



Good Practice Awards 2026

THE WINNERS

Lead Sponsors:



A word from our Sponsors



We're delighted to sponsor TPAS Cymru's Good Practice Awards Report 2026, which puts the achievements of residents in the spotlight.

The work TPAS Cymru does in making sure that the voices of residents are heard and celebrated is so important. This report highlights some of the new and innovative ways in which residents are helping to shape the services that matter to them.

This year sees the introduction of several new awards as well as the popular categories that focus on communities and services. These new awards recognise organisations and groups that are working to make sure tenants and residents' homes are safe and healthy and those contractors who put tenants and residents at the heart of how they plan and deliver their work.

Congratulations to everyone whose work is included in this best practice report.

I hope it will inspire more innovation and success stories for the future.

Anne Hinchey
Group Chief Executive,
Wales & West Housing



GOOD | GWOBRAU PRACTICE | ARFER AWARDS | DA 2026



Welcome to TPAS Cymru's 2026 Good Practice Awards Report, celebrating the exceptional achievements in tenant participation and engagement in Wales. This year's we highlighted innovative approaches and impactful projects which share new ideas and evidence of best practice.

We were excited to come together with everyone at our brand new venue in Cardiff to share good practice, with the goal of celebrating achievements within the sector and inspiring innovation.

The categories for 2026 were:

- Tenants Influencing Decision Making
- Engaging Tenants in Environmental Initiatives
- Involving Tenants in Designing/Reviewing Services
- Communities Supporting Communities
- Communication with Tenants and Residents
- Resident Support/Advice Programme
- Resident Engagement in Safe & Healthy Homes
- Tenant Focused Contractor
- Tenant of the Year

There were also **two special recognition awards** given out – one to celebrate the work of tenants/residents and another to recognise the work of a landlord.

In this booklet, we are sharing with you the winning entries and the judges top 3 in each category.

Thank you to the award nominators for providing the content for this report. We've added their contact details for each of the winning entries if you want to find out more about the projects.

Thank you again to all those involved, and we hope you enjoy reading the winning entries as much as the judges and we did.

Tenants Influencing Decision Making



WINNER

Hafod's Scrutiny Panel

For more information, contact: michelle.mcgregor@hafod.org.uk

Hafod's Scrutiny Panel is a clear example of how tenants are supported, empowered and trusted to influence key organisational decisions.

The Panel is not advisory in name only. It is a structured, respected and well-supported tenant body that has directly shaped decisions at Board level, influenced policies, improved communications, changed the way services are delivered and strengthened accountability across the organisation.

How tenants were supported and empowered to take part:

Tenants are empowered through a formal, open and transparent Scrutiny Panel with clear influence and strong links to both colleagues and the Board

How the Panel works

- Open recruitment, flexible approach and accessible to all tenants
- 7 members in total, including 2 new members recruited
- Meetings held 4 times a year, online, with one in-person planning session
- Hybrid access available to remove barriers to participation
- Clear quorum (3 members) so decisions are genuinely tenant-led
- Papers shared at least two weeks in advance, enabling informed challenge
- Structured agendas with dedicated time for:
 - Board feedback
 - Engagement updates
 - Open discussion and challenge

Empowerment in practice

- Tenants set scrutiny topics, based on what matters to tenants
- Panel members chair discussions, ask questions and request evidence of change
- Scrutiny outcomes are formally recorded through:
 - An action log
 - Board reports
 - Follow-up updates at subsequent meetings

The scale of tenant involvement over the last 12 months.

- 110 volunteer hours contributed
- 9 major scrutiny topics discussed
- 30 organisational decisions influenced
- 41 actions completed and 25 currently in progress

Support offered to enable tenants to participate:

Participation is supported in a practical, inclusive and proportionate way to ensure Scrutiny is meaningful rather than symbolic.

Practical Support

Inclusive participation is enabled through targeted support, including a monthly Wi-Fi contribution, loaned tablets with Teams access, flexible late-morning meetings with built-in breaks, transport assistance, and advance provision of clear, accessible information.

Skills, Confidence and Knowledge

A tailored Scrutiny training programme, supported by internal experts, strengthens knowledge, relationships, and efficiency – delivering £1,500 in savings reinvested elsewhere. Guest speakers provide insight across key areas including complaints, customer experience, repairs, decarbonisation, and rent setting.

Ongoing Support and Trust

Strong senior engagement and constructive relationships with colleagues and the Board empower tenants to contribute meaningfully, including speaking at conferences, supporting senior recruitment, and shaping corporate communications.

How tenant views influenced decisions and the difference made:

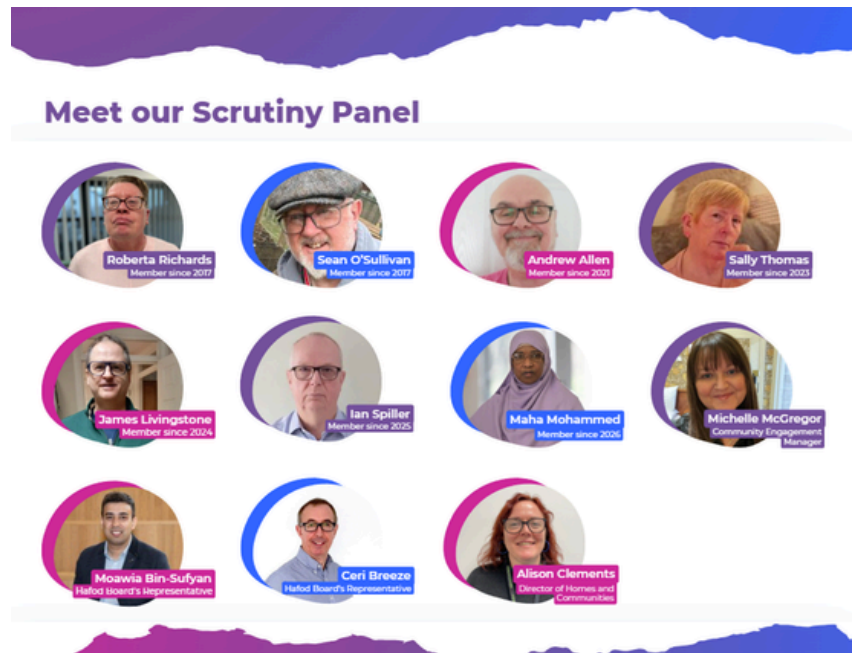
The Scrutiny Panel has delivered tangible, evidenced change, influencing how decisions are made, how services are delivered and how transparent the organisation is with customers.

Board engagement has improved through the introduction of a Scrutiny Panel designed feedback template, now embedded as standard practice. This has strengthened accountability, ensuring tenant challenge is visibly responded to and enhancing relationships between tenants and the Board.

Scrutiny has also delivered clear improvements in transparency, customer experience and communication. Changes to rent-setting communications, complaints reporting, and digital access have increased customer understanding, strengthened trust, and improved service standards. The Panel's wider influence has shaped community initiatives, policy development, and organisational practices, while members have contributed to recruitment, procurement, and external engagement – gaining national recognition and embedding the tenant voice in decision-making.

