

The magazine for residents of Wales & West Housing

FREE

In Touch

SPRING 2019 | ISSUE 97

**SMILES ALL
ROUND AS
HIGHTOWN
CELEBRATES**

**BUILDING
WITH NATURE
IN MIND**

**MEET THE
WINNERS OF
OUR MAD
AWARDS**

Getting ready for Universal Credit



Cyfathrebu yn Gymraeg Welsh Communications

Os ydych yn dymuno i ni ysgrifennu atoch yn Gymraeg, a fydddech gystal â rhoi gwybod i ni. Mae modd i chi wneud hyn trwy siarad â'ch Swyddog Tai neu ffonio ein Canolfan Gwasanaethau Cwsmeriaid ar
0800 052 2526.

If you would like us to write to you in Welsh please let us know. You can do this by speaking to your Housing Officer or by phoning our Customer Service Centre on
0800 052 2526.

Contact Us

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You can also contact members of staff direct by their email. For example, joe.bloggs@wwha.co.uk

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Other languages and formats

If you would like a copy of this edition of In Touch in Welsh or another language or format, for example in large print, please let us know and we will help you.

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WELCOME FROM ANNE

Dear residents

Welcome to the Spring edition of In Touch, the magazine for you our residents.

The theme of this edition is Giving Back and nowhere is that more evident than at our Making A Difference Awards. Once again this year we celebrated the achievements of so many of our residents who have given back to their communities in time, money, volunteering and fundraising.

We also revisit the many organisations which have benefitted from almost £87,000 in sponsorship during the last 12 months. These cover a wide range of community activities such as night shelters for the homeless, family fun days and business and training opportunities to help our residents.

You may have noticed that the wrapping that this edition

was posted to you in feels different to past editions. That's because we've swapped it for a more environmentally friendly wrapping made from a rather unusual waste product. You can find out what it is later.

It's one of the many ways we are giving back to the environment. Another is the way our development teams are working with the environment on new construction sites to make room for nature.

In addition, there's the ever-popular prize puzzles, craft, cooking and gardening ideas.

I hope you enjoy reading.

Anne Hinchey
Group Chief Executive

If you have any thoughts on In Touch or how we could improve, please let us know. We will continue to listen to you. Simply email contactus@wwha.co.uk or speak to our PR and Communications Team on 0800 052 2526.

HELPING TO PUT A

Why our new mailing wrapping for In Touch can

Plastic waste is a massive problem around the world which is why we are taking steps to reduce our impact on the environment.

You may have noticed something different about the bag this edition of your In Touch magazine arrived in. That's because we've swapped the recyclable plastic mailing bags we previously used for a new bioplastic film.

Bioplastics are an alternative to plastic and are made from renewable resources like natural and sustainable potatoes instead of crude oil. Using potato products such as potato starch and other waste from the food industry, means that the wrapping is 100% compostable and eco-friendly. You can put it in with your food waste, garden compost or in green council recycling bins. Plus it doesn't give off harmful toxins.

We have been working with Welsh printing business Xpedient Print Services to source the new bags as part of our commitment to the environment.

This is one step in our commitment to reduce reliance on single use plastics. Some plastics can take years to decompose. They also break down into smaller pieces called 'microplastics' which can contaminate our soil and waterways and oceans, killing wildlife.

Anne Hinchey, Group Chief Executive of Wales & West Housing said: "Single use plastics have become a huge issue for the environment. With the World Economic Forum estimating that about 150 million tonnes of plastic is currently floating in our oceans, we all need to take steps to change.

"Some people think their single contribution won't make much of a difference, but if every one of us makes that one change it can."

"National organisations and charities are starting to use bioplastics for their mailings and we believe we are the first housing organisation in Wales to make the change as part of our ongoing commitment to making a difference to sustainability and the environment."

Recently Wales & West Housing was awarded the Level 2 Green Dragon Award for environmental management.

Some of our recent green initiatives include:

- A new housing development of 14 homes that are capable of generating their own energy at Bryn Bragl, Bridgend, which is partly funded by the WG Innovative Housing Programme.
- Using more home grown



STOP TO PLASTIC

be put in your food recycling or compost bins

timber in our schemes for example 11 new flats at our scheme Cwrt Rhys Fynach at Rhos on Sea.

- Routinely fitting solar panels and increased levels of insulation in our homes and installing air source heat pumps in a number of our homes.
- Investing £35 million over the next three years to upgrade windows and doors, renew boilers and make our homes more energy efficient.





Happy Birthday Hightown!

WWH residents and the community turned out in force for a fifth birthday party at our Hightown Community Resource Centre.

A day of free events for children and families was organised to mark five years since the centre opened in Wrexham, North Wales.

Activities included face painting, story reading, karate and bingo, plus performances from Wrexham Singing Hands and a choir from local primary school Ysgol Bodhyfryd.

The event was opened by WWH Group Chief Executive Anne Hinchey and attendees included Wrexham Mayor Councillor Andy Williams.

Annette Bryden, Hightown Community Resource Centre Manager, said: "We're incredibly proud of the important role

which the centre plays in the community and it was fantastic to see so many people at the event.

"We had some groups with us who have been here since it opened, as well as newer users

of the centre who kindly put on displays and activities for us.

"Thanks to the Friends of Hightown Community Resource Centre group, who worked tirelessly to put on such a special event which will live long in the



Find out more about activities at the centre on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/hightowncrc/>



memory.”

The centre was built five years ago along with hundreds of new homes and a new medical centre as part of a multi-million-pound regeneration of the Hightown area of Wrexham.

Wrexham MP Ian Lucas said: “The warm welcome, astounding number of activities for all ages, the number of agencies working so well together and the care that is taken of this wonderful building are just some of the ways by which people living locally are made to feel that they’re truly part of a very strong community. Congratulations on the first five years and long may the centre continue.”



Join Spring Clean Cymru

Keep Wales Tidy has launched a month-long campaign to get everyone involved in cleaning up the environment on your doorstep.

The aim is to inspire thousands of people to join forces to collect and safely dispose of litter from the streets, parks and beaches, recycling as much as possible.

Not only does litter spoil the natural beauty of our environment, it also poses a threat to marine and wildlife.

The RSPCA recorded more than 7,000 incidents of animals being injured because of litter last year, and we know that 80% of litter that ends in the sea begins on land.

The ‘big pick’ runs until 23 April. To find out how you can get involved either by joining a litter pick near where you live or organising one of your own visit www.keepwalestidy.cymru/pages/category/spring-clean-cymru

Text reminders

– improving our service to you

We are starting a text messaging reminder service for your repairs appointments with Cambria Maintenance Services. When an appointment is made you will receive a text with the details of the appointment, and then you will have another reminder 24 hours before.

Please make sure we have your up to date mobile number so you can be kept informed of your Cambria Maintenance Services repairs appointments. If you don’t have a mobile phone don’t worry – your appointment will be made with you the usual way over the

phone with our repairs team, this is an additional reminder service.

Here is an example of what the text will look like:



Investing in Extra

A new WWH extra care scheme currently being built in Holywell will be called Plas yr Ywen.

The facility is set to open in Spring 2020 and will be our second in Flintshire, North Wales, alongside Llys Jasmine in Mold.

The name for the 55 apartment scheme – which translates as Yew Hall in English – takes its lead from a Yew tree which has been preserved at the site of the new scheme.

WWH is providing the new facility in partnership with Flintshire Council and Anwyl Construction.

The new name was revealed as members of Flintshire Council visited the site on Halkyn Road in the town to check how work was progressing.

Anne Hinchey, Group Chief Executive of Wales & West Housing, said: "We're thrilled to see how quickly work has

progressed with the scheme and can't wait to see the first residents move in early next year.

"We're equally proud that this important new development for Flintshire will benefit the North Wales economy with Anwyl Construction as lead contractors.

"The number of extra care living spaces provided by Wales & West Housing in the county will almost double once Plas yr Ywen opens, helping to meet the growing demand for this type of accommodation in the county."

Flintshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Social Services, Councillor Christine Jones, said: "This is another great step forward for our latest extra care scheme in Flintshire. With the Council and Wales & West Housing working in partnership together, we are all looking forward to seeing this scheme come to fruition.



