

Tai
Tarian

Cartref



Meet Nick

Get to know Nick Tagg, our new chief executive, and hear his thoughts on listening to tenants, improving services and shaping Tai Tarian’s future.

More on page 3.



Your Tai Tarian, anytime

Need to check your rent, make a payment or report a repair? Discover how the new My Tai Tarian portal can make managing your contract quicker and easier.

More on page 5.



Winter Ready?

Simple steps could help keep your home warmer, drier and healthier this winter. From ventilation tips to boiler checks, we’ve got you covered.

More on page 7.

Building careers,
improving homes



After losing his job at the steelworks, Jack chose a completely new career path. Now he’s building a future through Tai Tarian’s apprenticeship programme.

Read his story and meet our newest recruits on page 5.

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Community challenge gives local spaces a boost

Three local community organisations have received a helping hand thanks to our annual Community Challenge.

Margam Community Centre, DOVE Workshop in Banwen and Pontardawe Bowls Club were worthy winners, and over the last few months we have given their spaces a spruce up.

At Margam Community Centre, volunteers carried out improvements including painting the entrance and hallway, replacing toilet taps and resealing PVC doors to prevent water getting in.

At DOVE Workshop in Banwen, work included painting the entrance area and planters, tidying outdoor spaces and jet washing surfaces.

Volunteers also helped

refresh Pontardawe Bowls Club with a painting project to create a brighter, more welcoming environment.

Colleagues from across Tai Tarian used one of their annual volunteer days to support the projects, with supplies kindly donated by our contractors.

Julie at DOVE Workshop said: “We were so pleased to welcome the team from Tai Tarian. They worked incredibly hard, helping us with painting, weeding and jet washing, which has made a real difference to the appearance of the building and its surroundings. A huge thank you!”

We’re already looking ahead to next year’s Community Challenge. Keep an eye out for details in the next edition of Cartref.



Looneys hit the bullseye



Congratulations to the Tŷ Gnoll “Looneys” on being crowned Haven Darts League Champions 2026! They sealed the title in style with a superb 5-2 victory over the Gwyn Court “Dinosaurs”, finishing the season on a high.

Attention then turned to the battle at the bottom of the table, where the Mozart “Misfits” took on the Michaelstone “Muppets” in a fight to avoid the Wooden Spoon. With the league season now complete, players are looking ahead to the singles tournament, presentation event, a match against the ILO All Stars, and the ever-popular tenants versus Tai Tarian Senior Managers showdown.

Another great season of community darts!

Meet Nick

Following the retirement of Linda Whittaker, we’re pleased to welcome Nick Tagg as our new chief executive.

Nick joined the organisation in 2023 as director of finance and became chief executive this month. Earlier this year, tenants played an important part in the recruitment process, helping to choose our new leader.

With experience across housing, business and industry in Wales, the UK and internationally, Nick brings a strong commitment to delivering for tenants and communities.

As he settles into his new role, we caught up with him to chat about his priorities for the future.

What excites you most about becoming chief executive?

“It feels like a real privilege. Tai Tarian plays a huge role in people’s lives and local communities, and I’m proud to have the opportunity to lead the organisation into its next chapter.”

What will be your main priority?

“Tenants must always be at the heart of everything we do. My priority is making sure we listen to tenants, understand what’s important to them and use that feedback to shape our services and decisions.

What matters most is the experience tenants have when they interact with us and the difference we make in their communities.”

What would you like tenants to know about your approach?

“I want us to continue building

on our strong foundations. There’s a lot to be proud of, but there’s always more we can do to improve services and strengthen communities.

Working together, and listening to and learning from people, is how we will make a positive difference.

What would success look like in five years’ time?

“We have an established corporate plan taking us to 2030 which gives us purpose and direction together with dedicated staff and strong relationships with our communities. Success for me would be seeing continued improvements in the services we provide, more high-quality homes for local people, stronger communities and tenants feeling listened to and valued. I also want us to remain a sustainable organisation



that is well placed to meet the challenges of the future.”

