

February / March 2011  
Published by Community Housing Cymru  
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# The Assembly Elections 2011

## Inside this issue



Interview with  
Helen Armstrong,  
newly elected  
Housing Services  
Forum Chair  
p.17



Regulation Update  
P3



Prestigious  
European Housing  
Conference in  
Cardiff, 8-10 June  
p.2

## Production Information

Community Housing Cymru  
Fulmar House  
Beignon Close  
Ocean Park  
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Cartref is published six  
times a year.

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# Review of Chief Executives Conference



Over 20 housing  
association Chief  
Executives from across  
Wales met in Portmeirion in early  
February to discuss key issues  
affecting the future of the sector.

Nick Bennett gave an overview,  
focusing on the progress that has been  
made since 2007 on regulation and  
investment, and the need to focus on  
key propositions to ensure continued  
success following the election of a  
new National Assembly.

There were then a series of open space  
sessions facilitated by members. Antonia  
Forte, Chief Executive of Cynon Taf  
Community Housing Group, led on  
regulatory issues and Amanda Davies,  
Chief Executive of the Seren Group,  
led on financial capacity and investment.

New opportunities for the sector were  
discussed, including Feed in Tariffs and  
the creation of a Revolving Loan Fund  
based upon European best practice,  
following a presentation by Sioned  
Hughes and Aniko Dobi-Rozsa of Global  
Environmental Social Business.

There were project updates on Arbed 2  
and other EU projects that the sector is  
pursuing including the latest on the Centre  
for Regeneration Excellence Wales (CREW).

Nick Bennett also updated on the  
extension of Moneyline Cymru.

On the second day, delegates were  
joined by WAG civil servants and a WLGA  
representative to discuss key issues  
including future funding for the sector, the  
implementation of the Supporting People  
Review and housing benefit/welfare reforms.

Peter Cahill, Chair of CHC said:  
'The changes at Westminster with the  
formation of a new coalition, together with  
the election of a new National Assembly in  
May, means that the housing agenda will  
be affected by change in both devolved  
and non-devolved policy areas. Following  
on from the success of the Essex review,  
huge increases in stock transfer and  
investment in housing and regeneration  
by all our members, it is vital that we are  
equipped and united in order to influence  
the policy agenda going forward. Innovation  
and partnership working will be critical if we  
are to continue to deliver a housing, care  
and regeneration dividend for people and  
neighbourhoods throughout Wales.'

**Nick Bennett**  
Chief Executive

## CHC and Shelter Cymru Unite in Campaign to Inform Tenants of the Benefit Changes

CHC members and Shelter Cymru are working on an integrated campaign to advise tenants in the rented sector about the UK government changes to housing benefit and local housing allowance.

The campaign aims are to:

- Work with local authorities to ensure that all tenants are fully informed of the benefit changes.
- Drip feed messages as and when we know they are being introduced – starting with incapacity and non dependent benefits.
- Get HAs to sign up to use a uniform brand with a clear message and direct call to action for tenants.

- Direct our tenants to seek help from their housing association.

A working group has been set up to design and execute this campaign. Two staggered messages will be communicated initially for the social housing sector, concentrating on the changes taking place in 2011.

The working group have agreed to produce a postcard which will be distributed to tenants with their rent statements. The postcard will have two simple questions. If the tenant answers 'yes' to both questions, they will know that they'll be affected by the benefit changes and will need to contact their housing association for advice. Although each series of postcards will have a uniform brand, they will be personalised to each association taking part in the campaign.

Shelter Cymru will be adopting the same brand to communicate to the private rented sector.



They will also be running adverts in local newspapers and using radio and bus advertising to raise awareness.

Representatives from CHC's PR Network and Shelter Cymru are also attending local authority seminars on housing benefit to inform local authority staff about the campaign.

To date, twenty housing associations have signed up to the campaign. If you'd like to register your interest, please contact Edwina-ohart@chcymru.org.uk

**Edwina O'Hart**  
**Communications Manager**

## CECODHAS Housing Europe Conference

CHC will be hosting the first ever CECODHAS Housing Europe Conference at Cardiff Museum in June later this year.

It will offer an opportunity to present achievements in the field of sustainable energy and housing, to consider current and future EU funding opportunities and reflect on the needs for future EU support.

The event will also be an opportunity to show how EU support can be used in improving living conditions of EU citizens. By taking the example of energy efficiency investments in existing housing supported by the EU Structural Funds, the conference will look at the achievements made over the past few years, not only in

Wales (Arbed in particular) and the rest of the UK but also in other EU countries.

Potential project promoters in Wales and the rest of the UK will be able to obtain relevant information about current and future funding opportunities for sustainable energy investments in existing housing.

Key national and EU decision makers (European Commission and European Parliament) will hold a dialogue with participants on the future policy priorities and budgets of the EU after 2013 and how sustainable energy projects in particular in the housing sector could be further supported.

This event forms part of a European project called Structural Funds Energy Invest (co-financed by the Intelligent Energy Europe Programme), whose aim is to help increase the use of Structural Funds for sustainable energy projects. It will take place within the framework of the 2011 CECODHAS Housing Europe General Assembly Meetings hosted by Community Housing Cymru.

A draft programme is available at [www.housingeurope.eu](http://www.housingeurope.eu)

# Regulation and Governance Update

## Regulation Board

The Regulatory Board met last month and discussed a range of issues including feedback from the Tenants Advisory Panel, an update on regulatory issues and lessons learnt from the new system over the past 12 months (emergent issues were concerned with governance and risk management). Members were keen to ensure that training for board members is fit for purpose and CHC will be working with stakeholders to ensure that this is the case. Gaynor Jones, the independent panel member, is also keen to see a communication strategy developed for regulatory issues.

## New Regulation Framework

The new Regulatory Framework was formally launched at CHC's Governance conference on 18 February where there were also opportunities to discuss the new Intervention Powers and Schedule 1 payments.

## Staffing

### New Head of Regulation

Darshan Singh Matharoo has been appointed as the new Head of Housing Regulation and spent the first day of his new job at CHC's Chief Executives Conference held in North Wales. Darshan said: 'I am delighted to join the Welsh Assembly Government's Regulation Team and look forward to leading on the implementation of the new regulatory framework. I am struck by how much has already been achieved and by the excellent partnership working that exists, and I am committed to building on this.'

Darshan has over 25 years' experience of working within the social housing sector including working for housing associations, the Housing Corporation (London HQ) and local authorities.

He is a Fellow member of the Chartered Institute of Housing and has served the CIH as a nationally elected Council member. Darshan also has experience at Board level as an independent Board member.

Ceri Breeze, Head of Housing, said: 'I am very pleased indeed to have Darshan join our team. The depth and breadth of his experience in housing will make a significant contribution not only to our regulatory work but to the Directorate more generally.'



Darshan Singh Matharoo,  
new Head of Regulation.

