# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **The publication of the reports from the Task and Finish Group for Leasehold Reform and the Unadopted Roads Taskforce.** |
| **DATE**  | **17 July 2019** |
| **BY** | **A joint statement by Julie James AM, Minister for Housing and Local Government and Ken Skates AM, Minister for Economy and Transport.** |

Following a Welsh Assembly Member Debate on 14 February 2018 on the issues surrounding unadopted roads, the Minister for Economy and Transport announced the establishment of a Taskforce to investigate the problems associated with unadopted roads and make recommendations on how these can be addressed and avoided in the future.

In a written statement issued on 6 March 2018, the then Minister for Housing and Regeneration outlined a set of actions to tackle wider issues related to residential leasehold as tenure for home ownership in Wales. The written statement also referred to problems encountered by freehold homeowners linked to estate management charges being levied against them. As part of the package of actions a multi-disciplinary Task and Finish Group on Leasehold Reform was created to assist in this work.

Today we are writing to update Members on the publication of the reports from both the [Task and Finish Group for Leasehold Reform and the Unadopted Roads Taskforce](https://gov.wales/unadopted-roads-wales).

It is clear there are areas of significant overlap between the work of these two groups. Whilst they have approached the issue of unadopted roads and associated estate charges from different starting points they have shared some membership and sought to take advantage of opportunities for information sharing. The two groups have now completed their reports and reflected on how best to align their recommendations. Recognition of the need to now bring these two aspects of work together as a single work stream is reflected in this joint statement being made today.

The issues surrounding leasehold and unadopted roads are many and complex. In bringing together membership from a wide range of interested parties to advise us, we are in a stronger position to evaluate which actions might be most appropriate to address those concerns, which persist in the sector.

We will carefully consider the recommendations provided in both reports and subject them to appropriate analysis before deciding on how best to proceed.

Leasehold, as tenure, is governed by complex legislation and before deciding on the full suite of actions, we will also need to consider the findings from the Law Commission review, in the context of our devolved powers.

As the then Minister for Housing and Regeneration stated when launching the Task and Finish Group we will not shy away from taking legislative action if necessary. However, we can only properly consider the potential need for legislative change when we also have the benefit of the reports due from the Law Commission which we expect later this year.

In the meantime there are recommendations in the Unadopted Roads report which we are able to take forward immediately to reduce the likelihood of issues experienced to date being repeated. We will also consider the recommendations from the Leasehold Reform Task and Finish Group to identify those actions we can take forward with immediate effect drawing on the ‘tools’ we already have at our disposal.

We will provide further information to Members in the autumn.