In summary, the scrutiny panel is a strong, confident and respected tenant body. This is tenant empowerment in practice not consultation, not tokenism, but real influence backed by action.

Learn more about Hafod's Scrutiny Panel here: <https://www.hafod.org.uk/homes-and-communities/get-involved/scrutiny-panel/>





Mystery Shopper Group (Tai Môn)

Contact: nikkijones@ynysmon.gov.uk

The Tai Môn Service Improvement Group demonstrates a strong, collaborative approach to co-production, bringing tenants and staff together to drive meaningful service improvements. In response to low satisfaction with repairs, the group led an independent mystery shopping exercise, gaining first-hand insight into the customer journey and producing a robust, evidence-based report with clear, practical recommendations. Many of these have since been implemented, including improvements to communication, staffing, digital processes, and policy transparency. As a result, services are now more accessible, responsive, and aligned with tenant needs, contributing to a measurable 4% increase in satisfaction with Repairs and Maintenance. This work highlights the tangible impact of listening to tenants and embedding their voice in service design and delivery.



Rent and Budget Setting (Merthyr Valleys Homes)

Contact: allison.soroko@mvhomes.org.uk

The Living Rent Policy demonstrates a strong, tenant-led approach to fairness and affordability, with rents linked to local incomes and shaped through co-design with the Democratic Body. Following a comprehensive 2025 review, informed by extensive tenant consultation and stakeholder engagement, the policy was updated to introduce a clearer rent structure and strengthen transparency around rent and service charges. Democratic Body led this process, balancing affordability with the need for investment, and ensuring tenant feedback directly influenced decisions. The result is a well-evidenced, adaptable approach that maintains high levels of perceived value and affordability, while reinforcing tenant influence in strategic decision-making.

Engaging Tenants in Environmental Initiatives



WINNER

Involving Tenants in Grŵp Cynefin's Low Carbon Retrofit Work

For more information, contact:

Menraucymunedol@grwpcynefin.org

During 2024–25, Grŵp Cynefin carried out retrofit work across a number of their homes to improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon footprint and improve the comfort of tenants' homes. The work included the installation of solar panels, air heat pumps and insulation, as a practical response to the climate crisis and the cost of living challenges facing tenants.

Before any retrofit work began, historical consultation workshops were held with staff and tenants as part of the preparation work for the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) 2023. In addition to energy efficiency, prioritization of work across the housing stock, health and safety, methods of carrying out the work, and the influence and choice of tenants were discussed. This background work laid a strong foundation for the retrofit programme, ensuring that decisions are based on tenants' experiences – not tenants without a voice, but tenants as partners in the project.

How tenants were engaged with and provided inclusive support:

Tenant engagement was a central element throughout the project. A wide range of methods were used to ensure inclusion and to reach tenants with different needs, including:

- face-to-face workshops with tenants and staff
- online questionnaires
- phone calls to tenants without digital access
- home visits by Tenant Auditors

Tenant Auditors played a key role in capturing honest feedback, ensuring less-heard tenant voices were included. In response to concerns about low carbon technologies, communications were improved through a revised, plain-language Q&A leaflet that clearly explains the retrofit process and its benefits. Follow-up support, including referrals to an energy warden service, was also introduced to help tenants feel confident and maximise energy efficiency gains.



Impact of the engagement and what it means for the future:

This approach to engagement has led to a positive and real impact on tenants' lives. Many have reported warmer homes, more efficient energy use and, in many cases, a reduction in energy bills. Very importantly, the work has contributed to the better wellbeing, dignity and confidence of tenants in their own homes.

The introduction of the Questions and Answers sheet has had a practical effect by reducing tenants' anxiety, improving understanding of the new technology, and increasing tenants' willingness to engage positively with the change to live more sustainably.

The impact of the work is also reflected in direct feedback from tenants, such as **Ms M's experience at Parc Aelas, Llangernyw:**

"I used to feel ashamed to invite people into the house because it was so cold. Since getting the new heating system, the home is much warmer and it has made a huge difference to my life. I am truly grateful."

This quote underlines that the project is more than technical improvements – it's about improving the quality of everyday life and ensuring that tenants feel proud and comfortable in their low carbon homes.



Lessons learned are being embedded as an ongoing process of listening, learning and improving, rather than a one-off exercise. As the retrofit programme continues into 2025/26, further engagement sessions are being held within local communities to gather feedback, understand tenant experiences, and refine how environmental initiatives are communicated. To ensure inclusivity, Tenant Auditors will also visit those unable to attend in person, ensuring all voices are heard.

Insights from this continued engagement, alongside resources such as the tenant Q&A, will help shape future retrofit and environmental programmes, build confidence in sustainable technologies, and encourage positive energy behaviours. This approach supports long-term carbon reduction while providing a strong model of good practice, demonstrating that meaningful tenant

involvement and continuous learning are key to delivering successful, sustainable communities.

In summary, this shows how environmental initiatives can succeed better when tenants are involved from the outset, when feedback is taken seriously, and when continuous learning underpins the move towards more sustainable communities.



Myddleton Avenue Growing Project (Denbighshire County Council)

Contact: Luisa.Citra@denbighshire.gov.uk

The Myddleton Avenue Community Garden is a powerful example of a grassroots, community-led initiative that has transformed an unused piece of land into a thriving, inclusive space at the heart of the neighbourhood. Driven by local residents and supported by partners, the project brought people together to design and create an accessible garden that promotes food growing, skills sharing, and social connection. Through regular sessions, strong volunteer leadership, and a focus on inclusion the garden has become a welcoming hub that reduces isolation, builds confidence, and strengthens community ties. The garden's success lies in the dedication and collaboration of its volunteers, who have created a safe and valued space shaped by local needs and lived experience. It has not only improved the physical environment but also revitalised community spirit, fostering friendships, supporting wellbeing, and reconnecting neighbours.



Transitioning Residents to Low-Carbon, Healthy Homes (Caerphilly County Borough Council)

Contact: kasliz@caerphilly.gov.uk

This approach places residents at the centre of delivering safe and healthy homes through clear communication, tailored support and practical interventions, particularly within older, more complex housing stock. Residents were actively engaged throughout retrofit works to understand how improvements such as insulation, ventilation and renewable systems enhanced safety, reduced damp and improved living conditions. A strong focus on inclusion, accessible communication and ongoing support has ensured all residents can engage effectively, with additional guidance on heating, ventilation and moisture management. This has led to measurable improvements, including warmer, healthier homes, reduced damp and mould, lower energy costs and increased tenant confidence.

