Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

HHSRS Review

& other updates from CIEH

CIEH Cymru Wales

Housing Training Event

HHSRS Review timeline

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- May 2017 – Data collected for first CIEH survey
- Dec 2017 – Report on survey published
- Feb 2018 – CIEH gives oral evidence to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee
- May 2018 – HCLG report published
- Jul 2018 – MHCLG roadshows
- **Nov 2018 – HHSRS Review announced**

HHSRS Review timeline

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- Dec 2018 – Second survey and engagement events
- Jan 2019 – CIEH invited to sit on MHCLG project board for the review
- Feb 2019 – Review engagement events
- Apr 2019 – Expected date for completion of review & presentation to Minister
- ?

HHSRS – 2017 survey

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HHSRS: 11 years on, Dec 2017

- 170 complete responses from at least 85 LAs
- ***97% support an update of HHSRS***
- 9 out of 10 wanted more up to date worked examples
- 53% said they couldn’t deal with a housing issue using HHSRS
- 71 comments mentioned HHSRS statistics

HHSRS – 2017 survey

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

HHSRS: 11 years on, Dec 2017

Which areas need updating?

- Fire and electrical safety
- Excess cold
- Excess heat
- Damp and mould
- Crowding and space
- Outdoor spaces
- Vulnerable groups

HHSRS – 2017 survey

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

HHSRS: 11 years on, Dec 2017

- Not just the Rating System
- Enforcement guidance and Housing Act 2004, including:
  - Role of informal action
  - FTT/RPT decisions and case law
  - Powers of entry
  - Empty properties
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and CO/smoke alarms

HHSRS - 2017 survey

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

Attitudes towards a risk based approach

- 55% risk based approach
- 15% minimum standard only
- 18% other

Attitudes towards HHSRS

- 62% think that HHSRS was an improvement on the old Housing Fitness Standard.
- 23% think that the old Housing Fitness Standard was better.

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- 120 responses (Dec 2018-Jan 2019)

- Whilst support for HHSRS is still high (71%), there is also significant interest in minimum standards (81%)
- A combination of both could work well, but good design and alignment will be key
- Minimum standards need to be set:
- at an appropriately high level and
- only for areas where this is appropriate and useful for enforcement

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- We asked 3 key questions:
- 1. Which hazards score too low for enforcement action?

damp and mould (inc ventilation*) – 32%
fire – 23%
food safety/domestic hygiene – 14%
disrepair* - 14%
personal hygiene – 10%

- 2. Which issues do tenants complain about most often?

Damp and mould (inc ventilation) - 26%
Excess cold (inc heating costs) - 22%
Electrical - 10%
Fire risk - 9%
Crowding and space - 9%

- 3. Which areas would benefit from minimum standards

Fire safety – 47%
Excess cold (heating and insulation) – 40%
Crowding & space – 35%
Electrical hazards – 24% ^
Damp & mould – 20%
Food safety – 12%
Lighting – 12%

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- *How to determine which areas might benefit from standards?*

- Hazards which EHPs find it difficult to take formal action on due to the low scores generated.
- Some of the most common problems encountered to speed up enforcement work
- Some issues lend themselves better than others to clear and simple standards

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- *How could standards and the rating system work together?*
- Standards often don't cover the whole hazard.
- Simple analysis of current minimum standards to ask whether a category 1 hazard is still *possible* if the standard is met.
- MEES – yes
- Smoke and CO alarms – yes
- Electrical and gas safety certificates - yes

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- *Should HHSRS be simplified in some way?*
- There was no clear consensus on whether HHSRS should be simplified
- Similar proportions of respondents wanted to simplify HHSRS as those who wanted to keep it as it is (35% vs. 36%)
- There was some interest in potentially combining certain hazards (66% liked this approach)
- Falls hazards and excess cold and damp hazards were suggested most frequently

Second survey and CIEH submission

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- *Other ideas:*
- Clearer guidance on action required on multiple category 2 hazards
- Management of a property is important
- Interest in mental health impacts of housing conditions

About our work

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- Housing remains a major area of work for CIEH's policy and campaigning team
- Last year, we have submitted 9 written responses and 2 oral evidence sessions on housing
- In January 2019, we published a report together with the Chartered Institute of Housing on selective licensing schemes

Policy priorities are:

- Improving housing standards
- Tackling cold homes
- Improving protections, accessibility and affordability for tenants

Looking forward

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

- UK wide licensing scheme for landlords renting out property?
- Evaluating impact of Rent Smart Wales
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Renting Homes Wales Act 2016 (outcome of consultation on fitness standards)
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards for PRS & trajectory

What are your views?

Chartered Institute of Environmental Health

1. What are the key housing issues in Wales?
2. If we were to do a campaign on housing, what should this focus on?

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