Work starts on Aberystwyth extra care scheme

Work has also started to clear a site overlooking Aberystwyth harbour to make way for another new extra care scheme.

Ceredigion County Council has granted full planning permission for the 56-bed extra care scheme on the site of Plas Morolwg to the south of the town centre.

It is hoped that building work will start at the end of April, subject to contracts being finalised, with the first residents expected to move in early in 2021.

Built over three and four storeys, the extra care scheme will have 56 independent one and two-bedroom apartments, with 24-hour on-site care and support for adults who need it.

Wales & West Housing's Development Manager, Gareth Thomas, said: "This is an exciting time for us to be working in partnership with Ceredigion County Council and Welsh Government to bring this extra care scheme to Aberystwyth. "There is clearly demand in

the north Ceredigion area for care and housing for older and vulnerable people under one roof.

"It has been some time in the planning, but we are looking forward to working with the community to bring modern, much-needed extra care housing to the town, which local people can be proud of."

The plans were first unveiled to local residents and councillors at a consultation event held at Penparcau last April.

Care



“ Plas yr Ywen will provide excellent facilities to make a real difference to residents’ lives. ”



Shaping our homes for the future with residents in mind

We’re reviewing the way we design our homes for older people and would like to hear from the people who know best – the residents who are living in our schemes.

We plan to contact some of our residents living in some of our over-55s schemes to ask for feedback on the design of our schemes.

What works for you in your home? What improvements do you think we could build into new schemes that might benefit other residents?

What matters for you? Do you use the parking spaces at your scheme? Would a larger communal garden be more useful to older people? Do you like drying your washing on communal washing lines? Would allotments or raised beds be helpful?

These are just some of the questions we want to ask.

We plan to write or telephone a selection of residents living in our over-55s schemes at random to ask if you would like to take part. If you are invited and agree to take part, a member of our development team will then arrange to visit you in your home to talk to you in more detail about your opinions on the design of your home. We look forward to working with you.



Bringing new homes to Barry

Work is due to start this summer on a scheme to bring 72 apartments for rent to the seaside town of Barry.

WWH is working with development partners Jehu Group to build two blocks of one and two bedroom apartments on Subway Road.

Built in two four and five storey blocks, the development is expected to be complete in two years.

The scheme, which has been approved by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, will regenerate an area of the town on land being sold by the British Ports Authority.

A popular tourist town, Barry is famous for its funfair and the TV comedy series Gavin & Stacey,

yet there is currently an acute need for affordable homes. It has one of the fastest growing housing markets. In the past year house prices have risen faster than anywhere else in the UK. There are around 400 families and individuals currently waiting for suitable affordable accommodation on the Council's Homes4U Waiting list and it's been estimated that the town needs 576 new affordable homes to be built every year.

The new site is a short way from the Barry Waterfront development, where WWH manages several units in the private development of more than 2,000 homes built by private

developers Taylor Wimpey, Barratt and Persimmon.

Wales & West Housing's Construction Manager, Grant Prosser, said: "We are looking forward to working in partnership with the Jehu Group on this development, which we hope will help to address the housing need in the town."

"This is a great opportunity to redevelop this prominent site and help ease the shortage of affordable homes for rent in the area."

When completed, the homes will be let to people currently on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Homes4U list in the area.

New WWH homes for Ruabon

Work is due to start soon on a row of new WWH homes in Ruabon following the demolition of a trio of half-finished homes.

The eyesore properties had been vacant since 2004 and will now be replaced by affordable homes for the village, on the outskirts of Wrexham.

WWH Construction Manager, Matt Hall, said: "We're delighted that work is finally underway on site for this small development, which will provide

three affordable, high quality and energy efficient homes for families in the Ruabon area.

"The homes will be among the first to be built for us by Brenig Construction, one of our new construction partners in North Wales as we increase our house-building programme across the region."

The homes have been welcomed by Wrexham Councillor David Griffiths, lead member for housing.

He said: "This is very exciting development in a long-running partnership between ourselves, Wales & West Housing, Welsh Government and Ruabon Community Council, and I'd like to thank all those involved for their co-operation."

Ruabon Councillor Dana Davies said: "I'm extremely pleased that the demolition is finally taking place and hopeful that families could be moving into the three new properties by the end of this year."

Building quality homes

Ensuring homes are completed to a high standard continues to be an area of focus especially homes provided by large house builders through the planning process. We want homes to be defect free when new residents move in and sometimes this leads to delays in handovers.

We are also focusing on the design of our new homes and are keen to get more feedback from new residents about the internal layout, fixtures and fittings and what, if anything, they would want to be different.



101 new homes were started in last quarter of 2018



41 new homes were also completed

IN THE PIPELINE

South Wales

Bridgend: Plans have been approved for 10 flats in the seaside town of Porthcawl. Our new development partners P+P Builders will start on site later this year.

West Wales

Pembrokeshire: Work has just started to bring 14 new homes to a greenfield site in the coastal town of Newport.

The development of 6 one-bedroom flats, 7 two and three-bedroom houses and a one-bedroom bungalow is being built on land off Feidr Eglwys.

Morgan Construction are building the development, which is due for completion early next year.

North Wales

Flintshire: We have submitted

plans to build 6 new homes on the site of an old church in a North Wales village.

Consent has been granted to demolish the United Reformed Church in Northop and we have submitted plans to Flintshire Council to replace it with 4 houses and 2 apartments.

If accepted, the new properties will provide much-needed affordable homes in the area.

Also in Flintshire, we have applied for permission to build **23 affordable new homes in place of a derelict hotel in Mold.**

The Bryn Awel Hotel has been vacant since closing in 2011 and the site was bought by WWH last year. Our plans are for affordable



Bryn Awel Hotel

housing in the form of one and two bed apartments for social rent.

Approval to demolish the hotel was granted in January.



Follow us on Instagram to see more pics of our new developments: [instagram.com/wwhousing](https://www.instagram.com/wwhousing)

Looking for an easy access home in Cardiff?



Our new £10million scheme at Pentland Close, Llanishen, Cardiff aims to create 82 new homes for people who require easy access accommodation.

Pentland Close is bringing modern new homes to one of Cardiff's most popular residential suburbs, Llanishen. Aimed primarily at over 55s age group, and those with accessibility needs, it has been designed to

create a close-knit community of apartments and promote social inclusion.

Our scheme recently won a design award at the Welsh Housing Awards.

WWH is working with Cardiff Accessible Homes to create homes to meet the needs of people who have been waiting a long time for such homes. The homes will be affordable to rent

and accessible to people with mobility problems.

We are taking design advice from specialist organisations including the Alzheimer's Society and RNIB.

Built in five blocks the scheme has 16 ground floor flats and all flats have wider doorways and wet rooms with a spacious open plan kitchen, dining and living room area. There will also be a lift to all floors and storage and charging points on the ground floor for mobility scooters.

Construction work is going well and contractors, Hale Construction, aim to complete the scheme ready for the first residents to move in early next year.

WWH Housing Manager, Chris Walton, said: "The homes we are building at Pentland Close will be modern, warm and attractive for residents. There are around 2000 people over the age of 50 on Cardiff Council's housing waiting list wanting one bedroom accessible accommodation."

"When this development is complete we hope it will potentially free up many larger social family homes as older

'Don't miss out, register now!'

Newport locals urged to apply for new homes at Iard Y Parrog



Wales & West Housing is working with Pembrokeshire County Council to bring new homes that local people can afford to rent in the popular coastal town of Newport.

WWH has contracted

Haverfordwest company WB Griffiths to build eight new homes at Iard Y Parrog after buying the former Parrog Yard site from Newport Town Council. The total cost of the development is £1 million.

When the development is completed later this summer, the two-bedroom houses and one and two-bedroom apartments will be allocated through Choice Homes, Pembrokeshire's local letting scheme to local families and individuals in need.

Popular with holidaymakers and second home owners, property prices in Newport are above the national average, putting many homes out of the reach of local people making it difficult for these people to afford to live in the place where they were born and bred.

According to the property website Zoopla, the average price of a two-bedroom house or apartment in the town is £238,328 and a semi-detached home is £287,760.