Involving Tenants in Designing/Reviewing Services



WINNER

Fix It Together: Trivallis' Co-Produced Tenant-Led Repair Diagnostic Tool

For more information, contact: Kacey.Davies@trivallis.co.uk

The Trivallis Repairs Working Group sits within a wider, well-established tenant involvement infrastructure. Members actively engage with the broader tenant community through a sustained programme of relationship-based engagement, including fun days, door-knocking, community clean-ups, drop-ins, surveys, and structured tenant meetings. This ensures that insight is not drawn from a small or self-selecting group, but reflects the lived experience of tenants across different communities, ages, household types, and circumstances.

Tenants, drawing on their lived experiences, identified consistent barriers to accessing repairs services, particularly for those balancing work, caring responsibilities or limited availability during standard hours. Through ongoing engagement, it became clear that traditional reporting methods were no longer effective or accessible for many residents. Rather than simply highlighting these issues, tenants within the Repairs Working Group took an active role in shaping solutions, proposing a digital self-service repairs tool to improve accessibility. This marked a shift from consultation to true co-production, with tenants working collaboratively with staff and influencing key decisions around service design and investment.

Tenants continued to play a central role in designing and refining the system, ensuring it reflected real-life needs, such as the ability to upload photos and videos to improve clarity and first-time fix rates. They also led an inclusive testing approach through hands-on workshops, involving residents of varying ages and digital confidence levels to ensure the tool was accessible and user-friendly. Working closely with Repairs and IT teams, tenants helped shape a system grounded in lived experience, fostering a collaborative culture where their expertise was valued equally and resulting in a more effective, inclusive and tenant-focused service



This service improvement is a clear result of tenant-led insight and co-design, with every aspect shaped by lived experience to better meet real needs. Tenants successfully influenced more flexible appointment options that reflect everyday commitments, while also ensuring all system communication is clear, supportive and accessible by replacing technical language with plain English. They removed barriers to engagement by challenging and eliminating the “recharge warning,” creating a more reassuring and tenant-friendly process. Additionally, tenant-driven features such as photo and video uploads have significantly improved repair diagnostics, enabling better-prepared visits, more effective triaging, increased first-time fix rates and fewer repeat appointments, ultimately enhancing the overall quality and efficiency of the service.

The introduction of the tenant-led digital repairs app and diagnostic tool has delivered clear operational improvements while also strengthening tenant empowerment and confidence. It has enabled more flexible, self-selected appointment booking, reduced reliance on call centres, lowered missed appointments, and improved first-time fix rates through better diagnostic information, all contributing to greater efficiency and early cost savings. At the same time, tenants report a stronger sense of control and ease in managing repairs, with feedback highlighting the system’s simplicity and convenience. Although still in early rollout, uptake is increasing, digital self-service is reducing pressure on traditional channels, and both tenant satisfaction and confidence in the service are continuing to rise.

As reflected by the Head of Repairs:

“Tenant feedback didn’t just influence the service, it defined it. Their input gave us confidence that this was something residents would genuinely use and benefit from.”

This statement reflects a wider organisational shift: tenants are no longer contributors to feedback loops; they are co-authors of service design.”

The Trivallis tenant-led digital repairs system has set a new standard for accessible, efficient and customer-focused services, demonstrating the power of co-production in delivering meaningful, lasting improvements for both tenants and the organisation.





Our Garden, Our Choice (Valleys to Coast)

Contact: cassie.jennings@v2c.org.uk

This initiative transformed grounds maintenance across seven community living schemes by bringing the service in-house and placing 178 customers at the centre of decision-making. Moving away from a one-size-fits-all contract, the organisation responded to tenant feedback that outdoor spaces were inaccessible and lacked purpose, particularly for those with mobility or health needs. Through direct engagement and collaboration, customers helped shape a more personalised, flexible service delivered by a dedicated in-house team, building trust and creating gardens that promote social connection, wellbeing and pride. The change has also delivered better value for money through reduced service charges and improved transparency, while early results show significant improvements in accessibility, appearance and customer satisfaction. Ultimately, the initiative has not only enhanced maintenance standards but restored a sense of ownership, dignity and community, demonstrating the powerful impact of customer-led service design.



“Make our House a Home” Co-Creating Repairs Promise (Tai Tarian)

Tai Tarian’s Repairs Promise was co-created through a highly innovative and inclusive process that brought together tenants, staff and a co-design facilitator to reshape the reactive repairs service based on lived experience. Through a series of engaging workshops, creative activities such as songwriting, and interactive methods like a pub quiz, tenants were empowered to share honest feedback and define what a fair, responsive and high-quality repairs service should look like. The process prioritised diverse participation and relationship-building, with tenants not only influencing but directly shaping outcomes, including a revised repairs policy and future transformation priorities. The result is a clear, tenant-informed Repairs Promise that sets shared expectations around quality, communication, safety and respect, while improving clarity on repair categories and timeframes. The initiative has strengthened trust between tenants and the organisation, demonstrated the value of genuine co-production, and is already influencing wider transformation work. Ongoing engagement through Tenant Voice groups ensures continued tenant oversight, embedding a culture where listening, collaboration and continuous improvement drive better services and stronger relationships.

Communities Supporting Communities



WINNER

MenShed Tech Club & Hedyn Communities / Digital Services Team

For more information, contact: Nathan.davies@hedyn.wales

Newport MenShed has played a vital role in tackling digital exclusion across Newport and surrounding communities through its Tech Club, supporting residents to gain access to technology, digital confidence and essential online services. Working in partnership with Hedyn, the MenShed has enabled surplus laptops to be repurposed and redistributed in a way that delivers real, practical benefit to individuals and communities experiencing digital poverty.

Over the last two years, Newport MenShed's Tech Club has supported the repurposing and redistribution of over 180 laptops. Most recently, a further 200 devices have been prepared and are ready for repurposing, with planned distribution across Hedyn's operating areas. Newport MenShed's model is rooted in accessibility, trust and peer-led support. Through their work, they have supported hundreds of individuals access:

- Online health services
- Benefits and DWP communication
- Online banking and bill payments
- Social connection through email and social media
- Employment, training and learning opportunities



MenShed provides:

- A safe, non-judgemental environment to learn and ask questions
- Hands-on, practical support from skilled volunteers
- Opportunities for men to contribute their expertise while reducing isolation

Through partnership with Hedyn's Communities and Digital Services teams, the MenShed receives laptops that would otherwise be decommissioned. Tech Club volunteers refurbish these devices, ensuring they are safe, functional and suitable for everyday use before being gifted to individuals or community groups.