### Regulation Network

There are three Regulation Networks planned for 2011. Further details can be found on our website. The first meeting will be on 8 March at the Metropole Hotel in Llandrindod Wells. The agenda will include a presentation from the new WAG Head of Regulation, a self-assessment surgery and a session on lessons learnt from pilots of the Whole Association Assessments.

The appointment of a new Senior Regulatory Co-ordinator is imminent.

### Amanda Oliver Head of Policy and Research

## Meet Shaun Gealy, the Senior Financial Analyst, Regulation Team



Shaun Gealy,  
Senior Financial Analyst.

I am very pleased to say I have recently taken on the role of Senior Financial Analyst in the Housing Regulation team as maternity cover for Naheed Hussain.

I have worked with a number of Welsh Registered Social Landlords for several years as an external auditor with KPMG. I also have links with the wider not-for-profit sector and serve as a charity Trustee of Cardiff Shopmobility.

This is an exciting time to be joining the Housing Regulation team with the amount of change happening in the sector around stock transfers, the new regulatory framework and the first year of published financial viability judgements.

## Assembly Watch

***“Real politics are the possession and distribution of power.”*** Benjamin Disraeli



The last term of the One Wales government before the elections has begun and as Assembly members returned from the Christmas recess, debate over the Assembly's powers heightened in and out of the chamber.

The referendum on further Welsh devolution begins to creep closer and plenary has been dominated by the consideration of measures to ensure that each measure gets through its standard four-stage process in the Assembly before the next Assembly election.

The National Assembly for Wales' Legislation Committee No.2 has supported, in principle, the proposed Housing (Wales) Measure, and the general principles of the Measure have been agreed following debate in plenary. The measure in its amended form will now go for consideration before legislation committee 2.

The Assembly's final budget will have been agreed by the time you read this article. As the draft budget announced cuts of around 30% to Social Housing Grant, it is vital that we focus on renewed imagination - not new ways to argue for extra money but developing new sources of funding and using the money we already have to better effect.

The referendum itself is about Wales not having to confer with London when it wants to make changes within the devolved policy areas, but being able to make the changes ourselves. The call for setting up an All Wales convention to assess the levels of support for full law-making powers necessary to trigger the referendum was a prominent feature in the One Wales agreement. As the One Wales agreement faces its final hurdles, debates and predictions have started to heat up around the outcome and impacts of the Assembly elections in May. There is no doubting that the next few months have an important role in shaping Wales' constitution.

### WAG updates

#### An update on Fuel Poverty

WAG has now replaced the home energy efficiency scheme with the new fuel poverty scheme, and British Gas has been selected to manage the New Fuel Poverty Scheme for Wales in partnership with the Energy Saving Trust Wales. The consultation document outlines that a partial grant will be available for loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and solid wall insulation for owner occupiers and privately rented properties (not social housing).

Statistics on fuel poverty show the scale of the challenge we face in tackling fuel poverty in Wales, especially in light of the recent increase in fuel prices. It is vital that WAG ensures that it uses all the levers in its power to ensure that the prevalence and effects of fuel poverty are reduced.

#### Rent benchmarking information for 2011/12

A new rent policy framework has been developed and the Rent First model is now being piloted. Changes made to the current benchmarking guidance include automatically excluding schemes built to meet level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, and increasing the percentage of properties that can be exempt from the benchmarking system from 5% up to a maximum of 15%, subject to the RSL making a satisfactory case to the Welsh Government.

These are temporary measures which should support those associations with development programmes - the changes came into effect on 1 January 2011 and apply to new development schemes. It is anticipated that the proposed framework will be subject to full public consultation in the Spring and updated for implementation in 2012/13.

#### A look ahead

The code for sustainable homes pilot scheme is well under way. The interim report is being prepared to help us move towards the new energy standards in the Welsh building regulations.

On the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, WAG is at the final stages of the pilot project which will provide us with an update on progress towards achieving the standard. WAG has involved the Wales Audit Office, and we have learned that it will be using this as part of its current study of the standard.

**Shea Jones**

**Political Research and Information Officer**

## Feed in Tariff briefing paper available to download

The FIT scheme is an environmental programme introduced by the Government on 1st April 2010 to promote the widespread uptake of a range of small-scale renewable and low carbon electricity generation technologies.

The scheme requires participating licensed electricity suppliers (FIT Licensees) to pay a generation tariff to small scale low-carbon generators for electricity generated, and an export tariff where such electricity is also exported to the national grid. It is applicable to a number of technologies including solar photovoltaic, wind, hydro, and anaerobic digestion, up to a maximum capacity of 5MW, and micro-CHP up to 2kW.

CHC had received requests from members asking for guidance on the options available to them in this complex area. We have put together a briefing paper which specifically focuses on solar photovoltaic panels.

There are a range of funding models that housing associations can consider in funding the installation of photovoltaic panels on roof space, whether the HA project manages the installation and on-going maintenance or alternatively gets



'PV for free', which involves a range of offers from companies or intermediaries offering to rent roof space from housing associations in exchange for free or discounted energy.

A standard offer includes the investment and delivery to be outsourced to a specialist PV developer, whilst the tenant benefits from some on-site free electricity, but the housing association gains little or no further financial value.

This briefing has been specifically designed for CHC's members and it draws data together from a range of sources in helping the sector to decide what it should be considering when evaluating different financial options for moving forward and where they can get further help. These proposals present the sector with real opportunities to implement renewable electricity solutions across its estates.

The briefing paper cannot in any way provide detailed information that would allow an individual association to decide which option best suits its needs. However, it does go a long way to outlining what each association should consider.

To view the briefing paper please visit our website: [www.chcmru.org.uk](http://www.chcmru.org.uk)

## Arbed's message reaches Brussels



Nigel Draper, Chair of CHC's EU Strategic committee, and Sioned Hughes, CHC's Director of Policy and Social Enterprise (pictured above with the conference chair) travelled to Brussels last November to take part in an international conference entitled,

'Sustainable housing: a tool for social cohesion?' held as part of the Belgian Presidency of the European Union.

The Welsh Assembly Government had been invited to present the Arbed project as an exemplar of a housing investment policy and programme that contributes to strengthening social cohesion whilst upgrading the energy performance in housing.

The invitation was sent following an informal ministerial meeting of the Ministers of Housing held last June in Toledo which was attended by Nick Bennett. It was obvious from the conference in Brussels that Arbed as a programme has gone further than

any other programme of its kind to meet the social, economic and environmental objectives by investing in local supply chains and implementing social clauses into contracts.

**Sioned Hughes**  
**Director of Policy and Social Enterprise**



# EU Cohesion Policy Consultation

## **C**onsultation on conclusions of the fifth report on economic, social and territorial cohesions: the future of cohesion policy.

The EU are reviewing their cohesion policy to realise 'Europe 2020', which is the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade. The vision for Europe 2020 is for the EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These three mutually reinforcing priorities should help the EU and the member states deliver high levels of employment, productivity and social cohesion.