WWH Housing Manager Glenda Bowen said: "There is a great need for these homes in Newport. People from the town

single people and couples, who are currently under-occupying larger family homes, will be able to move into new, modern homes which will meet their needs as they get older”.

The development of four and five-storey blocks will create a community of 82 one and two bedroom apartments with communal balconies and social areas, where residents can meet up and make friends. There is also off road parking.

Llanishen is a popular suburb of Cardiff with a vibrant community of shops, leisure facilities, employment opportunities and support services. There is a bus stop and train station on the doorstep with regular links to the city centre and nearby communities with the aim of reducing car use for residents.

Ground floor apartments are being offered to applicants on Cardiff Accessible Homes’ register and shortlisting will start this summer for first floor apartments and above.

Anyone interested in moving to Pentland Close, Llanishen, can apply to the Common Housing Register.

Wales & West Housing residents can request a transfer application form to join the register by contacting our Housing Options Team on 0800 052 2526.

have had to move out of the area where they grew up just because they can no longer afford to live there. We want to make sure people are given the opportunity to bring their families up in the place where they belong and at a rent they can afford.

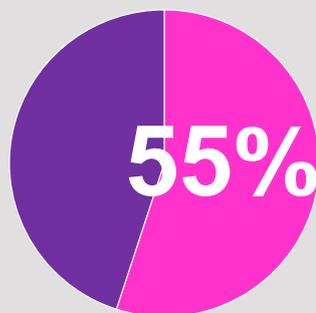
“We are working with the local authority and Newport Town Council to make sure the new homes at Iard Y Parrog are allocated to those local people needing housing.”

Anyone interested in moving to Iard Y Parrog should register their interest with Choice Homes. To register visit www.choicehomespembrokeshire.org

For further information visit WWH’s website wwha.co.uk/parrog/Newport or call 01239 712 013.

Listening to what residents want

A number of local authorities in Wales are reviewing their Common Registers. We are an active partner in all of these and we make sure that we are listening to what you tell us is important in terms of a new home, such as the right location, to help in the review of these registers.



of available homes were let right first time for residents

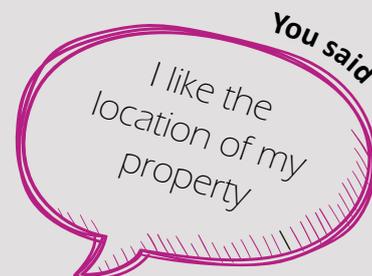


up
6%
on last year



was the average time it took to let an empty property

10 less than this time last year



Making space for

How much of the UK do you think is built on? Ask most people and they will probably would say one half or one third.

However, the reality is much less with only 7% of the UK built upon - a fact highlighted in a recent campaign by environmental organisation Friends of the Earth.

Friends of the Earth is campaigning to make more space for nature everywhere, bringing nature to life in villages, towns and cities and where we live, learn and work.

As part of the campaign it released a fascinating video called 'The UK in 100 seconds', with each second of the film equating to 1% of what the country looks like from the air.

Just five seconds of the film journeys through homes and gardens with the largest proportion being woodland, crops and pastures.

With over half of UK wild species in decline and 1 in 10 at risk of extinction, the film asks the question can we make more space for nature?

Shayne Hembrow, Deputy Group Chief Executive at WWH, said:

"This puts into perspective what Britain actually looks like and gives a real sense of proportion, which is important when we are planning to build more much-needed affordable homes."

"While we are playing our part in helping the Welsh Government to meet its pledge to deliver 20,000 new affordable homes, protecting and making room for wildlife is also important to us. We are looking at ways we can make more space for nature everywhere, including our existing homes and new developments."

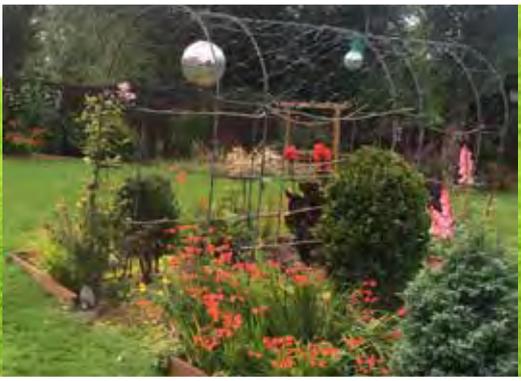
We worked with ecology specialists and Bridgend County Borough Council to redevelop a

former farm site in Coity, while protecting the native species of bats already living on site. With evidence of bats roosting in the roof of the derelict farm building, we worked with nature conservationists to build a new "bat house" on the site allowing the bats to move in before demolition.

In Ruabon we commissioned a bat survey and took advice from ecologists before going ahead with plans to redevelop the site of the former Victoria Garage.

In Llanbedr, Powys, we are supporting the creation of a nature garden and allotments alongside new homes at St Peter's Close. The community council is working with the community and local schools to create a place where nature and

nature



Resident Kathryn Burnand created a beautiful communal garden



The bat house in Coity

local people can live side-by-side.

Through our Making A Difference grants we have also supported residents across Wales to create their own community gardens, to grow vegetables, fruit and flowers to attract insects and birds.

Every year we celebrate these achievements in the Going Green category at our annual Making a Difference Awards.

This year Kathryn Burnand of Prestatyn won the award for creating a community garden which she shares with her neighbours as well as an abundance of wildlife including badgers, squirrels, butterflies and bees.

Shayne added: "Being outdoors and gardening not only encourages wildlife, but it also helps improve people's mental health and

wellbeing. Why wouldn't you want to make room for nature on your doorstep?"

To watch the full film 'The UK in 100 seconds' visit <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/nature/space-nature-uk-100-seconds>

Giving back to the community

Every year Wales & West Housing supports grass roots projects which make a difference to our residents.

In the past year more than 50 organisations and individuals in Wales shared a cash pot of almost £87,000 from Wales & West Housing in 2018.

Sports teams, community events, housing and homelessness projects, education and family charities and arts and music were some of the beneficiaries of funding through our Making A Difference sponsorship programme.

We supported housing projects such as Boomerang Cardiff, a charity which is dedicated to supporting the homeless and tackling poverty, Wrexham Night Shelter, TPAS Cymru and Cymorth Cymru.

We also supported 17 sports teams or projects across Wales helping with new training and match day kit or funding to help stage tournaments.

We have supported community projects including gardening groups in Langford Close, Wrexham; Cyfarthfa in Merthyr; Tŷ Dewi in Rhondda and Buxton Court in Rhyl.

Educational projects for young people have also benefitted. For example, we helped to fund a professional video making course

in Twyncarmel, Merthyr and an internet safety project with North Wales Police in Nant y Môr, Prestatyn. Residents also had help to become entrepreneurs and run their own business in the shape of sponsorship for a Pop Up business school.

Other smaller community projects to benefit included community carnivals, a Christmas lights switch on and a flower festival.

Some of the organisations and events we have sponsored during the last 12 months include:

North Wales

- **Wrexham Night Shelter** – funded 12 camp beds and bedding for a new Night Shelter at churches in Wrexham set up by Housing Justice Cymru, supported by the Diocese of St Asaph.
- **FOCUS Wales 2019** – supporting the volunteering programme for this annual international music and arts festival in Wrexham to create new opportunities for our residents and the wider community to get involved with the event.
- **Hawarden Youth Project** – part-funding for summer

sports attended by more than 100 children and run by Aura Leisure and North Wales Police to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area.

South Wales

- **Eisteddfod Yr Urdd Cardiff Vale 2019** - £3,000 of Making A Difference funding will be used to support the Welcoming Scheme at the annual youth Eisteddfod in Cardiff this summer.
- **Rhydycar Bowls Association, Merthyr Tydfil** - once again we're sponsoring the WWH challenge cup.
- **Canton Rangers, Cardiff** received sponsorship for training tops for their junior team.

West Wales

- **The Hub at Penparcau, Aberystwyth** - our £2,000 sponsorship funded a new IT centre to help residents in Aberystwyth to get online. Three laptops, a printer and software has been bought by the Penparcau Community Forum.

- **Wales National Tug of War Championships** – more than 2000 people descended on the Ceredigion seaside town of Aberaeron for this event in July 2018, funded through Wales & West Housing's lead sponsorship.
- **Play areas in Cardigan** - we provided £4000 match funding towards equipment on a new play area between Golwg y Castell and Awel yr Afon.