As we look ahead, we wish Nick every success in his new role as we continue our focus on providing sustainable homes, supporting sustainable communities, and protecting our planet, all underpinned by a strong and sustainable business.

Nick Tagg

Firefighting trio answer the call

As people across Wales enjoyed the summer sunshine, three Tai Tarian colleagues spent much of the season responding to emergencies as retained firefighters.

Alongside their roles at Tai Tarian, Josh, Mike and Gareth serve their local communities by responding to incidents in their spare time. This summer saw one of the busiest periods in recent years for fire and rescue services, with prolonged hot and dry conditions leading to a significant increase in call-outs across Wales.

Between them, they attended a wide range of incidents, including wildfires, road traffic collisions, property fires, water rescues and medical emergencies, often spending evenings, weekends and nights on call.

Josh described the summer as “hectic”.

“We spent a lot of hours on call, every evening and every weekend. We attended category 3 wildfires, vehicle fires, domestic property incidents and high-rise calls.”

For Mike, the summer was one of the most demanding periods he has experienced during his years as a retained firefighter.

“August was particularly challenging, both physically and mentally, due to the significant increase in incidents across Wales.”

The impact was felt across fire stations throughout South Wales, with crews regularly providing support beyond their local areas to help keep communities protected.

Gareth highlighted the scale of the demand faced by firefighters during the busiest periods.

“Some days involved attending more than 10 incidents a shift, with the station responding to around 100 incidents in a month.”

Their experiences are a reminder of the vital role retained firefighters play in protecting local communities, often balancing emergency service responsibilities alongside full-time jobs and family commitments.

We’re incredibly proud of Josh, Mike and Gareth for their commitment throughout a challenging summer. A huge thank you to our firefighting trio for helping keep communities across South Wales safe.



Time to Thrive continues to boost communities

Time to Thrive, delivered in partnership with our contractors, continues to make a real difference across Neath Port Talbot. When awarded work with us, contractors commit to giving back to local good causes through Time to Thrive.



Since the start of the year, the fund has helped local groups, schools, sports clubs

and community organisations bring their ideas to life.

Recent awards include £1,000 for Vernon Place Community Hub for materials and improvements, and £500 for Goytre United FC to purchase new equipment and upgrade their community garden.

Neuadd Cwmllynfell Bowls Club received £10,000 to build a new outbuilding with dedicated changing facilities for male and female members. Port Talbot Mixed Ability Rugby Team received £500 to help overcome transport challenges.

Forward 4 Fairyland received £2,000 for skips to remove fly-tipped waste, while Croeserw Primary School received £1,000 to create outdoor learning facilities. Afan United was also awarded £250 towards essential equipment.

To find out more about Time to Thrive and how to apply, visit our website or contact the community team. You can hear more from the people we have helped here:



AGM news

Shareholder members, tenants and colleagues came together this summer at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Blanco’s Hotel in Port Talbot.

The event gave people the chance to find out more about some of the work happening across Tai Tarian, with information stands covering topics including financial inclusion, decarbonisation, housing developments, equality, diversity and inclusion, and our tenant portal, ‘My Tai Tarian’.

Members also heard updates on how we are doing financially and from guest speakers, Cardiff University’s Professor Jo Patterson and Neath Port Talbot Council’s Oonagh Gavigan. Both presented on the impact social housing is having on research projects as the world moves towards cleaner, more sustainable ways of heating and powering homes.

In her final AGM as chief executive, Linda Whittaker reflected on the past 15 years at the Tai Tarian helm. She spoke fondly about the transformation WHQS brought to existing homes, along with how we’ve supported the community with the



Copper Foundation, housing for veterans, grants and benefits, and our transition to greener energy.

Denise attended the event and said:

“The AGM was very enjoyable, it was good to hear about recent progress and plans, and it gave me a chance to meet with other tenants. It showed how important it is for tenants to get involved and have a voice in shaping the future of Tai Tarian.”

Talking rent setting

Each year, lots of work goes into making sure that the rents and service charges for your homes are fair and affordable.