This approach removes multiple barriers at once, including:

- Financial – devices are free to recipients
- Confidence-based – support is peer-led and informal
- Access-based – devices are placed within familiar community settings

With continued partnership working, Newport MenShed aims to:

- Expand device repurposing across wider communities
- Increase the number of volunteers trained to support digital inclusion
- Support community groups to act as local access points for digital support
- Continue working with Hedyn to tackle digital poverty at scale

Partnership Working & Sustainability

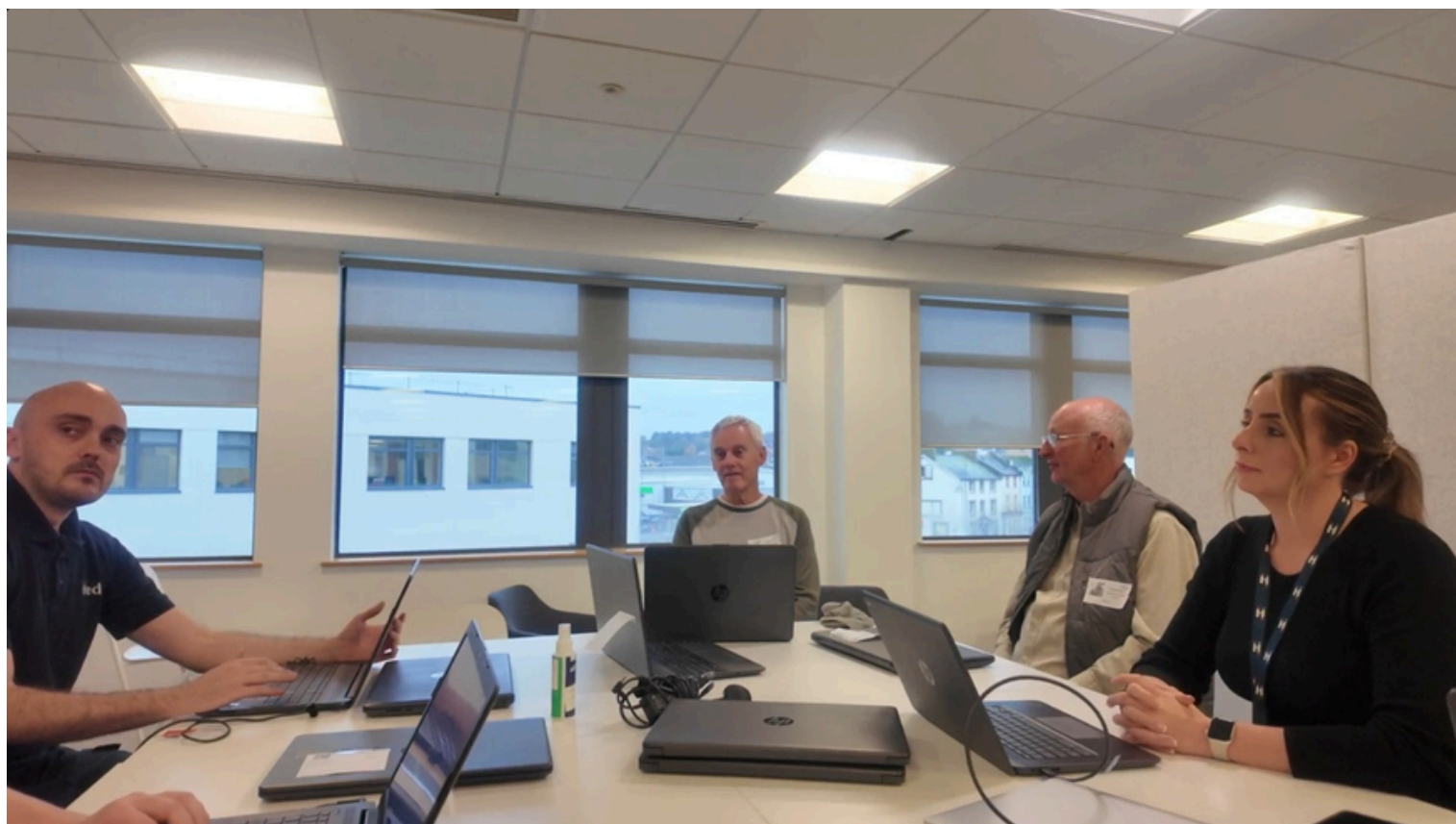
While Newport MenShed leads delivery on the ground, partnership working has been key to sustaining and scaling impact. Hedyn supports the initiative by identifying need across its five local authority areas and supplying surplus laptops for refurbishment. Additional partners such as Good Things Foundation provide SIM cards, devices and training resources, helping ensure people not only receive equipment but also connectivity and skills. Links with community centres, warm hubs and food banks further extend reach.

This collaborative model ensures:

- Skills, resources and assets are shared effectively
- Community organisations remain at the centre of delivery
- The approach is sustainable, scalable and replicable

Newport MenShed's Tech Club demonstrates the power of community led action in addressing the digital divide. By combining practical skills, volunteer commitment and strong partnerships, MenShed has enabled hundreds of people to access technology, services and opportunities that improve their everyday lives.

This initiative shows how community organisations, when supported and trusted, can play a leading role in delivering inclusive, impactful solutions ensuring no one is left behind in a digital world.





Penrhys Community Volunteers (Trivallis)

Contact: Jen.oharajakeway@trivallis.co.uk

The volunteers at Penrhys Church represent an exceptional, long-standing community effort, providing vital practical, social and emotional support tailored to local needs. Through services such as a food bank, low-cost café, clothing and furniture provision, youth and wellbeing activities, and one-to-one outreach, they have created a trusted, inclusive hub that supports hundreds of residents each week. Their work has reduced hardship, strengthened community connections, and ensured vulnerable individuals are not isolated, particularly during a period of regeneration. By building strong partnerships and enabling residents to shape local decisions, they have sustained community spirit, increased confidence and opportunity, and demonstrated the powerful impact of a truly community-led approach.



Bumps and Jumps Project (Grŵp Cynefin & HWB Dinbych)

Contact: Megan.moores@hwbdinbych.org

The Actif Gogledd Cymru programme has empowered young people in Upper Denbigh to lead meaningful community change by removing barriers to physical activity. Through youth-led engagement, a group of boys identified the lack of safe cycling spaces and, with community support, designed and delivered the Bumps and Jumps project, resulting in a new, well-used pump track. Their involvement in every stage built confidence, leadership skills and strong partnerships across local organisations. The project has improved safety, increased activity levels, and created a lasting community asset that continues to bring people together and support wider initiatives such as bike maintenance training and accessible cycling opportunities.

Communication with Tenants and Residents

WINNER



'Cartref' - Tai Tarian's bespoke broadsheet for tenants

For more information, contact: Polly.oliver@taitarian.co.uk

Cartref, launched in spring 2022, was developed with tenants at its core, building on a long-standing commitment to co-design communication methods with them. Tai Tarian's communications team had already embraced innovative use of social media, particularly during and after the pandemic, recognising the growing reliance on digital platforms. This approach, led by Rachel Gardiner-James, helped build strong trust and engagement with tenants and even informed sector-wide learning through seminars.



However, tenant feedback and insights from initiatives such as the Tenant Academy and surveys highlighted ongoing digital barriers for many residents, particularly those over 55. During the Covid-19 pandemic, "Safe and Well calls" further emphasised that printed materials remained highly valued by this group. As a result, there was a clear need to ensure that essential information and positive community stories could reach all tenants, regardless of digital access.