The Union has set five ambitious objectives - around employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate/energy - to be reached by 2020. Each member state will adopt its own national targets in each of these areas. Concrete actions at EU and national levels will underpin the strategy.

CHC has submitted a response to the consultation and has taken CECODHAS into account, the European federation of public, co-operative and social housing, and NHF's submissions.

The key messages included in our response to the consultation were as follows:

- There is a need to look at utilising much of the significant investment to be made by social housing with future EU budgets.

- A strategic approach presupposes that various cohesion funds can be used together to address the same priority. At present funds such as ERDF and ESF cannot be used alongside each other and this needs amending post 2013.
- We call to extend the use of the ERDF fund from 4% to 8% to be available for social housing retrofit projects in post 2013 structural funds.
- It is essential that meeting the needs of an ageing society be incorporated within policy and funding priorities.
- Engagement and support needs to be targeted towards hard to reach individuals through training, into job entry and onto sustainability and progression.
- In order to make cohesion policy more effective, one of the conditions needs to be the requirement to engage all stakeholders, including housing associations, when priorities are defined and programmes established.
- The compatibility between the ERDF intervention and other public schemes in the UK such as the feed in tariff needs to be improved.

To view CHC's response in full please go to our website: [www.chcymru.org.uk](http://www.chcymru.org.uk)



## Rents 2011/12

The Welsh Assembly Government have issued guidance on the rent increase for 2011/12, having considered a wide range of factors including the financial viability of landlords, the reduction in Social Housing Grant budgets and its impact on the provision of new homes, together with the need to maintain the level of services provided to tenants and the wider community.

Whilst lower rent increases could help households with pressures resulting from the current period of austerity, this could be detrimental to the promises tenants have received from their landlords to meet and maintain WHQS.

In balancing these and other influencing factors the Deputy Minister for Housing has decided:

- to retain the general policy of using the previous September RPI inflation figure of 4.6%;
- to retain the convergence policy;
- to increase Housing Association benchmark rents and the maximum rent for the three bedroom, five person (3b5p) house for 2011-2012 by 5.6%; and



- to increase the All Wales Local Authority guideline rent for 2011-12 by 6.6% - the actual distribution will be set out in the annual HRAS Determination.

The rent review group being led the Welsh Assembly Government is still ongoing, with a further meeting of the group scheduled for mid February. There is more work to be done before we are able to fully populate the matrix and share this with both sectors. However, it is anticipated that the proposed framework will be subject to full public consultation in the Spring, and updated for implementation in 2012/13.

**Steve Higginson**  
**Monmouthshire Housing**

## Supporting People Review Update

**Jane Pagler, CHC's Supported Housing Advisor outlines what has happened since Sir Mansel's Review was published last November.**

The review findings were launched by the Deputy Minister on 24 November 2010 and three workstreams have been set up to take forward the review recommendations:

1. **Quality Services** – to include commissioning and procuring, service element of tariff, outcomes.
2. **Financing Housing related support** – focusing on funding arrangements, redistribution, formula.

3. **Governance/Regulation** – action to establish accreditation, National Advisory Committee, committees, performance monitoring.

CHC membership of the workstreams is being agreed in conjunction with Cymorth Cymru to ensure a wide representation of geographical areas and service user groups.

There are a number of quick wins identified to ensure the programme acts as quickly as possible:

- Welsh Assembly Government issue the agreed 11 outcomes for local authorities and relevant providers to sign up to by March 2011.



- There is a greater role for Public Health Wales by being represented on the Supporting People Steering Board and on the National Advisory Board.
- The literature review is disseminated by end of January 2011.
- Allocation of the reduced 2011/12 supporting people funding to take account of a more equitable distribution.

**Jane Pagler**  
**Supporting People Advisor**

# 2007–2011:

## What has been achieved in the Welsh social housing sector?

**W**ith the forthcoming National Assembly for Wales elections, the supplement takes a look back at what has been achieved in Welsh housing over the last few years since the last election. It also takes a look at what the May elections mean for Wales and the sector and what messages CHC will be promoting.

The One Wales document was officially signed on the 18th of September 2007 by Ieuan Wyn Jones and Rhodri Morgan and formed the basis of the joint programme of coalition government between Labour and Plaid Cymru.

The First Minister at the time, Rhodri Morgan, outlined the key policy elements for the administration stating that the government would bring substantial new investment and a 'new approach' to the supply of affordable housing.

As we approach the end of this assembly term and move towards the National Assembly elections in May (which will mark the end of this particular One Wales agreement), here are some of the main housing proposals from the One Wales document that have been achieved:

- **Increasing the supply of affordable housing by at least 6,500 units over the four years.**
- **A Legislative Competence Order which goes further than just allowing the suspension of the Right to Buy in areas of high pressure (which the One Wales document originally proposed).**
- **Extra funding for the Supporting People programme.**
- **A National 10 Year Homelessness Plan.**



There has been a significant amount of policy development in housing throughout this term of government, which has largely been enhanced by the partnership approach between WAG and stakeholder organisations such as CHC. Of course, the implementation of the Essex Review put a much greater emphasis on collaboration and gave the sector the freedom to innovate.

Led by Sue Essex, the review resulted in 43 recommendations, most of which have been implemented, including:

- **A new regulatory framework.**
- **£95m of Strategic capital investment funding.**
- **£35m of European Regional Development Funding for Arbed 2.**
- **£110m of European Investment Bank lending.**

2011 promises to be a year filled with both challenges and opportunities and it means preparing for a new government in Wales. CHC will continue to lobby to ensure that social and affordable housing remains on the political radar and, following the appointment of the new Cabinet, CHC will work to ensure that our priorities are heard and that political engagement continues in order to deliver housing and related support for our members and the people of Wales.

There is evidence to support the fact that housing policy strategies are now diverging further in the four nations of the UK and that policy priorities for housing associations are reflecting local circumstances and locally-determined decisions to a greater extent. As a result of the housing LCO, the next government has the opportunity to use its greater scope and flexibility to act to protect vulnerable people and react to circumstances that might impact on the future quality and supply of affordable housing in Wales, whatever the composition of the next Assembly government.



With housing and regeneration coming under one portfolio in the Assembly, greater synergy has been created. The creation of our group structure with Care & Repair Cymru and CREW helps CHC to cover all these areas. In the lead up to the election and beyond, our key messages include:

- **Increasing and improving affordable housing in Wales through social housing investment.**
- **Regeneration activities which can tackle poverty and create jobs and training opportunities.**
- **Continued action for delivering care and support.**

The message from our joint manifesto is clear - to provide an innovative approach to help minimise the potential damage posed to public services including housing, care, support and regeneration. WAG's draft budget confirmed a cut of around 30% in social housing grant for 2011/12 and further cuts in subsequent years. Therefore, it is vital that the sector continues to facilitate effective engagement with citizens and communities, by looking at new ways to overcome barriers in order to deliver public services as an important part of a joint vision and collaborative action to achieve better outcomes.