We are a not-for-profit community landlord and 87% of our income comes from the rent we receive. We use this income to repair and improve homes and communities, and to provide support when tenants need our help. A key part of our approach to rent setting is talking to tenants and understanding how costs are affecting them.

We have carried out an important rent survey to gather views from you about affordability and held a number of workshops to hear directly from tenants about what’s important to them.

As part of this work, we have liaised with TPAS Cymru and National Independent Tenant Voice (NITV), organisations that promote tenant engagement and participation in social housing across Wales, helping to ensure tenants’ voices remain at the heart of decision-making.

Throughout the summer, our housing team and Tenant Voice members have also been out and about in communities, speaking to tenants about how affordable they feel everyday living costs are compared to last year. These conversations have provided valuable insight into the challenges people continue to face.

Next, we will consider Welsh Government guidelines alongside the feedback and research gathered through our engagement activities and continue the conversation about affordability with our tenants.

You will receive your rent booklet in January, which will explain what we consider when setting rents, how your rent is spent and what your charges will be from April 2027.

When you receive your booklet, please take time to read it and keep it somewhere safe. If you need help understanding the information, or if you need advice or support with paying your rent, please get in touch. We’re here to help.

Green Flag 4 Fairyland

Congratulations to Forward 4 Fairyland, a tenant-led community group that has received its first Green Flag Community Award.

The award recognises high-quality, well-managed community green spaces and celebrates the hard work of volunteers who help make local areas better places to live. The group has been praised for transforming Fairyland Community Garden in Neath, creating growing spaces for local people and helping build a stronger sense of community pride.

Well done to F4F on receiving such a prestigious award and helping to create a greener neighbourhood for local people.



Apprenticeships helping build careers and homes

This autumn, we’ve welcomed five new apprentices to Tai Tarian following a competitive round of recruitment. Cian has joined our plumbing team, Gethin and Ciaran are training as plasterers, Ashton has started an electrical apprenticeship, and Luke has joined the carpentry team. Before they began their apprenticeships, the recruits completed a two-week skills course with Cyfle Building Skills, who then presented them with the tools of their trade.

Their arrival brings our apprenticeship team to eighteen, with people joining from a variety of backgrounds. We caught up with second-year carpentry apprentice Jack and new apprentice Luke to hear about their journeys.

After losing his job at the steelworks, Jack decided it was time for a fresh start.

“I didn’t want to keep starting over, and when I joined Tai Tarian, I knew I wanted to develop my skills and build a career.

I wasn’t sure which trade I wanted to



pursue at first, but once I bought my first house, carpentry fell into place.

Housing is a really good career to get into, and apprenticeships can be for everyone, not just school leavers.

Before becoming an apprentice, Luke worked as a personal trainer and joined Tai Tarian through our Copper Foundation programme.

I was with Copper Foundation for about eight months before moving into labouring with the damp, mould and

condensation team, where I learnt loads.

Since I started, I’ve had loads of support from everyone I’ve worked with.

With carpentry you really have to use your brain to solve problems, and I’ve met some really good people along the way.”

Their stories show that apprenticeships can open doors at any stage of life, helping people build rewarding careers while developing skills that benefit local homes and communities.

Special project complete

While our newest recruits are just starting their apprenticeship journey, three third-year apprentices have been putting years of learning into practice by leading a major project in Bryn.

Alex, Stephen and Hendrix took charge of rebuilding a large retaining wall at one of our properties, overseeing the project from planning through to completion. The 15-metre-long, two-metre-high wall required around 3,000 blocks and gave the apprentices the opportunity to put their skills into practice on a real-life project.

Supported by labourer Alex and experienced bricklayers Lyn, Chris and Owen, the team worked through challenging weather conditions, including heavy rain and extreme summer heat, to successfully complete the build.

As part of their third-year apprenticeships, the project gave them valuable experience in planning, construction, problem-solving and teamwork, while helping them gain the evidence needed for their qualifications.

Hendrix enjoyed the challenge of working on such a large-scale project and said:

“I’m really proud of what we’ve achieved. I’ve gained a lot of confidence and experience from working on something of this size.”

