have to stay in hospital for longer than was necessary and that she could come out to a secure accommodation placement. Laura continues to build an excellent rapport with our team and her support is ongoing.



## Case study: ClwydAlyn

Emily\*, a 16-year-old girl, was referred to the service in early 2023 due to a breakdown in her relationship with her father. Emily has a physical disability and experienced a range of mental health issues. Emily's engagement with staff at the service initially was limited; she rarely came out of her room or spoke with anyone

within the project and was quite isolated. After a few weeks, staff were able to forge a trusting professional relationship with her, and she started opening up more during her support sessions and appeared more settled. When she moved in, Emily was already enrolled into college studying A-levels although was struggling to engage with this due to her turbulent living conditions at the time. Staff supported Emily by attending meetings with her tutors at college to communicate Emily's situation to ensure wrap-around support, which enabled her to remain on her college course. Throughout her time at the service, Emily's mental health was very up and down. However, staff were able to recognise patterns of behaviour such as withdrawing from support, missing college and appearing quiet which allowed them to intervene before her mental health deteriorated significantly. At these times, Emily was supported to speak with her GP and was also referred to outside agencies to complete talking therapy and CBT. Staff accompanied her to many of these appointments due to her feeling quite anxious.

By August 2023, Emily's confidence had grown tremendously. She was attending concerts independently and went on her first solo trip abroad. By April 2024, she began applying for universities to study social psychology. Staff assisted Emily with applying for her accommodation, student financing and also put in an application for DSA. However, in May 2024, around the time of her final exams in college, her mental health began declining. Staff spent significant time with Emily to try and build up her confidence and remained in close contact with the support staff from the college to ensure that she was able to remain on the course and complete her exams, with a sufficient plan of support in place. Despite less engagement with staff during this time, they continued to try to support Emily during this time. Emily sat her exams and achieved the results she needed to secure her place at university and moved out of the project in September 2024. Prior to leaving, staff supported Emily with her transition to new accommodation and ensured she had access to support from the university wellbeing team before she left to fill the gaps in support. Emily stated before leaving the project that she had never moved on from somewhere for a positive reason and has since been in contact with staff and has settled in well to her new accommodation.



## Case study: Taff Housing

Taff Housing recently supported a family of 6 whose private landlord was increasing the rent from £650pm to £1000pm, a change that was unaffordable for the family. The father of the family was concerned that he may be unable to pay rent, despite his part-time employment, leading to eviction and eventual homelessness for the entire family. This was an incredibly stressful time for the entire family, including the

children, with an impending deadline for a viable solution to avoid homelessness. Taff identified that the landlord was not registered under Rent Smart Wales and liaised with them to consider doing so in order to be eligible to apply to the Prevention Fund operated by Newport City Council Homelessness Team. This was a success, and Taff were then able to assist the service-user with their application.

Taff communicated this outcome to the Landlord, and upon confirmation from the council that the shortfall would be guaranteed, he was reassured that his costs would be covered and felt confident to provide the family with a legally binding lease for an additional twelve months. He qualified for assistance as he, with Taff's support, was able to demonstrate his existing income couldn't accommodate the increase, but it would be more affordable for Newport City Council to contribute to the shortfall than to have the family placed in temporary housing. With the support of Taff Housing, this family are no longer in a vulnerable housing situation in the private rental market, to the relief of all the family. The children's education and wellbeing has not been affected, and the family have been given the luxury of time to find a more long-term solution while in the safety of their existing home.

*"My Family and I are so glad that Tenancy Support was there to support us with keeping our home by liaising with the Council and our Landlord. We didn't know such help existed."*



## Case study: Platfform

A young adult faced significant challenges living in an unsuitable environment with his grandmother after a relationship breakdown with his parents. He has a diagnosis of anxiety, ADHD, autism and depression and recognised his need for support. He was advised by his occupational therapist to attend a drop-in with Platfform's housing support and advice service, who referred him on to Platfform's 24-hour supported accommodation, as he was lacking the necessary skills for independent living, and he was apprehensive about his future.

He moved into Platfform's 24-hour supported accommodation, which was a turning point in his journey. With structured support and guidance, he began working on personalised goals in his support plan, which includes developing essential life skills to gain independence. Upon his initial assessment, he completed the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, scoring 43. Remarkably, his score improved to 50 when he moved in and has further increased to 59 after six months of living there. This highlights his improved mental wellbeing since being with Platfform and the importance of the work we do. He actively participates in Platfform's hosted activities, and reported that he found these activities beneficial for improving his social skills and fostering a sense of community. He enjoys spending time with other residents and felt a strong sense of belonging. He has received comprehensive support from Platfform's staff, who have assisted him in various aspects of independent living. He has learned budgeting skills, how to seek help when needed, and gained a better understanding of managing household responsibilities such as setting up and paying bills, cooking and maintaining cleanliness.

His journey has also led him to take on some roles of leadership by leading peer support groups, including breakfast club and game days that other residents attend. This has significantly improved his social anxiety and confidence. Through these activities he has not only helped himself, but other residents too. His experience at Platfform has been transformative. He has reported significant improvements in his social anxiety and overall ability to handle support matters. The structured environment and dedicated assistance from Platfform have equipped him with the skills necessary for independent living, marking a successful transition towards a more self-sufficient future.