Particularly prominent to 2011 is the question over powers for the Assembly. 2011 started with debate over the housing measure - this will be followed in March by a referendum on further Welsh devolution and this year will end with the devolution of building regulations to WAG on the 31st of December 2011.

**Shea Jones**  
**Political Research and Information Officer**

# 2007–2011:

## Beth a gyflawnwyd yn sector tai cymdeithasol Cymru?

**G**yda'r etholiadau i Gynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru ar ein gwarthaf, mae'r atodiad hwn yn edrych yn ôl ar yr hyn a gyflawnwyd yn y maes tai yng Nghymru dros yr ychydig flynyddoedd ers yr etholiad diwethaf. Mae'n edrych hefyd ar yr hyn y mae etholiadau mis Mai yn ei olygu i Gymru a'r sector a pha negeseuon y bydd Cartrefi Cymunedol yn eu hyrwyddo.

Cafodd dogfen Cymru'n Un ei llofnodi'n swyddogol gan Ieuan Wyn Jones a Rhodri Morgan ar 18 Medi 2007a dyma sail y rhaglen llywodraeth glymbleidiol rhwng Llafur a Phlaid Cymru.

Amlinellodd Rhodri Morgan, Prif Weinidog Cymru ar y pryd, yr elfennau polisi allweddol ar gyfer y weinyddiaeth gan nodi y byddai'r llywodraeth yn dod â buddsoddiad newydd sylweddol ac 'agwedd newydd' at gyflenwi tai fforddiadwy.

Wrth i ni agosáu at ddiwedd tymor y trydydd Cynulliad Cenedlaethol a symud tuag at yr etholiadau ym mis Mai (fydd yn nodi diwedd cytundeb presennol Cymru'n Un), dyma rai o'r prif gynigion ym maes tai Cymru'n Un a gafodd eu cyflawni:

- **Cynyddu nifer tai fforddiadwy gan o leiaf 6,500 dros y pedair blynedd.**
- **Gorchymyn Cymhwysedd Deddfwriaethol sy'n mynd ymhellach na dim ond caniatáu atal yr Hawl i Brynu mewn ardaloedd lle mae pwysau mawr ar dai (y cynnig gwreiddiol yn nogfen Cymru'n Un).**
- **Cyllid ychwanegol ar gyfer y rhaglen Cefnogi Pobl.**
- **Cynllun Cenedlaethol 10 mlynedd ar Ddigartrefedd.**



Bu llawer o ddatblygu polisi yn y maes tai drwy gydol cyfnod y llywodraeth, a gafodd ei hybu gan y dull gweithredu partneriaeth rhwng Llywodraeth y Cynulliad a sefydliadau fel Cartrefi Cymunedol. Wrth gwrs, rhoddodd gweithredu Adolygiad Essex lawer mwy o bwyslais ar gydweithio a rhoi'r rhyddid i'r sector i arloesi. Dan arweiniad Sue Essex, arweiniodd yr adolygiad at 43 argymhelliad. Gweithredwyd y rhan fwyaf ohonynt, yn cynnwys:

- **Fframwaith rheoleiddio newydd.**
- **£95m o gyllid buddsoddiad cyfalaf strategol.**
- **£35m o gyllid o Gronfa Datblygu Rhanbarthol Ewrop ar gyfer Arbed 2.**
- **£110m o fenthyciad o Fanc Buddsoddi Ewrop.**

Mae 2011 yn argoeli bod yn flwyddyn llawn her a chyfle ac yn golygu paratoi ar gyfer llywodraeth newydd yng Nghymru. Bydd Cartrefi Cymunedol yn parhau i lobio i sicrhau fod tai cymdeithasol a fforddiadwy yn parhau ar y radar gwleidyddol ac, yn dilyn apwyntiad Cabinet newydd, bydd Cartrefi Cymunedol yn gweithio i sicrhau y caiff ein blaenoriaethau eu clywed a bod yr ymrwymiad gwleidyddol yn parhau, er mwyn darparu cefnogaeth tai a chysylltiedig gyda'n haelodau a phobl Cymru.

Mae tystiolaeth i gefnogi'r ffaith fod strategaethau polisi tai yn amrywio fwyfwy ym mhedair cenedl y Deyrnas Unedig ac mae'r blaenoriaethau polisi ar gyfer cymdeithasau tai yn adlewyrchu amgylchiadau lleol a phenderfyniadau lleol i raddau helaethach. Fel canlyniad i'r Gorchymyn tai, bydd gan y llywodraeth nesaf gyfle i ddefnyddio ei chwmpas a hyblygrwydd cynyddol i ddiogelu pobl fregus ac ymateb i amgylchiadau a fedrai effeithio ar ansawdd a chyflenwi tai fforddiadwy yng Nghymru, beth bynnag yw cyfansoddiad llywodraeth nesaf y Cynulliad.



Crëwyd mwy o synergedd gyda thai ac adfywio yn dod dan un portffolio yn y Cynulliad. Mae creu ein strwythur grwp gyda Care & Repair Cymru a Chanolfan Rhagoriaeth Adfywio Cymru yn helpu Cartrefi Cymunedol i weithredu yn yr holl feysydd hyn. Yn y cyfnod cyn yr etholiad a thu hwnt, mae ein negeseuon allweddol yn cynnwys:

- **Cynyddu a gwella tai fforddiadwy yng Nghymru drwy fuddsoddiad mewn tai cymdeithasol.**
- **Gweithgareddau adfywio a all fynd i'r afael â thlodi a chreu swyddi a chyhoedd hysfforddi.**
- **Gweithredu parhaus ar gyfer cyflenwi gofal a chefnogaeth.**

Mae'r neges o'n cyd-fanifesto yn glir - rhoi dull blaengar i helpu lleihau'r difrod posibl a achosir i wasanaethau cyhoeddus yn cynnwys tai, gofal, cefnogaeth ac adfywio. Cadarnhaodd drafft gyllideb Llywodraeth y Cynulliad y byddai gostyngiad o tua 30% mewn grant tai cymdeithasol ar gyfer 2011/12 a thoriadau pellach mewn blynyddoedd dilynol. Felly, mae'n hollbwysig fod y sector yn parhau i hwyluso cyswllt effeithiol gyda dinasyddion a chymunedau, drwy edrych ar ffyrdd newydd i oresgyn rhwystrau er mwyn cyflenwi gwasanaethau cyhoeddus fel rhan bwysig o weledigaeth ar y cyd a chydweithio i sicrhau gwell canlyniadau.

Bydd mater pwerau'r Cynulliad yn neilltuol o amlwg yn 2011. Dechreuodd 2011 gyda thrafodaeth am y mesur tai - dilynir hyn ym mis Mawrth gan refferendwm ar ddatganoli pellach i Gymru a daw'r flwyddyn i ben gyda datganoli rheoliadau adeiladu i Lywodraeth y Cynulliad ar 31 Rhagfyr 2011.