There are a large number of young families living on the two estates and the play area has become an important community facility.

- **At Drefach Felindre** park we sponsored a summer playscheme



Wales National Tug of War Championships



Canton Rangers, Cardiff

Play area in Cardigan





TANISHA THOMAS



IAN STOKER

from Cardigan, won the Community Heroes Award for leading a one-man crusade to clear litter and dog mess from the streets and beauty spots of his home town. He spends up to nine hours a day collecting, on average, an astounding eight kilos of dog mess a week and countless bags of rubbish.



ROGER NICHOLAS

Grandfather and retired miner **Roger Nicholas** of Maesteg, near Bridgend, won the Fresh Start Award for his determination in beating an alcohol addiction that had affected his life and family for more than 40 years.



NEIL BUFFTON

Neil Buffton, a young resident at Llys Glan Yr Afon extra care scheme in Newtown, Powys, was named Wellbeing Champion for overcoming personal barriers and make life better for his neighbours by setting up a new branch of the charity Men's Shed and encouraging them to take part in activities.

Giving back to their communities

- the residents who are making a difference

Residents who have devoted themselves to giving back to their communities were recognised at Wales & West Housing's annual Making A Difference Awards 2019.

Now in its 11th year, the awards are open to the 22,000 residents living in Wales & West Housing properties across Wales and celebrate good neighbours, local heroes, environmental and community projects and those who have made inspirational and motivational changes to their lives.

Among the winners were a young female motorbike champion who fought a life-changing cancer diagnosis and a pensioner who devoted 20 years to improving a North Wales community.

National Motorcross champion rider Tanisha Thomas of Cardigan and John Williams of Barracksfield, Wrexham, both won an Outstanding Achievement Award.

Tanisha, 24, was presented with the award for the inspirational way she fought hard to learn to walk again and regain her title as National Motorcross Champion three years after doctors found a cancerous tumour on her spine.

John won the award for devoting the last 20 years of his life to making a difference to the lives of families on the Barracksfield estate in Wrexham, as well as social housing residents across Wales.

Other award winners at the ceremony at the Vale Resort, Hensol, near Cardiff, were:



IRIS EVANS

Retired nurse **Iris Evans** of Wrexham was named fundraising champion. She volunteered and raised funds for Wrexham Maelor Hospital's Voluntary Service for 21 years and after retiring started knitting to raise money for cancer charities, the SANDS support service for bereaved parents and residents at Pendine Park care home.



KATHRYN BURNAND

Kathryn Burnand won the Going Green Award for transforming an overgrown patch of land near her home in Prestatyn into a communal garden. Kathryn has organised BBQs for everyone living in and around the scheme and shares the surplus fruit and veg grown in the garden.



WENDY BLEWETT

Wendy Blewett won the Good Neighbour Award for making a difference to her neighbours at Oldwell Court retirement scheme in Cardiff. She makes and delivers cakes and presents for birthdays and special occasions. She organises fundraising and charity events.

Rhys Gibson, of main sponsors Gibson Specialist Technical Services, said: "We have sponsored the event for many years and every year I am honoured to help to celebrate the achievements of so many incredible Wales & West Housing residents.

Anne Hinchey, Group Chief Executive of Wales & West Housing, said: "There were so many deserving winners and finalists at this year's awards. It was humbling and inspiring to hear their stories of how they make a difference to their own lives and their communities."

Money raised from the event goes into Wales & West Housing's Making A Difference grant scheme, which helps to kickstart community and environmental projects and training and employment opportunities for residents.



Above: Residents celebrating at the Making a Difference Awards Ceremony 2019

MAD AWARDS 2019 FINALISTS

Wellbeing Champion, sponsored by Hale Construction

Winner: Neil Buffton, Llys Glan Yr Afon, Newtown
Finalists: Kate Hancock, Llys Owen, Cardigan; Refresh and Community Gardening Group from Ely, Cardiff; Joyce Brown, Nant Y Mor, Prestatyn

Good Neighbour, sponsored by Jamson Estates

Winner: Wendy Blewett of Oldwell Court, Cardiff
Finalists: Sarah Wilson from Queensferry; Reg Baulch of St Mellons, Cardiff and Pat Rogers of Limebourne Court, Cardiff

Fresh Start, sponsored by Lee Poole & Sons

Winner: Roger Nicholas, Bridgend
Finalists: Elaine Mayhew, Rhyl; Jackson Gray and Amey Parker, Aberystwyth

Going Green sponsored by Contour Showers

Winner: Kathryn Burnand, Prestatyn
Finalists: Ali Cocks, Aberystwyth; Kathleen Simpson & Graham Jones, Hanover Court, Llandudno; Iorwerth Jones of Llys Hafren

Community Heroes, sponsored by PMD

Winner: Ian Stoker, Cardigan
Finalists: Unity group from Caerau, Cardiff; Tommy Guest, Flint; Christine Foulkes and Val Evans, St Clements Court, Cardiff

Fundraising Champion, sponsored by MACP

Winner: Iris Evans, Wrexham
Finalists: Vera Piper, Western Court, Cardiff; Steve Derrett, Oakmeadow Court, Cardiff; Agnes Prosser, Gerddi Ffynon, Aberystwyth

Outstanding Achievement, sponsored by CJS Electrical

Winners: Tanisha Thomas, Cardigan; John Williams, Wrexham

Sponsors of the MAD Awards 2019 included:

Gibson STS, Jamson Estates Ltd, Lee Poole and Sons, Contour Showers, PMD, Hale Construction Ltd, CJS Electrical, MACP, Ian Williams Ltd & Dulux, Thermal Earth, Jehu, J&P Windows Ltd, Anwyl, EWIS, Independence Solutions, Snowdonia, P+P Builders, Days Rental, Preseli Home Improvements Ltd, WCS environmental and building maintenance; Polyflor; 1st Communications; Xpedient Print; Envirovent; Symphony; Brenig; Seddon Construction Ltd; Stelrad; Vaillant; CR Creative; Inhouse Manager; Aico; Thorlux; M&K Pest Control; Physical Adaptation Solutions; Castlemead; Vale Resort; Village Hotel.

Universal Credit Special

What you need to know about the Universal Credit Roll-out



The government plans to start transferring a selection of people from existing benefits or tax credits onto Universal Credit from July 2019. This process is known as **managed migration** and the Secretary of State has announced approximately 10,000 people will be transferred in 2019 as part of a pilot scheme.

If you are not part of the initial 10,000 people selected (and the Department of Work and Pensions, DWP, will contact you if you are one) you won't be transferred over to Universal Credit until the pilot scheme has been completed and assessed.



Severe Disability Premium (SDP) and Universal Credit

If you receive SDP as part of any benefit you currently claim you will not be moved across to UC until managed migration takes place.



Universal Credit Two-child Limit

Starting from 1 February 2019, families with more than two children who make new claims for Universal Credit will no longer be directed to claim legacy benefits but be able to claim Universal Credit. Families who were awarded Universal Credit after April 2017 and have two or fewer children but have then gone on to have a third child or more, will have the two-child limit applied.



Universal Credit Work Allowance Increases

Work allowances are the amount of your earnings from employment that you are allowed to keep before it is taken into account as income for Universal Credit. These will increase by £1000 for the year, meaning that people in work who have children or have limited capability for work (or their partner has limited capability for work) will benefit by up to £630 per year. However if you are a worker who has no children or you or your partner have not been assessed as having limited capability for work, you will still not receive help in the form of work allowances.

National Minimum Wage Increase

The National Living Wage (for those over 25) will increase by 4.9% from £7.83 per hour to £8.21 per hour in April 2019.

The National Minimum Wage increases from £7.38 per hour to £7.70 per hour for people aged 21 to 24; and from £5.90 per hour to £6.15 per hour for people aged 18 to 20. There is more information about the National Minimum Wage on the Gov.uk website.



Universal Credit and Mixed Aged Couples

From 15 May, couples where one partner is aged above Pension Credit age and the other is aged under Pension Credit age, will no longer be able to make a new claim for Pension Credit. Instead they will have to claim Universal Credit.