In response, Tai Tarian committed to delivering a printed publication to every tenant four times a year, aligning with its values of being bold, kind and fair. The development of *Cartref* was also shaped by ongoing professional learning, with the communications team drawing on best practice from sector organisations such as TPAS Cymru and CHC to ensure the initiative reflected both tenant needs and wider industry insights.

Tai Tarian's *Cartref* builds on a strong legacy of customer-focused storytelling established through *Grapevine*, a trusted printed publication. Insights from tenant engagement showed that, despite the growth of digital channels, printed communications remained valuable across all age groups. This was evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, when print played a vital role in sharing essential updates and community stories. Rachel's editorial experience and tenant insight helped shape 'Cartref' as a modern continuation of this approach.

Nia Singleton, Head of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement at Tai Tarian said this:

“We wanted to cut through (social media) and create something fresh in print format. Going old school and printing a broadsheet just for Tai Tarian tenants was a really exciting way to reconnect with customers, raise awareness of our services, share need to know information and the stories of their community”



Cartref's aim was to reconnect with tenants and provide both meaningful and practical content. It combined tenant stories, organisational updates, and accessible guidance with engaging features such as recipes, puzzles, and competitions. This approach reflected a commitment to wellbeing and ensured the publication was something tenants would keep and revisit, rather than a disposable communications.

The decision to prioritise print also responded to the challenges of digital overload. By creating a high-quality, physical publication, Tai Tarian was able to cut through competing messages, strengthen engagement, and showcase community achievements. The broadsheet format supports clear storytelling and reinforces the organisation's connection with tenants.

Accessibility and continuous improvement are central to *Cartref's* success. The publication has been shaped by equality assessments, RNIB-reviewed design, and ongoing tenant feedback. Surveys and focus groups consistently highlight its value, while suggestions from tenants – such as clearer navigation and more tenant-led content – are actively incorporated. Alongside this, Cartref plays an important role in challenging stigma by celebrating tenant achievements and promoting pride in the Tai Tarian community.

Cartref instils a sense of pride in being part of the Tai Tarian community and it will continue to use it in conjunction with other customer, internal and public channels to advocate for the positive impact of social housing on the personal, community and wider level.

Read some examples of *Cartref* through the following link:
<https://www.taitarian.co.uk/publications/cartref/>



Community Connects Us Newsletter (Cynon Taf Community Housing)

Contact: cbradwick@cynon-taf.org.uk

Community Connects Us has become far more than a newsletter, evolving into a trusted, tenant-shaped platform that strengthens connection, pride and engagement across communities. Designed using tenant feedback and even named through a competition, it uses clear, friendly language and accessible formats to ensure everyone can engage, whether in print or digitally via QR links. Each edition combines uplifting community stories with practical, easy-to-understand guidance on important topics such as home safety and wellbeing, helping tenants feel informed and supported. By showcasing real experiences and promoting local activities, it has increased participation, encouraged earlier access to services, and built stronger relationships between tenants and the organisation. Ultimately, the newsletter has embedded itself in community life, giving tenants a voice, celebrating their achievements, and fostering a greater sense of belonging and trust.



Connect (Hafod)

Contact: sian.price@hafod.org.uk

Hafod's *Connect* eNewsletter demonstrates effective, customer-led communication that is accessible, responsive and evidence-based. Shaped directly by tenant feedback, *Connect* was recently redesigned to better reflect how tenants access and consume information, the majority on their mobile devices, resulting in shorter reading times, clearer content and significantly improved engagement. With a 20.2% open rate in the last year, increased click-throughs, and tenants influencing change, *Connect* shows measurable effectiveness and clear impact, supporting transparency, awareness of services and stronger relationships between tenants and Hafod.

Resident Support/Advice Programme

WINNER



Working Denbighshire Community Housing Employment and Skills Mentor

For more information, contact:

Melanie.a.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk

Denbighshire's Housing and Community Service works in partnership with tenants, residents and local organisations to strengthen resilience and improve wellbeing across communities. A key part of this approach is Working Denbighshire, the Council's strategic programme to reduce poverty and support residents aged 16+ who are at risk of, or experiencing, financial hardship. The programme recognises the strong link between poverty, health, and life opportunities, and is built on the vision that all residents can realise their potential and live better lives.



Central to this approach is the understanding that employment is a major determinant of health and wellbeing. Secure, fair work not only provides financial stability but also improves mental health, reduces stress, and promotes social inclusion. Working Denbighshire focuses on helping residents access good-quality employment that supports long-term stability, while also benefiting families and communities. For social housing tenants in particular, this approach helps create healthier, more sustainable living environments and breaks cycles of disadvantage.

To strengthen this work, the Housing Service funded a dedicated Community Housing Mentor within the Working Denbighshire team. This role provides tailored, person-centred support to social housing residents, many of whom face complex barriers such as health conditions, low confidence, caring responsibilities, or long-term unemployment. The service offers holistic support including one-to-one mentoring, wellbeing interventions, skills training, and access to wider services, ensuring individuals receive help that reflects their specific needs and circumstances.

The programme takes a whole-system, partnership-based approach, connecting residents with health services, financial advice, childcare, community groups, and employment opportunities. It also actively engages residents through community events, outreach activity, and initiatives such as BAROD wellbeing sessions, helping to build confidence, reduce isolation, and encourage participation. This joined-up model ensures that residents receive the right support at the right time, addressing both employability and wider life challenges.

The impact of this work over the past year has been significant. More than 260 social housing residents have been supported, with many reporting improved wellbeing, confidence, and readiness for employment. Over 120 individuals received one-to-one mentoring, leading to 23 entering employment, while others progressed through training, education, or skills development. These outcomes demonstrate that even small steps can have life-changing effects, strengthening households, improving community resilience, and delivering long-term social and economic benefits.

Collaboration between Working Denbighshire and the Housing Team represents a highly effective and strategic approach to improving outcomes. Social housing providers are uniquely placed to engage residents who may be furthest from the labour market, offering trusted relationships, local insight, and access to communities that traditional services can struggle to reach.

Geoff Davies, Lead Officer for Community Housing said:



“The Housing partnership with Working Denbighshire has brought significant impacts for tenants of social housing through the dedicated support. The impact on households has been life changing but also the relationship has helped Housing staff understand the employability issues faced by our tenants, including the impact on their mental health and confidence to thrive in their community.”



Torfaen Floating Housing Support (Stori Cymru)

Contact: Sophie.williams@storicymru.org.uk

Stori has delivered over 30 years of trusted, person-centred housing support in Torfaen, with a recent focus on addressing gaps for Deaf and hard of hearing residents through a specialist British Sign Language (BSL) inclusive service. This approach has significantly improved tenancy sustainment, financial stability, and independence by enabling clearer communication, better access to benefits, and reduced reliance on others for interpretation. It has also enhanced safety through tailored home adaptations and supported wellbeing by reducing isolation and increasing participation in community and employability activities. Critically, Stori provides unique, accessible support for Deaf survivors of domestic abuse, enabling safe disclosure and ongoing engagement. The service is highly inclusive, addressing wider barriers such as digital exclusion and discrimination, while delivering culturally aware, flexible support. Growing demand and strong community endorsement highlight its impact, which is further strengthened through workforce development and organisational commitment to embedding Deaf inclusion across services.