**Shea Jones**  
**Swyddog Ymchwil Wleidyddol a Gwybodaeth**

## CHC Faces Up to Social Media

**Y**ou may remember in a previous edition of *Cartref* we outlined findings of our social media study.

The findings showed that 92% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that social media is here to stay. Recognising the importance of social media, CHC has employed Victoria Jones as a social media intern to establish a sustainable social media presence for our organisation. Victoria will work on the project for a period of 10 weeks and here she outlines why she is pleased to be working with CHC on this project.

I'm really excited to be implementing a social media strategy for CHC as part of a GO Wales placement. With Facebook boasting over 600 million users and with approximately 190 million users on Twitter, I think there has never been a more exciting and important time to

develop a social media presence.

I studied English at the University of Birmingham and I wanted to be a journalist from a very young age. I became interested in communicating across various multimedia platforms when I trained as a magazine journalist at the Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies. As part of my training I completed an internship at BBC Countryfile Magazine, and was the online editor for the course website during my journalism training at Cardiff University.

Over the next 10 weeks I hope to not only inform but engage with members, tenants, politicians and members of the public, strengthening established connections and making new ones. The fast-paced world of social media is ever-changing and developing so I will be experimenting with outlets such as



Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube to identify suitable channels for CHC.

**Victoria Jones**  
victoria-jones@chcymru.org.uk

## First successful online discussion held on CHC's website

With 50,502 page views in the last three months, CHC's newly relaunched website is attracting a lot of visitors. Many of these occurred last month, when CHC successfully held a question and answer session on our website's discussion forum. The discussion was led by Steve Harris, the Energy Saving Trust's Head of Low Carbon Technologies. We hope to make these sessions a regular event in order to facilitate a new way of networking. In the future, we hope to stream interviews live from the website.

The discussion forum is a great area to network with other people from the sector in between conferences and other meetings to share knowledge, raise issues or seek clarification.

If you are interested in seeing the topics and issues that were discussed in the session, the threads can be viewed in the Technical Services area of the discussion forum.

Please note that this is a private discussion which is hidden from non members - you will need to register as a user on the forum in order to view the threads or to post your comments.



We are eager to host discussions on a range of sector topics, not just technical services. Topics could range from marketing and PR to maintenance and regeneration issues.

If you have any queries about the website or would like to suggest speakers or topics for future question and answer sessions, please contact Bethan-samuel@chcymru.org.uk.

**Bethan Samuel**  
Communications Officer

## HR Column

# Leading with emotion – intelligent or not?

**M**uch has been written about the concept of Emotional Intelligence and how valuable it is, but to what extent does this really i to understand and manage their own emotions and those of others around them. The five key strands which make up our emotional intelligence are:

- Self awareness – our willingness to take an honest look at ourselves; ability to understand our emotions and not let them take over; knowing our strengths and weaknesses; constantly working to perform better.
- Self-regulation – our ability to control emotions and impulses; thinking before we act; avoiding making impulsive careless decisions; acting with integrity.
- Motivation – our drive to achieve; focus on being productive; embracing challenge.
- Empathy – our ability to identify with and understand the wants, needs and viewpoints of those around us; to listen and observe; being open and honest.
- Social Skills – our ability to talk to and truly engage with others; helping others to develop and shine; building and maintaining relationships; managing disputes.

People with high emotional intelligence are usually successful in most things they do. Why? Because they're the ones that people want on their team, who make others feel good, who have the ability to look at a problem and calmly find a solution, and who know when to trust their intuition.

And just how important are these characteristics when leading people through troubled times? When organisations are experiencing significant change – with staff demotivated and anxious about their future, and quite often sceptical or critical of organisational decisions or changes - the pressure is on for leaders to prove their worth, and engage their people.

The only real way to do this is through the use of emotional intelligence. Leaders need to be aware of what is happening around them, and of the importance and impact of their own style and behaviour. They need to listen to their staff, give reassurance and encouragement, and create an atmosphere and environment that is open and positive, enabling others to be more in touch with their own emotions and behaviours. In doing this, leaders are more likely to be successful in bringing their staff with them and responding positively to challenges.

We all know leaders who are bright, knowledgeable and technically capable, but who fail to truly connect with others - are these the people who inspire and motivate us? Intelligence, technical knowledge and sector expertise are essential elements of leadership, but they on their own are just not enough anymore.

To truly make a difference, leaders need to be able to relate to others in an honest and meaningful way – after all, people follow with their hearts, not their heads.

In our view, whilst emotional intelligence is not the only element of successful leadership, it may well be the defining characteristic that differentiates between those leaders who survive these difficult times, seize opportunities and generate further success, and those leaders who struggle to keep their organisation afloat.

**Vikki Evans, Consultant**  
**Insight Hr and Management Consultancy Ltd.**



# CREW update

## Research Work

CREW has begun some of its research work in earnest over the last few months with the appointment of Bethan Lindsay Gaylard and Kyle Burgess to work on two key projects. Bethan is examining School to Work transitions for young people in Wales. Much of the evidence suggests that making the move from school to the workplace is a critical transition point which can have life-long consequences for the individual. We know from experience in the 1980s that those who failed in that transition often remain locked in welfare dependency and long-term economic inactivity. Currently, young people in Wales face high levels of unemployment and the number of NEETS (Not in Education, Employment or Training) are at their highest ever. Bethan will explore the experience of young people in this context and analyse the barriers to workplace entry for young school leavers at 16 and 18 years.

Kyle is employed from WAG's New Ideas research funding and is developing a Toolkit to assist in the assessment of the impact of regeneration initiatives on communities where they are delivered. Based on earlier research for the JRF, the project builds on the Atmosphere, Landscape and Horizon framework which will be familiar to those who have joined CREW's Thematic Networks. Kyle is following the application of the Framework in a study of RCT Homes' Green Spaces audit currently being conducted by Hyder Consulting.

## Health impact assessment tool

CREW is also supporting the development of a Health Impact Assessment Toolkit in partnership with the Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit at Cardiff University. This will result in both a toolkit and a half-day training programme (on the right). We have also organised a Seminar Series jointly with WISERD (Welsh Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods – see the next column for event details). More events are in the late planning stages and you can keep up with the latest information at [www.regenwales.org](http://www.regenwales.org).

## Follow CREW's blog/twitter/facebook

CREW has held a number of events over the last few months which are beginning to prompt a debate about key aspects of regeneration. To facilitate participation in these debates, CREW has established a Blog Page where you can follow contributions or make your own. Currently, you can join a discussion on key issues in regeneration following the January Seminar with Professor Kevin Morgan or give your views on Poundbury.



There is also a discussion which will help shape a Charter for Regeneration which CREW is leading on. The blog is at <http://regenwales.blogspot.com>.

CREW has also established other social media mechanisms for keeping in touch with CREW events and these will be more active as the programme develops. Currently, find out more from Twitter (ProfDaveadamson) and Facebook (Centre for Regeneration Excellence Wales).

You can also contact [jenny-horton@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:jenny-horton@chcymru.org.uk) for further information and to book your place at our events.