Mixed aged couples on Pension Credit can continue to remain on Pension Credit as long as they continue to satisfy the other qualifying conditions for Pension Credit.



What is Universal Credit (UC)?

Universal Credit is a new benefit that combines multiple benefits into one monthly payment. Anyone under 65 who currently claims Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and/or Tax Credits will eventually be moved onto this new system.

When will it affect me?

It is now being rolled out in all areas of Wales and soon anyone making

a new claim for the benefits listed above will have to make a claim for UC.

Can I do anything to prepare?

- **Getting online** - UC claims are made and managed online. If you don't currently use the internet start to think of ways that you could access it, for example many libraries or council buildings have beginner courses to show you the basics. As well as preparing for UC this also opens up numerous options to save money, from using comparison sites to monitoring energy usage and bills.
- **Budgeting monthly** - UC will be paid monthly which may differ from the way you currently

receive your income. It is therefore important to make sure your budget is in good health so that you find this transition easier than if you are struggling to balance your income and expenditure now. Even though UC may not be imminent for you, now is the time to act as getting a handle on your finances isn't easy. Our website has many tips about managing your money and also highlights websites that offer further information.

- **Getting a bank account** – you may currently use a post office account that only allows you to withdraw your money or you may find you are incurring bank charges from the account you currently use. If

Support for residents who are struggling

84%



of residents are paying their rent on time and paying off arrears – that's 3% more than the same time last year



There were **0** evictions for rent arrears during Quarter 4 2018

We have recognised that residents with variable incomes, such as those in part-time employment, self-employed or on zero-hour contracts, are often those who may be finding it difficult to keep a regular payment plan.

We are continuing to improve our systems to help us spot when someone may be starting to struggle and allow us to offer help and advice as quickly as possible.



In the last quarter of 2018 an average of

5,282 residents

paid their rent by Direct Debit

Did you know?

You can request to set up a Direct Debit on our new website - www.wwha.co.uk



this is the case, now is the time to open a new bank account and enable yourself to manage your money as conveniently and effectively as possible. This will allow you to pay your bills like rent and council tax by Direct Debit, meaning you don't have to remember to pay or visit a shop or Post Office.

What happens if I do claim it?

Once you have completed your online claim you will be offered an advance payment to help you manage the five-week period before your UC starts. This advance will be made up of your standard allowance (e.g. what would have been your Jobseekers Allowance, Income

support or Employment and Support Allowance) and also an amount towards your rent. It is important that if you take the full advance that you contact us regarding making a rent payment. This allowance will then be recovered through your ongoing UC payments over the next 12 months so ensure that you can live on this reduced amount over that period.

You will also be asked to attend an appointment in the Jobcentre to provide ID documents and to discuss your claimant commitment. Your claimant commitment will involve a discussion with a work coach and is your record of the responsibilities that you have accepted in return for receiving Universal Credit, and the

consequences of not meeting them (ultimately a sanction).

When will I get my first payment?

You will receive your first payment approximately 5 weeks after you have made your claim online.

Where can I get help?

If you are struggling with any aspect of your UC claim give your Housing Officer a call. They will be able to advise you of how to resolve the issue or refer you to one of our Tenancy Support Officers if you need assistance.

Want to work

– but not quite ready?....there is help

There are lots of agencies out there who can help you improve your chances of getting a job.

But finding out who are they, what do they do and how to get in touch with them isn't easy. That's why we have teamed up with a number of agencies who work across Wales, and local agencies, to help you.

We asked three different employment support agencies who work with a wide variety of people across Wales to tell us how they can help you.

Remploy

Putting ability first

Who we are

We help support disabled people and those with health conditions into work.

What we do

We deliver a range of programmes and services.

We can help with

The Work & Health Programme, a tailored, community-based employment support for people with a disability or health condition, and the long-term unemployed.

- The Work and

Health Programme Wales offers up to 21 months of support from a Remploy key worker, both pre-employment and in the workplace

- Access to a wide range of local support, including health and social care services, skills programmes, drug and alcohol addiction specialists, and advice and counselling.
- Specialist Employment Service- we match specialist coaches with people with multiple, complex barriers to employment who need more support, lasting up to 12 months. The coach

can either support the customer directly into employment or advise their JCP Work Coach on their recommended next steps.

- Individual Placement & Support (IPS) for people with severe mental health conditions, giving intensive support to an individual and job searches, followed by placement in paid employment and in-work support.

Who we help

Rita was suffering from severe anxiety, depression and panic attacks and had been out of work for 18 months, which knocked her confidence. An experienced

administrator, Rita's advisor worked with partner agencies to help her with health and wellbeing through a series of workshops and 24-hour online support. As she grew in confidence, Rita was able to work with local colleges who helped her find and apply for jobs online. Several interviews later Rita was delighted to be offered a job with a local company as a receptionist / administrator.

Contact

Website: www.remploy.co.uk
Tel: 0300 456 8110
8am – 8pm Mon- Fri
9am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday





Rhieni, Gofal Plant a Chyflogaeth Parents, Childcare and Employment

Who we are

PaCE (Parents Childcare and Employment scheme) is funded by Welsh Government and the European Social Fund (ESF). We help improve employment prospects for parents where childcare is their main barrier to accessing training or job opportunities. PaCE will cover the cost of childcare while parents undertake training, work experience or volunteering and gain the skills they need to get a job.

What we do

PaCE advisors support parents who wish to engage with the project on a voluntary basis, and work towards realistic and achievable goals. They help to improve skills, tackle low confidence/self-esteem, and move parents closer to sustainable employment. PaCE offers one to one support to eligible parents to establish their individual childcare needs and employment goals. The PaCE adviser talks through options with the parent, including solutions for overcoming childcare costs

to enable the parents to train, volunteer or take up work experience to improve job prospects. It can provide one to one support in family friendly locations, supporting parents in their search for training and employment.

We can help with

- 'Better Off' in work calculations
- providing employment advice and guidance, including self employment
- identifying childcare options
- funding childcare
- identifying training requirements
- getting parents closer to the workplace.

Who we help

PaCE helped WWH resident and young mum Rachel Driscoll with childcare funding while she went back to college to study for her Level 3 Diploma in Children's Care Learning and Development. She said: "Having a second chance in life to do what I originally wanted to do after leaving school means the world to me."

- Parents aged 25 and over not in employment
- Young parents (16-24) not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

Contact

Email: PaCE@wales.gsi.gov.uk



THE POPPY FACTORY

getting you back to work

Who we are

Helping veterans with physical and mental health conditions into work since 1922.

What we do

We run a community-based employment service, Getting You Back to Work, which has supported over 1000 wounded, injured and sick veterans into meaningful and sustained employment across the UK since launching in 2010. The charity works closely with NHS Veterans Wales, the Welsh Government and all other military charities to support veterans and their family.

We can help with

Veterans can sign up for support after two-years of leaving the Armed Forces. Each

veteran works closely with an experienced employment consultant who helps to build confidence and find the right role and training opportunities that suits each person's strengths and ambitions. When veterans start their new job, we also offer 12 months of in-work support to the individual and their employer.

Who we help

Wayne, a veteran of the British Army, secured a job as a gardener at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission thanks to support from The Poppy Factory. He says: "I'm very happy within myself and I love going to work. I love going home and sharing my day with my family. All thanks to The Poppy Factory."

Contact

Visit poppyfactory.org/ or call 020 8939 1837



Taking action on crime

We aim to support you to resolve any problems you may have with your neighbour informally, and as soon as possible, to try to stop situations escalating.

Unfortunately, we are sometimes left with no option other than to apply to the courts to resolve problems in our communities.

We have seven cases currently in court, mainly related to drug issues, as a result of which we hope to help tackle anti-social behaviour and criminal behaviour in our communities.