Managing Money and Tackling Debt (Cardiff County Council)

Contact: Jack.Slowinski2@cardiff.gov.uk

The Welfare Liaison Team provides comprehensive, one-to-one financial support to Cardiff Council tenants, helping them manage budgeting, debt, and maximise income through accessible, community-based services. In 2025/26, the team supported over 2,200 tenants, identifying more than £3.5 million in weekly benefits and additional savings, enabling individuals to better meet essential living costs during the cost-of-living crisis. Through inclusive outreach - including home visits, community events, and targeted engagement with older residents - the service ensures support reaches those most in need. By addressing financial hardship, the team not only alleviates poverty but also strengthens community resilience, encouraging peer referrals and greater engagement with support services. Case studies demonstrate life-changing outcomes, from securing significant backdated payments to preventing debt escalation and improving wellbeing. Overall, the service acts as a vital lifeline, reducing financial stress, improving stability, and empowering tenants to manage their finances with greater confidence.

Resident Engagement in Safe & Healthy Homes

WINNER



Personal Evacuation Plan (PEEP) project at St Tydfil's Court

For more information, contact: Bethan.parry@mvhomes.org.uk

The tragic events at Grenfell Tower in 2017 remain etched in all our memories. They were a stark and devastating reminder of the consequences when residents do not feel safe in their own homes. At Merthyr Valleys Homes, that legacy has strengthened their unwavering commitment to one clear principle: every resident deserves not only to be safe, but to feel safe in the place they call home.



From the outset, collaboration between South Wales Fire and Rescue Service (SWFRS) and Merthyr Valleys Homes has been integral. Through opening doors at St Tydfil's Court, inviting operational fire crews to carry out familiarisation visits so that any team responding to an emergency would already know the building, the residents, and the risks. This partnership deepened when Jason Lamport from SWFRS's Business Fire Safety Team approached MVH to prepare for the forthcoming Welsh Housing Bill, which would introduce stricter requirements for Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in blocks of flats. Merthyr Valley Homes were proud to be selected as the flagship housing association in Wales, working alongside SWFRS to develop a practical, resident-focused strategy that could be rolled out nationally.

Resident engagement has been at the heart of this work. Quarterly meetings bring residents and SWFRS together to talk openly about fire safety, concerns, and lived experiences. Local fire crews continued to carry out regular familiarisation visits, embedding strong, trusted relationships. On the 20th of June, this commitment culminated in a full-scale live exercise to test and shape the new PEEP arrangements in real conditions. Tenant volunteers took part in simulated rescues, with local paramedic teams on standby to mirror a real emergency response. This powerful, collaborative event ensured that the proposed approach was not just compliant on paper, but workable, humane, and focused on protecting lives.

Testimony from Jason Lamport (Group Manager |High-Rise Team | South Wales Fire Service HQ):

“We’re proud to work with Merthyr Valleys Homes, where Bethan and her team have strengthened fire safety at St Tydfil’s Court. Crews have delivered safety talks, exercises and helped refine all-Wales high-rise evacuation procedures –with residents even supporting as volunteers. This year will also see a pilot of our High-Rise Team’s PEEPs initiative, helping identify vulnerable residents and prepare for future legislation. Thanks to their commitment, we’re better able to keep our communities safe.”

Through partnership, engagement and courage to lead, Merthyr Valleys Homes has helped shape a safer future for residents – not only within their community, but potentially across Wales.





Pen Dinas: Turning lived experience into safer homes (Trivallis)

Contact: richard.evans@trivallis.co.uk

At Pen Dinas, fire safety improvements were shaped by tenants' lived experience rather than enforcement alone. After FRA inspections found communal areas blocked by items like children's bikes, teams engaged residents directly and discovered the root issue was a lack of storage. Working collaboratively across housing, estates and other teams, underused assets - seven empty garages - were repurposed, with six allocated to households and one converted into shared bike storage. This co-designed approach cleared evacuation routes, improved safety, reduced stress for tenants, and strengthened trust, with residents feeling heard and supported. The project highlights how starting with lived experience and cross-team collaboration can deliver practical, sustainable solutions, with potential to expand across other underutilised assets in the housing stock.



Safe & Healthy Homes Initiative (Hafod)

Contact: james.loy@hafod.org.uk

Hafod's Safe & Healthy Homes initiative has installed 900 Aico HomeLINK Solutions to shift from reactive repairs to proactive resident empowerment, tackling damp, mould and fuel poverty through real-time environmental monitoring and a user-friendly app. By prioritising inclusive engagement - clear communication, hands-on support and digital inclusion - residents are actively involved in managing their home environments, receiving tailored advice and gaining confidence in their home's health. The data enables Hafod to identify risks early, intervene before issues escalate, and target support for vulnerable households, while strengthening trust and collaboration with residents. With potential for predictive maintenance and wider sector learning, the project offers a scalable model for using technology to improve health, wellbeing and housing outcomes across Wales.

Tenant Focused Contractor

WINNER



Llanw (A wholly-owned subsidiary of Valleys to Coast)

For more information, contact: lizzie.conway@v2c.org.uk

Launched in April 2024, Llanw was created to transform Valleys to Coast's reactive repairs department into a dynamic, customer-centric property service. Driven by a need to improve historically low tenant satisfaction, Llanw was built from the ground up with a "commercial engine and a social heart". Over the past two years, service delivery, driving post-repair satisfaction from 65% up to an impressive 95%.

Putting Tenants at the Centre

To improve transparency and trust, Llanw introduced "Track our trades" software, giving customers real-time updates and estimated arrival times via text link. A strong focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion ensures services are accessible to all, with adaptations such as clear verbal communication and safer working practices for visually impaired tenants. This commitment extends to the future, with EDI embedded into policies and an assessment framework for contractors to ensure consistent, high-quality service for every customer.

Llanw was designed around the lived experiences of its customers, shaping both its identity and operations. Before launching, tenants were asked what they wanted from a repairs service, with their priorities (politeness, reliability and consistency) inspiring the name "Llanw" (Welsh for 'tide'), symbolising dependable, continuous service. In response to feedback, the trades team's working week was extended to 40 hours, with evening and weekend appointments introduced so the service fits around tenants' lives rather than the other way around.



Listening and Responding

Using monthly insights from 80 tenant surveys via Acuity, delays in repair timeframes and communication were identified, responding by restructuring our business support service. This enabled faster logging of follow-on work, increased outbound calls to book repairs, and overall improved communication with tenants. Alongside this, the complaints process was strengthened, reducing complaints by over 100 through regular root cause analysis, allowing for trends to be identified, support staff, and prevent repeat issues.

