

MERTHYR

VALLEYS HOMES



Lorraine Oates CPFA

Acting Chief Executive | Prif Weithredwr Dros Dro

t: 01685 727790

e: Lorraine.oates@mvhomes.org.uk

Ross Williams

Tenant Engagement Lead | Arweinydd Ymgysylltu â Thenantiaid

t: 07872 415094

e: ross.williams@mvhomes.org.uk

Hayley-Louise Broad

**Senior Community Development Officer | Uwch Swyddog Datblygu
Cymunedol**

t: 07718 248645

e: hayleylouise.broad@mvhomes.org.uk



- Adopted in MVH in April 2018
 - Based on 28% of local earnings and 35% for service charges
 - No definition of ‘average’
 - OECD vs Merthyr
 - Tenants know what is affordable and their expectations
 - Balance of ‘need’
 - What does VFM look like?
 - What could we do better?



What problem are we trying to solve?

“ As a mutual, are we creating the opportunity for tenants to meaningfully inform the decision making process with regards to Rent Setting for 2023/24, allowing us to better assess the fairness and affordability of our rent levels, and to maximise opportunities for tenants to sustain their tenancies?”

The project should be:

- Values-led
- Meaningful
- Reassuring
- Influencing



Project Phases

- Phase 1 - Scoping
 - Phase 2 - Planning
 - Phase 3 - Mobilisation
 - Phase 4 - Results gathering



Phase 1 - Scoping

- Project scope – In/Out
 - Background Reading
 - Survey Design
 - Understand the reasons
 - No distractions
 - What's right for MVH tenants
 - A time for good practice



- Internal awareness
 - External awareness
 - New faces, new opinions, new learning
 - Social media
 - Community groups
 - Existing relationships
 - Be where people are



Phase 3 - Mobilisation

- Listen, Listen, Listen
 - Focus groups
 - Young people
 - Where are we today?



Our Findings so far...

1. Rents are fair, but affordability is becoming a bigger challenge.

“I don’t have the luxury of being able to decide whether it’s a meal in a restaurant or staying in, because that decision has now been made for me.”

“I’m having to make a decision about whether I have an extra meal a day or the kids go to school in wet clothes because I can’t afford to put the tumble dryer on”

2. Heat or Eat



3. The Green agenda has been placed back on the table

“Who do I talk to about fitting a new heating system which can save me money?”

“Without a lunch club in [location], I wouldn't be able to meet friends as I can't afford the bus fair to where my other friends are”

4. Connection is key



Phase 4

- Not there yet
 - Flexibility to circle back
 - Democratic Body
 - Further work



1

People know Housing Associations are limited in our ability to change things.
“I don’t care how you come to the decision, I just want it to be fair”.

Cost of living is already having a huge impact. However, food banks and pantries are enabling a different conversation.

2

3

Those who are hearing the stories are also feeling the pinch.



If we had our time again....

1

Use single responses and test these against a wider audience.

Spend longer raising awareness amongst colleagues and creating space to co-produce solutions.

2

3

Look more at the good work that is out there.



Thank you.

Any Questions?



MERTHYR

VALLEYS HOMES