Alex explained what the work meant for him and his fellow apprentices:

“We’re all in the third year of our apprenticeship now, and we must show that we have taken on a large-scale project, so this has been perfect.

“We’ve had to get involved in all aspects of the build, from planning and preparation through to laying the final brick and clearing the site. It’s been a big challenge but one that will help us qualify as fully-fledged brickies.”



“My Tai Tarian” is now live!

Our new digital portal, My Tai Tarian, is now live and making it easier than ever to access all things Tai Tarian, at a time to suit you.

Available 24/7, My Tai Tarian allows you to manage things online, including checking your rent balance and statements, making payments, requesting repairs and updating your account details. You can also upload photos when reporting an issue, helping us understand and resolve problems more quickly.

My Tai Tarian gives you more choice in how you interact with us and means many everyday tasks can be completed at a time and place that works for you.

Getting started is easy. Find My Tai Tarian on our website, or scan the QR code below and follow the step-by-step instructions to create your account. An app version will also be available in the near future, giving you even more flexibility to do things on the go.

My Tai Tarian is all about giving customers more choice and making it easier to access our services.

Need support with the portal? Contact our digital connections team on 01639 506694 / 01639 506026.

Access the portal here:





Keeping homes safe

In every edition of Cartref, we take a closer look at one of our teams here at Tai Tarian. They're normally teams you'll see out and about in the community or interact with when you get in touch with us.

But tucked away in our head office in Baglan is a dedicated team of experts whose work often goes unnoticed but is critical to keeping people safe in their homes. They are our compliance team.

The 18-strong team is responsible for organising and recording safety checks across all our homes. These checks include heating systems, electrical installations, fire safety, ventilation equipment and water systems. They also carry out safety checks on lifts in our flats.

We spoke to senior supervisor Paul, electrical officer Jason and planner Elle to find out more about their work.

As experienced electricians, Paul and Jason focus on the electrical safety side of the team's responsibilities.

"By law, our homes must have an electrical safety inspection every five years. As you can imagine, with more than 9,500 properties in our care, that is quite a task. On average, around 36 properties have to be tested every week.

"Following the test, we issue a report

and certificate confirming everything has been checked and is safe."

Jason explains why tenant access is so important:

"We will get in touch when a test is due and offer a date and time. If that's not convenient, tenants can contact us to rearrange.

"However, it is vitally important that we do get access to carry out these checks. We do sometimes have problems gaining access, but the tests are there to help keep people safe in their homes."

Keeping track of the testing programme, reports and certification falls to Elle.

"There is a lot of paperwork involved. I have to keep track of what properties have been tested and which ones are coming up.

"Once testing is complete, I organise the reports and certificates and get them sent to tenants.

"If we complete electrical work between the five-year inspections, that also needs to be tested, approved, recorded and certified. It's all vital for people's safety."

A growing area of the team's work is the installation of additional smoke detectors.

Jason explains:

"We know that early warning of a fire is

key to keeping people safe, so installing smoke detectors in more rooms increases the chances of people getting out safely in the event of a fire.

"Under the new regulations we need to install them in places such as living rooms, landings and hallways, as well as a heat alarm in kitchens. The alarms will all be linked, so if one activates, you'll hear it throughout the home."

The role has become increasingly complex in recent years, according to Paul.

"It's a job where you have to keep up with changes in legislation and technology. We are testing more and more green technology these days, such as solar panels and electric vehicle charging points. That means it is more important than ever to make sure installations are safe and operating correctly."

Elle concludes with a simple message for tenants:

"We know it can be inconvenient having people in your home carrying out tests, but they are all there for a reason.

"Whether it's your annual gas boiler check, electrical testing or ventilation systems, these inspections are carried out to keep you, your family and your home as safe as possible."

Tenant Voice update

Our Tenant Voice groups have continued to play an active role in shaping services and influencing key decisions across the organisation.