Llanw's approach is highly responsive and customer-led. Every repair triggers a text survey, and dissatisfied customers are contacted directly through 'Feedback Friday' to resolve issues and understand root causes. This then prompts immediate learning, such as reinforcing clean-up standards with operatives. Services have also adapted based on tenant feedback, such as simplifying phone systems after customers found them overly complex. This demonstrates a clear commitment to listening, learning and continuously refining services to better meet customer needs.

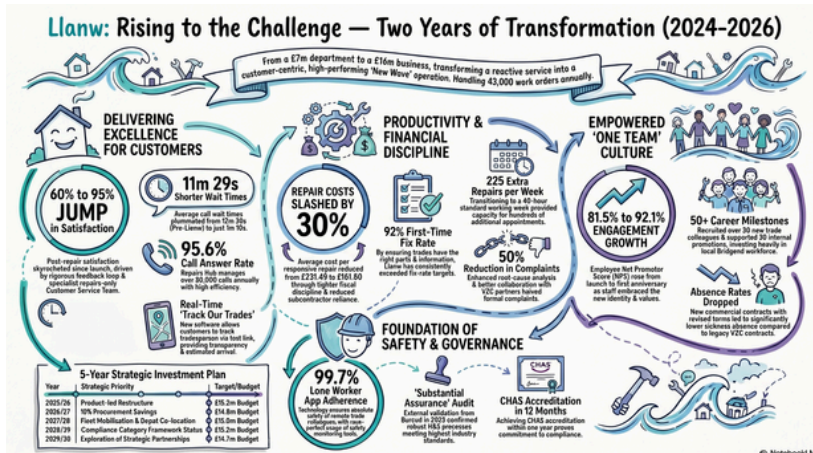
Positive Tenant Experience

Llanw has improved service delivery by prioritising clear communication, respect, and responsiveness, achieving a 95% customer satisfaction rate and a 92% first-time fix rate. To tackle repair backlogs, dedicated Scheduling Assistants proactively contact tenants to arrange and confirm appointments, while a new way of working has reduced average call wait times to just one

minute. The team also ensures no customer is overlooked by returning all abandoned calls the same day, creating a more accessible and reliable service experience.

The service has also become more inclusive and customer-focused. The addition of a Welsh-speaking team member enables customers to report repairs in their preferred language, improving understanding and comfort. Meanwhile, innovations such as "Track our trades" and post-repair text surveys have enhanced transparency and feedback, transforming the overall customer journey and reinforcing Llanw's commitment to continuous improvement.

Llanw has transformed repairs services by placing customer experience at the centre, using resident feedback to shape its approach, extend working hours, and introduce innovative tools like real-time tracking and proactive scheduling. Through strong communication, inclusive practices, and continuous service improvements driven by data and engagement, Llanw has reduced wait times, improved accessibility, and ensured services adapt to tenants' needs.



Find out more information here: <https://www.llanw.wales>

Tenant of the Year



WINNER – GENERAL NEEDS

Claire Ryan - Hafod

For more information, contact: sian.price@hafod.org.uk



Outstanding Community Volunteer

Hafod tenant Claire Ryan has demonstrated outstanding dedication by establishing and running the Barry Warm Space at Barry Rugby Club, providing a welcoming environment for those who may feel isolated or vulnerable. When a previous initiative ended due to lack of funding, Claire and her partner Les took it upon themselves to create a new space, starting with just £20 and securing support from the rugby club. Through their efforts, they have built a volunteer-led service offering food, warmth and companionship to the local community.

Despite operating without core funding, Claire continues to run the Warm Space twice weekly, carefully managing costs and seeking support wherever possible. With backing from organisations such as Hafod and local partners, her unwavering commitment has ensured the project's sustainability, reflecting her strong belief in supporting others and strengthening community connections.

Making a real difference

Claire's commitment has had a profound and lasting impact on the tenant and wider community. Claire is passionate about the area she grew up in and would love to bring back some of the neighbourhood spirit she feels has been lost a bit, when neighbours used to all know each other.

The Warm Space now supports around 65 people each week, offering not just food and warmth, but companionship, reassurance and a sense of belonging. For many attendees, it is a vital lifeline. Strangers have attended and became friends, some now even going on holiday together! Beyond the weekly sessions, Claire has led additional initiatives during challenging times, particularly over winter and school holidays. She organises discreet food parcels during the Christmas holidays for families who may struggle when free school meals are unavailable. These parcels are provided without names, forms or judgement, ensuring people can access support with dignity.

Claire has played a key role in bringing her community together through the Warm Space, strengthening connections between veterans, local care homes, the rugby club and residents, and creating opportunities for meaningful relationships and mutual support. One powerful example is Howie, a resident with complex needs, who through the hub reconnected with the veterans' community and was surprised on his birthday by former commanding officers—an emotional and memorable moment. Through initiatives like this, Claire has reduced isolation, expanded informal support networks, and helped rebuild a strong sense of community and belonging.

A space for everyone

Inclusivity is at the heart of everything Claire does. She is highly sensitive to the diverse circumstances people face and works hard to ensure the Warm Space is a non-judgemental, welcoming and safe space for everyone. Claire has designed services to remove stigma wherever possible. Food parcels are unbranded and anonymous, people can send children to collect support if they feel uncomfortable, and no-one is ever asked to justify why they need help. She adapts her approach to suit individuals, listens carefully, and treats everyone with warmth and respect.

The Warm Space welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds, including tenants, families, older people and veterans. Claire actively fosters partnership working with local organisations, charities, businesses and housing providers to ensure support reaches as many people as possible and reflects the needs of the whole community.

Claire's inclusive, compassionate leadership has created a space for people to feel safe, to connect, talk and belong.

Hear from Claire directly : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1OncsJ_0M_8





Aiden Moffitt (Monmouthshire Housing Association)

Contact:

Aiden.moffitt@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk

Aiden demonstrated outstanding commitment and dedication over more than five years of active tenant engagement, consistently working in partnership with staff to ensure tenant voices are heard at all levels, including governance and Board discussions. Through sustained leadership, national and local involvement, and their role on the Stonewall Housing Accreditation Panel, they have influenced housing practice and strengthened inclusivity across the sector. Their efforts have made a tangible difference by shaping key service areas such as community safety, repairs and tenant satisfaction, while fostering trust, transparency and collaboration between tenants and providers. Deeply committed to inclusivity, Aiden actively champions equality, mental health awareness and the needs of under-represented groups, ensuring services are accessible and tenant-focused. They amplify less-heard voices, support fellow tenants to build confidence and engagement, and maintain a strong community presence, ultimately improving outcomes and opportunities for tenants and communities alike.



Danielle Close (Cynon Taf Community Housing)

Contact: cbradwick@cynon-taf.org.uk

Danielle is an exceptional role model and a genuine asset to her community and CTCHG whose dedication, lived experience insight, and passion for supporting others have made a significant and lasting impact across her community and CTCHG. Her journey from a participant in the Optimised Retrofit Programme to a confident and influential tenant leader exemplifies commitment, growth, and genuine community spirit. Her personal growth has been inspiring; within a short period, she has developed into a confident, knowledgeable and influential tenant leader whose contribution has had a tangible impact across CTCHG. She embodies dedication, compassion and authenticity. She supports others without judgement, amplifies the voices of those who are seldom heard, and continues to inspire tenants to take part in shaping local services. Danielle has already achieved so much, and her potential continues to grow. Danielle embodies what it means to be a tenant leader: empathetic, knowledgeable, committed, and driven by a genuine desire to help others. Her impact has strengthened CTCHG's engagement culture, empowered tenants across her community, and created positive outcomes that will continue long into the future.