## CREW Events

### Health Impact Training Programme

21 March	Broneirion Hall, Llandinam
18 April	Morfa Hall, Rhyl

### CREW/WISERD Seminar series

#### (all at Glamorgan Building, Cardiff University)

3 March	Funding Regeneration. Speaker: David Swallow, Eversheds
7 April	Regenerating Small Towns. Speaker: Jonathan Fox, Capita Symonds
2 June	Towards the Green Economy. Speaker: Colin Hines, Co –author NEF, Green New Deal

**Dave Adamson**  
CREW Chief Executive

## Housing Round Up



Front row: Gill Murgatroyd, Director of Human Resources; Graham Worthington, Chief Executive, Lezli Prime, HR Administrator. Back row: Chris Dinwoodie, Senior HR Advisor, Lisa Whitehead HR Learning and Development Advisor; Christine Hughes, HR Advisor and Lisa Dodd, HR Advisor.

### Gold award for Pennaf Housing Group

The Pennaf Housing Group has become the first North Wales Company to be awarded the Gold Investors in People Award. Senior Investors in People Assessor Jenny Trickett concluded her report by saying that the Pennaf Gold Award 'represents achievement of world class best practice and shows the Pennaf Group are a truly cutting-edge organisation operating at the highest levels of people management.' Director of Human Resources Ms Gill Murgatroyd said: 'It's absolutely brilliant to have achieved the Gold Standard in our Investors in People assessment... The Group strives at all times to provide the very best services and we know this ultimately depends on our people.'



### The first HA in Wales to go digital!

United Welsh is reaching out to its customers by providing a new 24hr digital TV service that can be accessed at the touch of a button through Sky or Virgin Media. By going digital UWHA will reach more of their tenants, specifically addressing those without a PC or Broadband. They will also expand their service capability by being accessible 24 hours 7 days a week, especially useful during difficult weather conditions. Greg England, Head of Marketing and Communication for United Welsh explains: 'People lead busy lives and it's important that services are available 24/7 to meet demand... Most people are comfortable using the remote on a television so this service has a distinct advantage over the internet which requires a certain amount of computer literacy. So far this month the new channel has received over 1000 hits!'



### Shayne gets shorn

Mop-topped Wales & West HA Operations Director Shayne Hembrow has had his curls shorn off – raising more than £5,000 for Alzheimer's Society. Shayne has had the same hair style since he was 11. He decided to have a radical 'clippers number 1' cut for charity after hearing how Alzheimer's Society had helped his friends whose parents had been diagnosed with dementia. His original target was £2,000 but Shayne raised a total of £5,417 on the justgiving.com website. So far, WWHA staff and residents have raised more than £15,000 for Alzheimer's Society during the past 18 months and with Shayne's donations, this will top £20,000.



Steve Jones, Chief Executive, cutting the cake with Councillor Hag Harris, Chairman of Tai Ceredigion.

## Happy First Birthday to Tai Ceredigion

Tai Ceredigion has been up and running for a year since the stock transfer from Ceredigion County Council took place last December. The transfer unlocked a huge increase in available funds for planned maintenance, property improvements and new-build homes for local people. During the last twelve months Tai Ceredigion has delivered 100 out of 170 promises listed in their Offer Document, with 68 others started and none running late. This coming year will see the main home improvement work contracts starting on site around the county.

Steve Jones, Chief Executive, said: 'We would like to thank everyone who has supported us over the last year... Some of the highlights have been establishing the Board and many groups and forums like the Tenant Monitoring Group, key partnerships with the County Council, local Community Councils, voluntary and care sector organisations to ensure we are delivering the best possible service to local communities.'



Fran Bevan, Chair of the Grant and Sponsorship Panel, with an attendee at the Merthyr People First conference.

## Merthyr Valleys Homes awards £20,000 to local groups

Tenants on the Merthyr Valleys Homes Grant and Sponsorship panel have awarded over £20,000 to local community groups who applied for funding under their Grant and Sponsorship scheme. Established to support communities across the borough, Merthyr Valleys Homes are delighted with the successes the community groups have achieved with their funding. Fran Bevan, Chair of the Panel said: 'We are delighted to be able to fund groups that give so much to the community. It is such a great scheme and we are proud to be a part of it.'

## Monmouthshire HA go that extra mile

Mr and Mrs McLean were one of the first Monmouthshire Housing residents to use their new Handyperson Service, which was introduced in January. They called the MHA Repairs Hotline number and were able to book an appointment with one of the Handymen very quickly. Kim Fielding, one of the two handymen employed by MHA, attended the property and carried out a number of odd jobs that Mr and Mrs McLean were unable to carry out themselves. Mr McLean said, 'It is nice to know that MHA cares about its tenants and is providing a service that is so useful to its residents and it also makes them feel like they are not alone'. The Handyperson service is available to Monmouthshire Housing residents over the age of 60 and disabled residents.

# Cartref Interview

**Helen Armstrong is the newly elected chair of the Housing Services Forum. She joined Cadwyn Housing Association in 2000 and is their Director of Housing and Community Services. She has 21 years' experience in a variety of housing roles.**

Helen was recently involved in the Welsh Assembly Government's Private Sector Task and Finish Group to inform the homelessness strategy, and in Cardiff she chairs Cardiff Council's Accommodation Sub Group addressing homelessness.

Cartref was intrigued to hear about Helen's plans to design "a funky and exciting 'unconference'" for the Housing Management and Maintenance conference this year. Find out more by reading her interview...

## What was your first job?

I've always worked – cleaning my dad's car (50p I think!), later on a paper round (£4.30 per week?), and I worked in a restaurant cleaning tables (£1.17 per hour)...

## How did you become involved in housing?

Completely accidentally – My first job after college in 1989 was as a 'Warden' on Cardiff's gypsy/traveller sites. I got the job because I had volunteered with gypsy/traveller children when I was a student and so knowing some of the families made it an easy start for me.

## What do you think will be the key issues that will affect the housing sector over the coming year?

The whole purpose of social housing seems to be in the process of being rewritten at the moment – interesting times...

## Why did you decide to stand for chair of the Housing Services Forum?

I've just finished an MBA and was looking for some extra work to fill the gap - and I thought it would be fun!

## What do you hope to achieve as Chair of the Forum?

In these turbulent times I am hoping to ensure that we can use our influence to gain the best outcomes for the communities in which we operate, lobbying and promoting the good work our members do.

I'm also working with Rhian to hold a funky and exciting 'unconference' this year, a less formally structured event where the delegates are encouraged to be more creative, to put more in and to get more out!

## If you could change one thing in housing, what would it be?

Apart from have enough for everyone? I'd get politicians and decision makers to see people's homes as central to and an essential part of communities, rather than a commodity to move people in and out of.



## What are your personal ambitions for this year?

Learn to relax, have more fun, get fitter... academic work is bad for the waistline...