We opened **30 anti-social behaviour cases** in quarter 4, 2018, (compared to **38** in the previous year) **down 20%**



I would have liked WWH to take more action

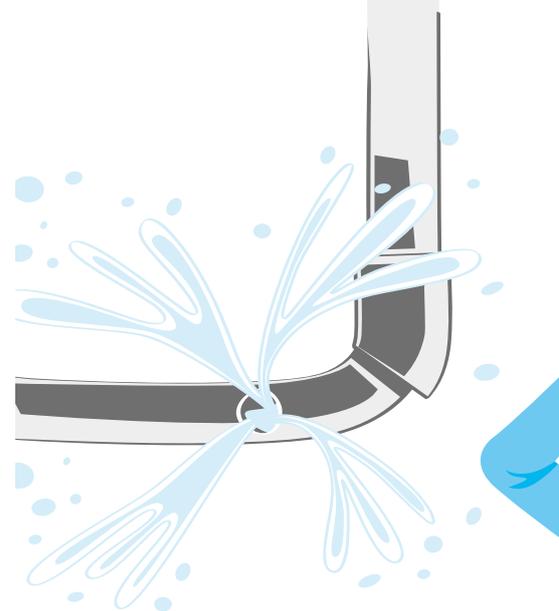


I like "being listened to"



We received most complaints about:

1. Noise
2. Harassment and aggressive behaviour
3. Domestic abuse



What to do if you have a burst pipe

It's that time of year when leaks and burst pipes cause problems around the home.

If you have a leak or burst pipe, you should **call our 24-hour Customer Service line 0800 052 2526 immediately.**

While you are waiting for an emergency plumber to call, here are a few steps you can follow to limit the damage to your home.

- 1 Can you turn off the water supply to the affected area? Doing this quickly will help to prevent further damage to your home and belongings and neighbouring properties. If you live in a flat this is essential to prevent water damage to neighbouring properties.
- 2 To turn off the water, there is usually a stopcock underneath your sink or in a cupboard under



Fixed first time

It's our busiest time of the year for repairs but we have managed to continue to deliver a fantastic service.

Residents can get through to our repairs team easily, repairs are carried out quickly and usually completed in one visit.

Our new website has a section containing useful tips on how to do minor repairs for yourself. Just go to wwha.co.uk and click on the contact us section.

Repairs can be reported via our new website or by phoning 0800 052 25 26.

your stairs. For toilets or bathroom sinks, there is an isolation valve (which looks like a slot-headed screw) which can be turned off using a screwdriver.

3

If the water is near any electrical sockets or switches, then turn off the electricity at the consumer unit.

4

Switch off the immersion or the central heating system.

5

Turn on all taps to drain the water from the system.

6

If you are unable to turn off the water, put a towel or container underneath the leak to collect the water. Make sure you empty the container before it gets too full and overflows.



8,540
repairs
were completed



More than
70%
were fixed
first time



Over
60%
were fixed within
0 - 5 days



You said

The operatives
were friendly and
professional



You said

I would
have liked better
communication
about appointments

CARDIFF

Residents of Western Court retirement scheme in Cardiff are enjoying the first flower of spring in their communal gardens. WWH staff joined them for a day of planting.

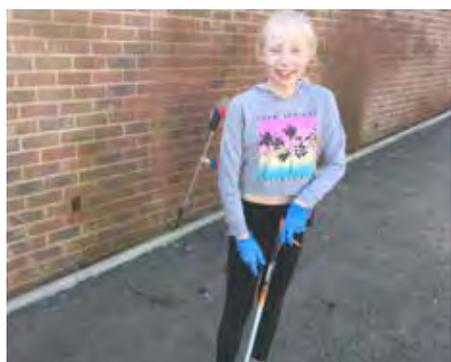


CLEAN SWEEP

Young residents spent their half-term holidays cleaning up the streets around their homes.

Around 12 children and parents from Ffordd Williamson, St Ederyn's, in Cardiff took part to improve their community, learn about the environment and make a difference to the scheme.

Resident Jade Cummins, said: "It was great to see children from the local community come together to improve the scheme, we hope to do more activities and litter picks in the future."



SUPPORTING LOCAL FOODBANKS



Families in need across Wales had a little extra help to celebrate Christmas thanks to support from residents and staff.

We organised food collections in our main offices and at schemes. We delivered four boxes of food to the Llandysul Food Bank to make up hampers for



those in need.

Residents at Constantine Court, Llys Ben Bowen Thomas and Tŷ Ddewi retirement schemes in the Rhondda collected almost 200kg of food for the Rhondda Foodbank. Trolleys of food were also delivered to the Cardiff Food Bank.

PREMIER FOR YOUNG MERTHYR MOVIE MAKERS



Young people at Twyncarmel could become successful YouTubers of the future thanks to a project teaching them how to make professional videos and film clips.

WWH funded a project working with youth workers from Gellideg Foundation Group to show the young people on the estate how to make professional videos.

Young people aged 8 to 14 attended the workshops where they learnt about planning, story boards, lighting, audio, directing, editing, set dressing and other skills needed to produce a professional looking video.

At the end of the project they staged a mini gala, inviting their parents, family and other guests to showcase their final work.

Community Development Officer Ali Chaplin said: It was a great success and we hope that some of the young people will be encouraged to follow a career in film and video making."

CARDIGAN



Residents at our Llys Owen retirement scheme in Cardigan presented Macmillan Cancer Support with £310, the proceeds of a coffee morning supported by local businesses.

NEWTOWN

FIRST TIME AUTHOR AT 94



A surprise Christmas gift led to Newtown resident Phyllis Davies becoming a published author.

Mrs Davies, 94, of Cae Camlas in Newtown, was always telling her children and grandchildren stories about her travels and her life, so they suggested she put them down on paper for her grandchildren to enjoy in the future. Her poor eyesight prevented her from doing this, until she received a voice recorder as a Christmas gift and was able to record her account of growing up in Wrexham and her travels as a member of the armed services before settling in Newtown in 1976 as the wife of a clergyman.

Her memoir 'My Life

Remembered' was published in November 2018 and has already sold more than 200 copies to raise funds for All Saints Church, and the charity Blind Veterans UK.

Mrs Davies says: "I feel blessed because all I have needed, the Lord has provided. I have got a good home and a good, really helpful and encouraging lovely family."

Anyone interested in receiving a copy, in exchange for a charity donation, should contact Housing Officer Rhian Marsh on 07539118684.

Rhian said: "Mrs Davies has seen many happy times and suffered some terrible losses in her life, but her story is an inspiration to all."

SNAKES ALIVE!



Residents at Clarendon Court, Cyncoed, Cardiff, had a shock when they put their bins out.

There was a four-foot long, bright-orange corn snake sitting on the wheelie bin.

They called the RSPCA Cymru, who took it into specialist care and launched an appeal to reunite the reptile with its owner as they thought it had escaped from a property in the neighbouring area.

ANYONE FOR TAI CHI?



The residents at Limebourne Court, Cardiff, have been enjoying a series of activities thanks to their neighbours Pat Rogers, Sheila Small, Rob and Lyn Henly.

They have organised a weekly Friday night games night, which

has become popular with lots of residents playing card games, board games and darts. The Tai Chi sessions have also proved popular with residents of all abilities.

Sarah Willcox, Community Development Officer, says:

"Some residents have felt isolated, but with enthusiastic residents on board the lounge is now becoming a hive of activity once more, and everyone is enjoying getting out of their flats and having lovely company from neighbours on their doorstep."

EGG NESTS



PREP: 25 MINS

COOK: 5 MINS

These super easy treats are a great way to get the kids to help in the kitchen.

Ingredients: (Makes 12 nests)

- 100g mini marshmallows
- 50g butter
- 180g chow mein noodles, broken into 2.5cm pieces
- 12 hole muffin tin
- 12 muffin paper cases
- Mini eggs or jelly beans to fill the nests

Method:

1. Place paper cases in muffin tin.
2. Melt marshmallows and butter over a medium heat in a saucepan. Stir until the butter and marshmallows have melted.
3. Add the noodles to the mixture and coat well.
4. Lightly grease your fingers with butter or oil and press the mixture into the paper cases in the prepared muffin tin, making a well in the centre for your eggs.
5. Refrigerate until firm, then fill with mini eggs or jelly beans.

D-I-Y Welly Boot Planters

This simple upcycle can transform any plain garden into a gorgeous space for the whole family to enjoy.

All you'll need is:

- An old pair of welly boots - the more colourful, the better!
- Liquid soap, water and a scrubbing brush or sponge
- Drill
- Stones and pebbles
- Compost
- Bedding plants or seeds



1. Prep

Give the boots a good clean with soapy water. Scrub off any mud from the grooves in the soles to make it easier to make holes in them later. Dry thoroughly and decide if you want to decorate them with paint or leave the boots their original colour.