Tenant of the Year



WINNER – SUPPORTED LIVING

Richie Horrigan – First Choice Housing Association

For more information, contact: eveexley@fcha.org.uk / laurapickering@fcha.org.uk



Tenant Advisory Group

Since joining FCHA's Tenant Advisory Group at its launch in March 2024, Richie has shown exceptional dedication, quickly stepping into the role of co-Chair through his natural leadership, kindness and passion for advocacy. He has maintained full attendance, independently participating in meetings and ensuring they run smoothly, while creating an inclusive, engaging environment tailored to the diverse needs of members. Richie plays a key role in communicating tenant perspectives by confidently recording clear, concise video updates for the Board of Management and recently delivered a professional and impactful presentation directly to them.

FCHA interviews

Richie has also helped to inform FCHA's recruitment process. To date, Richie has supported with the employment of 8 new members of staff, 3 of whom were board members. His role in the interview process has been to engage in a more social interview with the candidates prior to their formal interview questions. He welcomes them to the office and has a conversation with them to determine whether he feels they are a good organisational fit in respect of their views, personality and their approach to engaging with someone with a Learning Disability. He prepares his own questions and conversation starters and, whilst gathering the information he needs, Richie's approach puts interviewees at ease. Richie provides his feedback on each candidate to the interview panel who hugely value his input. In doing this, Richie is mindful that he is representing all of First Choice tenants. Richie's perspective has genuinely influenced decision making on recruitment at all levels of the organisation, all way up to the appointment of new FCHA Board members.

Quality Checker Role

Keen to embark on new challenges, in addition to co-Chairing the Tenant Advisory Group and supporting FCHA's interview process, Richie also volunteered himself for a pilot of the new Quality Checker role. Richie has taken a proactive and professional approach to visiting new properties and speaking directly with new tenants, ensuring their voices are heard and that any issues are identified early. His friendly and approachable manner puts tenants at ease, allowing honest feedback that helps improve standards across the organisation. Richie constantly shows dedication, reliability, and a genuine commitment to supporting others. He is doing an excellent job within this role and has made a meaningful impact, setting a great example of positive tenant engagement.

RichieFest

Richie approaches all the above with tenacity, enthusiasm and drive. This energy extends to Richie's active social life in his local community. Richie has become quite the legend on Cardiff's music scene; in 2025, he celebrated attending 100 gigs in a year, supporting independent venues and up-coming musicians. Richie is well known for his involvement with Gig Buddies Cymru, serving as a role model for so many people to get out and about doing more of what they love. With this passion in mind, Richie applied to FCHA's Community Involvement Grant, asking for funding to host his own live music event to raise money for the Gig Buddies charity. His fantastic application was successful and Richie got to work in securing a venue accessible for people with disabilities, photographer, videographer, merch, musicians and bands. He called this RichieFest, which he hopes to host again. Owing to Richie's visibility in Cardiff's music scene and his natural charm and charisma, many of the professionals and musicians involved in RichieFest did not charge or offered a reduced rate. As this resulted in saving some of the Community Involvement Grant he'd been awarded, Richie used this towards providing free tickets to people with disabilities and support needs, wanting to make the night as inclusive as possible.



Richie has made an exceptional contribution to First Choice Housing Association through his leadership, dedication and genuine commitment to representing tenant voices, and drive towards making things more inclusive and accessible.

Special Recognition: Landlord



Compassionate Communication Through Crisis - Monmouthshire Housing Association

For more information, contact:

Michele.Morgan@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk

In November 2025, devastating floods hit Monmouthshire, affecting the whole community and displacing residents from their homes with little or no warning. MHA's response to this crisis demonstrated how clear, compassionate, timely and multi-channel communication, combined with strong in-person presence, can make a life-changing difference to tenants.

Recognising that many affected tenants were older or had additional needs, communication prioritised direct, face-to-face engagement, with staff deployed immediately to provide reassurance, practical support and clear information in accessible, empathetic language. Door-to-door visits, wellbeing checks and a strong on-the-ground presence ensured tenants could access help quickly, while written information and assigned Single Points of Contact provided consistency and clarity. Alongside this, digital updates and coordinated messaging ensured information remained accurate, timely and accessible, with communication adapting as tenants' circumstances evolved.

This approach proved highly effective, providing immediate reassurance and ensuring all tenants were accounted for, safely relocated and supported throughout their recovery. Strong partnership working and ongoing communication enabled practical outcomes, including securing long-term accommodation, accessing financial support and replacing essential belongings. Importantly, MHA's compassionate and transparent communication helped tenants navigate distressing situations with dignity, rebuild confidence and maintain trust in their landlord. The experience has also driven organisational learning, reinforcing the value of relationship-based communication and strengthening future emergency response, while setting a benchmark for compassionate, tenant-focused communication in times of crisis.



Special Recognition: Tenants/Residents



Gower Davies Court Residents Association - Cynon Taf Housing

For more information, contact: cbradwick@cynon-taf.org.uk

The Gower Davies Court Residents Association, established in January 2025, is a tenant-led group dedicated to supporting older residents within Cynon Taf Community Housing Group's sheltered scheme in Ynysbwl. Led by committed volunteers, particularly Idris and Mike, the group focuses on reducing loneliness and improving wellbeing through inclusive, community-based activities. Regular coffee mornings, exercise sessions, craft workshops and Warm Spaces initiatives provide accessible opportunities for social interaction, while events are hosted within the scheme to ensure all residents can participate. The group's proactive approach, including securing funding and attending training, has helped create a sustainable and responsive community hub.

The impact of the association has been significant and measurable, with strong improvements in social connection, mental wellbeing and community resilience. Attendance has grown steadily, with over 900 visits recorded in a year and 70% of participants reporting reduced isolation. Residents describe feeling more connected, supported and purposeful, with many highlighting the activities as something to look forward to each week. The group has also supported individuals through bereavement and health challenges, offering both practical and emotional support, while exercise and wellbeing initiatives have contributed to increased confidence and physical activity.



Beyond individual benefits, the Association has strengthened the wider community by fostering trust, inclusion and mutual support among residents and local people. Activities have created a welcoming, accessible space that encourages participation beyond the scheme, while initiatives such as foodbank collections demonstrate a commitment to supporting others. Idris and Mike's leadership has been instrumental in building this positive culture, representing tenants at a national level and inspiring others through their dedication. Overall, the group stands as a powerful example of tenant-led community action, delivering lasting improvements in wellbeing, inclusion and quality of life.