## What has been your greatest work achievement?

Developing CanDo lettings agency from scratch is my favorite achievement because it feels completely mine.

## What has been your personal greatest achievement?

Achieving a distinction in my MBA, proving to myself that I can achieve what I want if I work hard and keep at it.

## Have you met anyone famous?

I wouldn't recognise anyone famous if I fell over them I'm afraid.

## If you could do any other job what would it be?

I'd be running a social enterprise to do with food security – about people growing their own food and selling it locally, getting people to eat more veg and less meat.

## How do you relax?

I knew there was something missing off my to do list!

## How would you like to be remembered?

I'm not worried about that, so long as my family remember me!

## Whom do you most admire?

Right now? Franny Armstrong, Director of the Age of Stupid and creator of the 10:10 campaign. She has a vision and she goes for it.

## If you could have dinner with one famous person, who would it be?

Alice Walker – she has the wisdom of the ages.

## Who would you most hate to be in a room with?

I can't say, I would get into trouble...

## Who would you like to play you in a film?

B'ellana Torres – she's a character in Star Trek Voyager, half human half Klingon – sounds about right – played by Roxann Dawson.

## Where do you read Cartref?

Feet up on my desk in my office.

## Farewell Cartref

**B**ack in March 1999, I joined what was then the Welsh Federation of Housing Associations as its Marketing Manager.

One of my tasks was to edit Cartref under the watchful eye of its Chief Executive, Gareth Hughes.

The two colour, text heavy, advert-packed newsletter is a million miles away from the one I sit editing for the last time.

The issues that were being written about back in 1999 included:

Affordability, Service Delivery, Investment, Governance and Accountability, Social Inclusion and Values.

If you take a look through this edition, the issues, some might say, have not changed hugely from the ones mentioned above:

Regulation, Collaboration, Innovation, Financial Capacity and investment, European Support, Efficiency, Value for money.

... some may argue that it's simply the same issues using different words. However, I feel that the sector that we lobby, promote, offer guidance and support to has changed significantly over the last eleven years. The size and make up of the sector has been transformed. Partnerships and collaborations have emerged over time that some thought impossible back in 1999. The Essex Review was a huge turning point for the sector.



The sector has shown that it is brave, innovative, proactive, committed and challenging and, no doubt, will continue to do so over the coming months and years.

Whilst the sector has changed, so too has the membership body that represents it. It too has been through hard and challenging times and is stronger for having gone through this. With the forming of the group structure, there will be lots more opportunities for it to support and champion the cause of housing, health and regeneration for the people of Wales.

I have enjoyed compiling, editing, proofing and signing off Cartref over the last decade with the help and support of CHC's Cartref team. I will be handing the next edition of Cartref to the very capable hands of Edwina O'Hart, whilst I concentrate on my HR role within the Group.

Thanks to all those who have contributed to the newsletter and, more importantly, to those that have read it. Signing out ...

**Phillipa Knowles, Director, Central Services and ex editor of Cartref.**

## Building for the Future – a 5 year Strategic Plan for Care & Repair in Wales

The Care & Repair Movement in Wales' 5 year Strategic Plan Building for the Future was officially presented to the Deputy Minister for Housing & Regeneration, Jocelyn Davies AM during Care & Repair Week (17 – 21 January). The strategic plan has been produced in partnership between Care & Repair Cymru, all 22 Care & Repair Agencies in Wales, and key stakeholders.

The Plan aims to briefly summarise the history and success of Care & Repair, set the context for the coming period, and set out high level strategies and actions for the next few years.

We are living in an ageing society which will bring significant challenges in terms of planning public services for older people that meet their needs, aspirations and demands, particularly during a time of significant pressure on the public purse.

Building for the Future aims to provide a framework that:

- recognises and responds to the challenges
- demonstrates the value for money of Care & Repair in helping deliver national and local priorities for older people services in partnership with housing, health and social care

- continues to deliver value for money
- encourages service improvement and
- enables innovation while retaining the core strengths of the Care & Repair approach.

The Plan can be viewed here: <http://www.careandrepair.org.uk/five-year-strategic-plan/>

Photo caption: Jocelyn Davies Deputy Minister for Housing and Regeneration with Chris Jones, Managing Director Care & Repair Cymru





Artist's impression - An artist's impression of the completed scheme.

## Regenerating communities - £13m regeneration of Loudoun Square

A regeneration scheme which aims to transform one of the most deprived areas of Cardiff reached another significant milestone last month when the local community attended a demolition event to mark the start of phase two of the project.

Work on the three-year scheme at Loudoun Square in the Butetown area of the city started in June last year following four years of community consultation and planning. The new scheme includes 62 affordable homes built to Sustainable Homes Code 4 and 5, 11 new retail units, a state of the art health centre, a community hub, enterprise units and a flexible community space.

The project is a collaboration between Cardiff Community Housing Association (CCHA), Cardiff Council and the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, and is being developed by the Leadbitter Group.

Kevin Protheroe, CCHA's Chief Executive said:

'The regeneration of Loudoun Square has been a long time coming for the local community and we are delighted with the progress of the scheme.

The community's pride is immense and it's a privilege to working on their behalf to bring new life into the area. We believe the partnership between CCHA, the council and the health board is a flagship for local cross-sector working to provide high-quality, community based housing and health care.'



The old shops and flats will be replaced with modern facilities.

Phase one of the scheme was completed in December 2010 resulting in completion of the external structures of the 11 new townhouses and two detached homes. The local retailers have been temporarily relocated to the ground floor of the townhouses whilst the new retail units are being built. This innovative solution has enabled them to keep their businesses open during the development. The scheme is due for completion in March 2013.

For further details please visit [www.loudounsquare.org.uk](http://www.loudounsquare.org.uk)



## Are you on board – coming to your town soon

Having held breakfast seminars at last Autumn's political party conferences, we are continuing to engage with the parties in the lead up to the Welsh Assembly Government elections in May by taking to the road to discuss local issues surrounding housing, care and regeneration.

From 28 February until 14 March, we will be visiting each local authority in Wales to hear from spokespeople, tenants and service users about the innovative work that is being done in their localities and to discuss the challenges that lie ahead.

The events are being co-organised by housing associations, Care & Repair agencies and regeneration organisations – all collaborating to give a voice to local communities on these important issues. With only a few weeks to go until the Welsh Assembly Elections, now is the



Edwina O'Hart

time to make it count for housing, care and regeneration.

For further details about the tour or to read more about the Welsh Assembly Elections please visit our website: [www.chcymru.org.uk](http://www.chcymru.org.uk).

**Edwina O'Hart**  
**Communications Manager**

## Evaluation of Care & Repair Agencies



Doing more with less is something all organisations in the voluntary and public sectors need to come to terms with.

Care & Repair as a movement is working to ensure that scarcer resources are used at the front line to help older people to remain living independently in their own homes for longer. This is what older people tell us they want, and this is also far more cost effective than residential care or hospital admission.