2. Drainage

Clamp the foot of the boots securely onto a workbench, sole-side up. Carefully use a manual hand-drill to make some holes in the sole to let water run out. This is definitely NOT a step that the kids can do! Try to drill between the grooves in the sole, where the rubber is thinner and easier to poke through.

3. Stones

Fill the foot of the boots with pebbles or stones to improve drainage when watering your plants.

4. Soil

Fill up the rest of the boots with compost and your favourite bedding plants. This is a fun part for children who can easily get involved. But be warned with tiny hands helping you, it may get a little messy!

5. Planting Up

Use contrasting colours or coordinate the flowers with the pattern on the welly boots. This is a great time to get children involved as they can choose and plant the flowers and take responsibility for watering them over the year.

Satisfaction and Complaints

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS

13.5

On average it took 13.5 working days to resolve complaints

between October and December last year.

SATISFACTION

8.3

Across our services we scored 8.3 out of 10 for satisfaction. This includes lettings,

repairs, new homes and anti-social behaviour. The highest increase in satisfaction was ASB with more at 6.3 out of 10.

COMPLAINTS

2

We've seen an 80 per cent drop in complaints in the last year. The complaints about our repairs service continued to drop with just 1 complaint recorded

between October and December compared to 6 the previous year. Overall we received 2 complaints.

Our quietest call times are usually after lunch

10am

was the busiest time for calls last quarter



Did you know you can get repair advice and report a repair on our website?

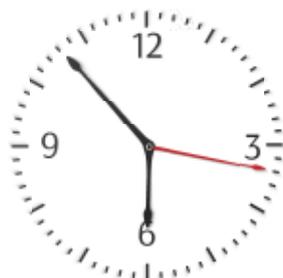
we received

32,316

calls - almost

48%

of those were repair calls



17 seconds

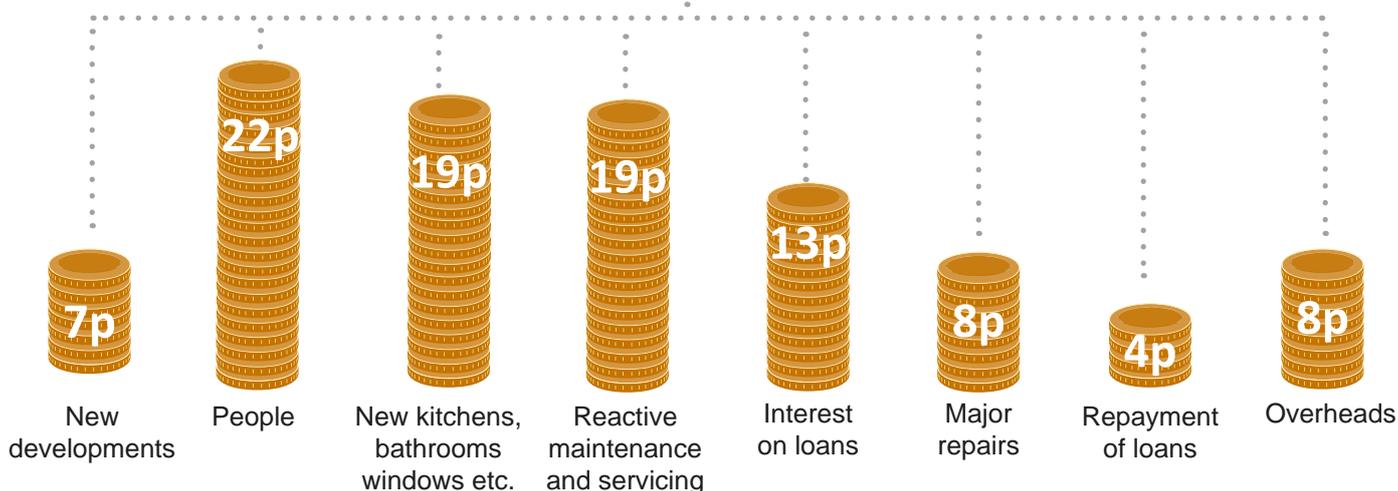
was the average time taken to answer repair calls



www.wwha.co.uk/repair

POUND TO PENNIES

Where every  rent is spent



PUZZLE PAGES

Win £30 shopping vouchers with our Wordsearch and Crossword puzzles



Signs of Spring Wordsearch

This issue's Wordsearch is all about Spring. All the words may be found backwards, forwards, horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

T	Y	M	X	N	C	S	D	E	L	I	J	T	B	N
U	L	Q	I	K	O	M	U	I	T	R	U	U	B	U
L	F	A	U	V	Z	B	D	G	V	I	M	O	M	M
I	R	W	R	E	W	O	L	F	A	V	K	R	A	B
P	E	G	A	U	F	T	S	W	O	R	M	P	L	R
S	T	I	M	F	V	P	L	U	F	T	A	S	N	E
O	T	Y	A	H	Y	A	C	I	N	T	H	P	A	L
Y	U	D	Z	H	P	R	V	R	F	S	P	D	S	L
G	B	V	A	E	A	P	I	X	O	O	H	K	K	A
W	R	T	V	I	E	S	G	G	E	C	C	I	O	O
C	C	O	N	W	A	R	M	H	W	I	U	T	N	J
H	E	B	W	L	K	M	B	T	H	E	D	S	S	E
B	O	C	L	O	U	D	S	C	J	J	U	W	K	I
W	C	N	R	B	O	J	V	Y	E	C	F	F	F	Q
P	X	P	F	C	C	J	K	J	B	O	W	B	C	J

- ASPARAGUS
- BREEZY
- BUTTERFLY
- CHICKS
- CLOUDS
- CROCUS
- DAFFODIL
- EGGS
- FLOWER
- GROW
- HATCH
- HYACINTH
- KITE
- LAMB
- RAIN
- RAINBOW
- SPROUT
- SUNSHINE
- TULIPS
- UMBRELLA
- WARM



Crossword

1	2			3			4		5			6
							7					
8												
							9					
10			11		12							
			13									
14									15			
			16						17			
							18				19	
20												
							21					
22												
							23					

ACROSS

- 1 Mother superior (6)
- 7 Feverish (7)
- 8 Relating to or similar to bears (6)
- 9 Suntanned (7)
- 10 Lunatic (6)
- 13 Puts things in order (7)
- 14 Dead as a ____, saying (4)
- 15 Strong positive emotion (4)
- 16 Acute intestinal infection (7)
- 18 Smile affectedly (6)
- 20 Sooner (7)
- 21 Stiff straw hat with a flat crown (6)
- 22 Refined (7)
- 23 Circlet of leaves (6)

DOWN

- 2 Loose garment worn by Muslim women (5)
- 3 Ice cream dish (6)
- 4 Gets back (9)
- 5 Winning all the tricks in a hand of bridge (5,4)
- 6 Child's toy (5,4)
- 10 Time of life between youth and retirement (6,3)
- 11 Immunise (9)
- 12 Device used to get at the contents of a tin (3,6)
- 17 Severity (6)
- 19 Happening, occurrence (5)

What's on

Sudoku

			3	8	1			
	6	3		7			4	5
9		2					7	
8	2	1	7					6
		4	1		3	2		
7					2	5	9	1
	4					9		2
6	7			2		3	1	
			5	3	4			

Winter puzzle winners

Congratulations to our Christmas puzzle winners. They were

Ruth Cook, Four Elms Court, Roath, Cardiff (crossword) and Wendy Salt, Derwen Deg, Leeswood, Mold (wordsearch).

Win

To be in with a chance of winning a £30 shopping voucher for our wordsearch or crossword puzzle, simply send your entry with your name, address and contact details to Alison Stokes, Wales & West Housing, Archway House, 77 Parc Tŷ Glas, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5DU. All correct entries will be put into the draw and one lucky winner will be chosen for each puzzle and will receive a £30 shopping voucher. The closing date for entries is **May 31st 2019**.