In 2011/12, Agencies will receive a 1.9% budget cut, 1% less than the 2.9% budget cut for the overall Care & Repair budget line. Agencies themselves are actively looking at collaboration and closer working with neighbouring Agencies, and exploring social enterprise to help sustain core Care & Repair services.

Last month saw a start of a review of how Agencies are evaluated on behalf of the Welsh Assembly Government by Care & Repair Cymru.

The intention is to slim down paperwork and bureaucracy, move away from output monitoring, and move towards an evaluation framework that considers the quality of governance, self assessment and outcomes.

Overseeing the Review of Evaluation of Care & Repair will be Antonia Forte, CEO of Cynon Taf Community Housing Group. Antonia brings knowledge of Care & Repair, alongside experience of being part of the Essex Review workstream that introduced a new framework for the regulation of housing associations. One of the benefits of streamlining evaluation will be freeing up Agencies and Care & Repair Cymru time, and this can only be good news for the delivery of services to older people at the sharp end. The Review will be undertaken in partnership with Agency Chief Officers, stakeholders and the Welsh Assembly Government and is programmed to be complete by the Autumn, for introduction in April 2012.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the review, please contact Chris Jones or Neil Williams.

**Chris Jones**  
**Care & Repair Cymru**

## HA in Focus: Cadwyn Housing Association



**C**adwyn has a proud history of providing homes to the people of Cardiff for over 35 years, and that success has been underpinned by a culture of innovation and embracing change.

As a community housing association we expect no shortage of challenges and opportunities in the immediate future. The current economic climate is going to present a number of challenges for us and our tenants. Chris O'Meara, Chief Executive, is confident that by working with our tenants and partners we can continue to meet these difficult challenges ahead and have a strong future.

Cadwyn has grown from the traditional roles of a community housing association of managing and maintaining our core stock. We now have years of experience of providing housing related support, directly managing a large family homelessness hostel, and our own in-house maintenance team which carries out the bulk of reactive maintenance and gas servicing.



Cadwyn are presented with the prestigious UK Housing Award for Innovation & Efficiency.

In addition to the current SHG/SCIF funded development, we will be providing more homes through a major expansion of CanDo Lettings which enables access to private sector homes for LHA tenants without the need for on-going subsidy. We have dipped our toe into the intermediate rental market, with some help from Cardiff Council, which is one of the ways we can continue to develop when SHG is decreasing.

As always, providing services that our tenants want in the way they want them is our priority. We are working with tenants to revamp activities, communication channels and ways they can influence what's going on. Further to retaining our Customer Service Excellence accreditation, we are enthusiastic users of new media such as Facebook and Twitter to get dialogue going.

We've been thinking about how we can make our service evaluation more outcome based and will start asking all tenants what they want from us, rather than what they think about us. This will determine our priorities going forward. We have also been working on an outcomes based focus to respond to the new regulatory framework.



Cadwyn Works - Our in-house maintenance team.

We also run the temporary accommodation scheme for Cardiff Council's homelessness service, a private sector leasing scheme and a social enterprise lettings agency. The lettings agency has recently been rebranded as CanDo Lettings and won the 2010 UK Housing Award for Innovation and Efficiency. Like all housing associations, we are currently faced with the challenge of doing more with less.

Our key challenges are to continue to provide new homes and high quality services to our tenants, meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard, reduce our carbon footprint and focus more heavily on wider community engagement and social enterprise.



Cadwyn's Chief Executive Chris O'Meara takes part in an egg and spoon race at Nightingale House's sports day.

This will allow us to work more strategically and also gives the Board of Management a better understanding of our strategies and achievements.

We have just handed over our first Code 4 scheme, and are on site with another that includes some Code 5 homes. The latter shares a site with Cardiff Council's Green Farm hostel that we are refurbishing to BREEAM Excellent standard.

We are on track to substantially meet Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2012, and are working on a proposal to retrofit energy efficient measures in existing homes.



Dale, a resident of the Ty Bronna Estate, makes his own 10:10 pledge at the 'Global Day of Doing'.

Having signed up to an international campaign to cut carbon emissions, our staff and tenants were quick to show their support at a litter pick and woodland clear-out at the Ty Bronna Estate on 10th October 2010 – the 'Global 10:10 Day of Doing'. Staff and tenants worked together to make the estate clean and safe, while also making their own environmental pledges.

We have worked with a number of tenant groups on green projects, and residents at Jubilee Gardens won a TPAS award and Royal Horticultural Society award for their environmental projects.



Children at Jubilee Gardens are presented with the Royal Horticultural Society Award by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff.

Providing opportunities to tenants and local residents is a key part of our work. We have carpentry apprentices, we provide social worker opportunities for students on post graduate courses and we currently host eight Future Jobs Fund work placements in partnership with Cardiff Council.

We've been running classes for our tenants to help them overcome language barriers, and we've helped tenants through courses in back to work skills, financial inclusion, health and wellbeing, and IT. We also retained Best Companies and Investors in People accreditations.

In the tough economic times that we are all currently faced with, it is becoming increasingly important to look at alternative ways of growing the good we can do within our communities and diversifying our incomes, and Social Enterprise has been recognised as a way forward. Building on the success of our CanDo Lettings enterprise, we are working on a number of other exciting projects.

Finally, our Chairman Richard Neale has decided to step down in order to spend more time with his grandchildren. We would like to thank Richard for all his hard work and wish him a very happy and enjoyable retirement.

**Chris O'Meara**  
Chief Executive

## CHC Events

All courses are in Cardiff, except where stated

March	Event
8	An Introduction to Minute Taking
10	Voids Management Excellence
19	The Effective Board Member – Roles & Responsibilities
19	The Effective Board Member – Roles & Responsibilities - North Wales
April	
14	Rent Arrears Masterclass
May	
12	Debt Counselling, Money Management & Financial Inclusion
16	Service Charges - An Introduction
June	
7	Advanced Minute Taking
9	Creating Successful Tenancies
July	
4	Service Charges: Practicalities, Problems and Solutions
7	Managing Complaints
20	Repairs for Non Technical Staff

For further information, please contact Jennifer Horton, Events Officer on 029 2055 7410, or [jennifer-horton@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:jennifer-horton@chcymru.org.uk).

## Conferences

19-20 May
Resources Conference, Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells
8-10 June
Housing Europe Conference, Cardiff Museum
14-15 July
Development and Regeneration Conference Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells
6-7 October
Housing Management and Maintenance Conference Metropole Hotel, Llandrindod Wells
Annual Conference – to be confirmed
Annual Conference – to be confirmed

Go to our website for further information or to book your place at any of these events:  
[http://www.chcymru.org.uk/chc\\_dev\\_final//events/training.cfm?mainpagelet=eventsByType](http://www.chcymru.org.uk/chc_dev_final//events/training.cfm?mainpagelet=eventsByType)



For further information, please contact Rhian Robinson, Events Programme Coordinator, on 029 2055 7413 or [Rhian-robinson@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:Rhian-robinson@chcymru.org.uk)