South Wales

Until May 6 - Leonardo da Vinci: A Life in Drawing

To mark the 500th anniversary of Leonardo da Vinci's death, twelve of his greatest drawings from the Royal Collection on display. Free entry. www.museum.wales/cardiff/whatson/10265/Leonardo-da-Vinci-A-Life-in-Drawing/

12 May - Caerphilly Food Festival, Caerphilly town centre

Homemade jams, chutneys and cakes will adorn the stalls through the town, as well as delicious fudge, succulent smoothies and delightful crepes. Visitors will be hard pushed to avoid the temptation of tasting.

26 May to 1 June - Urdd National Eisteddfod, Cardiff Bay

One of Europe's largest youth touring festivals. Attractions for the whole family from competitions to visiting the various stalls and exhibitors on site. Entry is free. <https://www.urdd.cymru/en/eisteddfod/eisteddfod-2019/tickets/>

North Wales

18 May - Rhuddlan Food, Drink & Craft Festival Rhuddlan Town Centre, LL18 5AW

Over 40 exhibitors will have everything from chocolate and cheese to meat, beer and ice cream to taste and buy. The majority of exhibitors are local, Welsh businesses, 10am-4pm, £1 entry; children free

16 June - Hawarden Old Castle Open Day, Hawarden Estate Farm Shop, Chester Road, Hawarden, Flintshire, CH5 3FB

Explore this historic building in Flintshire and enjoy some

spectacular views, 2pm-5pm; £3 adults, up to two children free; additional children £3. Tel: 01244 553442

Mid Wales

3-6 May - Talgarth Walking Festival, various locations

Explore the Black Mountains in the Brecon Beacons National Park with a series of guided walks. Cost from £3. info@talgarthwalkingfestival.org; 07943 616453

West Wales

27 April - Barley Saturday Cardigan & Around Cardigan

Dating back to the 19th Century, this unique event features horse competitions, followed by a parade of horses, vintage cars, motorbikes, tractors, carriages, milk floats and gypsy wagons. Starts at 2pm.

18-27 May - Abercystweth Cycling Festival, Aberystwyth

A celebration of cycling in Mid Wales, including town centre criterium racing, downhill mountain biking and a mass participation ride - the Continental Welsh Wild West Sportive, covering all the best roads in Ceredigion.

22 - 30 Jun - Pembrokeshire Fish Week

More than 150 businesses taking part, enjoy the outdoors with fishing and boat trips, open air BBQ's, seashore safaris and lots of fun filled entertainment that the whole family will enjoy!

29 - 30 June - Towy Valley Vintage Club Annual Vintage Show, Cothi Bridge Showground, Pontargothi

A fun-filled weekend for all the family, boot sale, trade stands, auto jumble and dog show. Plus displays of cars, motorcycles, scooters, commercial vehicles, stationary engines, miniature steam engines, tractors and more.

Gardening WITH GLENYS

Glenys Vandervolk is an award-winning gardener living at our St Mellons scheme in Cardiff. She is one of the leading lights in St Mellons Community Garden. In her regular column she shares her tips and advice to make your garden grow.



GARDENERS GO “NUTS” FOR SPRING

Spring is my favourite time of year as we start planting seeds ready for summer and autumn produce.

This year we're particularly excited at the St Mellons Community garden as we're going to be growing peanuts for the first time. Contrary to popular belief, the peanut isn't a nut; it's actually a vegetable belonging to the same family as peas and beans and grows in the ground similar to a potato plant.

Once the frost has passed, you can start planting your shelled

peanuts in containers or the garden at approx. one inch deep, in the sunniest spot possible.

The crop is ready to harvest when leaves turn yellow and the orange flowers die back. You can pull or dig them up just like potatoes. They take around four months to grow, so if you plant in April they should be ready in July. So happy harvesting.

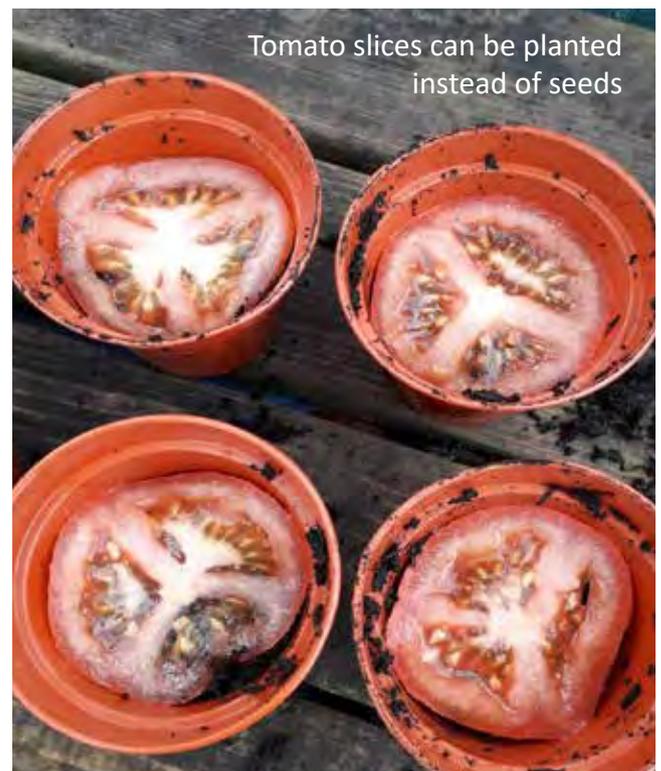
We're also planning a new approach to growing tomatoes, which has been tried by one of our members. Instead of planting

tiny tomato seeds, you can cut a tomato into slices and plant those slices into tubs

Just like using seeds, you should fill the tub three-quarters full with soil, lay the tomato slices on top, and then cover with soil. Leave the pots in a warm place such as a greenhouse or windowsill and water regularly. This method is a great way for people with poor eyesight or who have difficulty handling tiny seeds to get involved in gardening.



Volunteer gardeners preparing peanuts



Tomato slices can be planted instead of seeds

A day in the life of ...

a Housing Officer



Housing Officer Claire Jones has worked for Wales & West Housing for 20 years and in that time she has helped thousands of families and single people to settle into a place they can call home.

Young families, elderly couples, divorcees, single people, recently bereaved people... Claire tries to help them all. As a Housing Officer it's her job to make sure residents living on her patch are safe and happy and able to take care of their homes and pay their rent.

She manages around 400 homes, mostly flats near and to the west of Cardiff city centre, where she says her working life can be "like a box of chocolates". "I never know what I'm going to get next. There is no typical day, but supporting residents is my main priority

and that is something that does happen every day."

Communicating with residents is an important part of Claire's daily workload, whether face to face or on the end of a phone. It's also her job to keep up to date with changes which affect her residents, such as Universal

"I love working in housing. It makes me happy to know that I can make a difference to people's lives and help them to achieve 'what matters' to them."

Credit, and look at ways to improve services.

"Welfare reform is having a huge impact on my work lately as residents who are leaving legacy benefits for Universal Credit are struggling. Historically those residents would have their rent

paid directly via Housing Benefit but now they are receiving their 'Housing Cost Benefit' directly I have to make sure they have the right information to deal with these changes so that they can pay their rent. This can include advice on budgeting and support with getting back into either education or work."

Recently Claire has been working with the Salvation Army on their Cardiff Housing First project, which aims to help street homeless people to find a permanent home. She has been successful in helping individuals to settle into their new homes in the city.

Claire says: "The majority of the residents living on my patch go to work, come home to their families and just get on with their lives and don't need any

help. Others may need more support. Whatever the circumstances I am ready when they need me to go "that extra mile."

"I don't promise to 'fix' all their problems but I do what I can to help and be realistic with what they are requesting. I also work within a team of amazing colleagues who I know I can turn to at any time for help with any concerns or issues that I may need help or support with. I love working in housing. It makes me happy to know that I can make a difference to people's lives and help them to achieve 'what matters' to them."



Wales & West Housing has taken ownership of four new homes on the sought-after Rectory housing development in Wenvoe in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Three local families moved into the rented properties at the start of April. The fourth will be sold as part of our Low Cost Home Ownership scheme to first time buyers in the area for 70% of market value. The homes have been built by Redrow homes as part of their larger development in the area.

If you are interested in Low Cost Home Ownership call Bethan Christofides on 029 2041 4092.