Our Environment and Sustainability Group recently took part in carbon literacy training, helping members build their understanding of climate issues and sustainable living. Martin, who took part, said:

"I would definitely recommend the carbon literacy programme to anyone. It was well presented, with excellent interaction. Very interesting – I learnt a lot."

Elsewhere, Tenant Voice members have been the first tenants to visit our new low carbon hub at County Flats, Sandfields, giving them an early look at the green energy work taking place to support our sustainability ambitions.

Members were also invited to a first look at our customer portal, providing valuable feedback on accessibility and user experience to help ensure it meets the needs of all tenants.

We're creating new opportunities for engaged tenants through our Tenant Champion programme. These volunteers work closely with us on specific service areas, including rents, repairs and performance monitoring.



Tenant Champions will help review and improve key performance indicators, particularly those relating to emergency repairs.

Tenants also played a key role in the interview process for our new chief executive, Nick Tagg, ensuring the customer voice was represented throughout the selection process.

Fancy getting involved? No experience is needed, and members receive training, support, thank you vouchers and travel costs. Find out more via the QR code, or call 0300 777 0000.

Digital connections here to stay

We're pleased to announce that digital connections is now a permanent service at Tai Tarian after a successful first year supporting tenants.

The team helps people build confidence online, whether that's getting online for the first time, using a device, joining a video call, accessing online services or setting up Wi-Fi at home.

For many of the people we've helped, technology felt overwhelming at first, but our support is friendly, informal and tailored to individual needs.

We can help with:

- Getting connected to the internet
- Setting up and using Wi-Fi
- Using smartphones, tablets and computers
- Registering on My Tai Tarian
- Making video calls on platforms such as WhatsApp, Zoom and Teams
- Accessing online services safely
- Keeping in touch with family and friends online
- Building confidence with everyday digital tasks

Whether you're completely new to technology or just need a helping hand, we're here to help you learn at your own pace.

Emma and Hannah from digital connections are hosting sessions with Owen from South Wales Police next month covering scam phone calls, fake emails, suspicious text messages, password security and what to do if something doesn't feel right.



Dates for the diary

2nd November
Neath YMCA
10:00am - 12:00pm

10th November
Melyn Community Trust,
80 Briton Ferry Road
12pm to 2pm

25th November
Cymmer Community
Swimming Pool
12pm to 2pm

26th November
Tŷ Llansawel Training Centre,
Hunter Street,
Briton Ferry
12pm to 2pm

If you, or a tenant you know needs help getting online, come along to a session or call 01639 506694 / 01639 506026.

Get your home winter ready

A few simple checks can help keep your home warm, safe and running smoothly this winter.

Test your boiler early

Turn it on before the cold weather arrives and report any issues.

Check your gutters

Look for leaves or blockages from ground level to help prevent leaks and damp.

Stop draughts

Check for cold air around windows and doors. Simple fixes like draught excluders can make a big difference.

Frozen condensate pipe?

Pour warm (not boiling) water over the pipe to thaw it. If it still isn't working, get in touch.

Know your stop tap

Make sure you know where it is in case of a burst pipe.

Need help?

Report repairs via My Tai Tarian, call **0300 777 3000** or email **repairs@taitarian.co.uk**.



Let your home breathe this winter

As the weather gets colder, many of us are ready to hibernate, keep our windows shut and spend more time indoors. While this helps keep the heat in, it can also trap moisture inside your home.

An average household can create around 20 pints of moisture every day through activities such as cooking, showering, drying clothes and even breathing. In fact, a person can exhale nearly a pint of water into the air each day. That's why it's important to help your home breathe.

Using your fans

All homes have ventilation fans, usually in the kitchen, and it's important to keep them switched on at all times.

Your fans have two settings:

- Trickle mode: runs continuously to remove everyday moisture
- Boost mode: automatically increases when extra moisture is detected, usually during cooking or showering

If your fan becomes noisier, particularly in boost mode, it's often a sign it's doing

its job by removing excess moisture.

The good news is that running your fan costs very little, typically less than the cost of boiling your kettle over the course of a year.

Looking after your fan

Dust and grease can build up on units over time. If you're able to, gently vacuum around the cover and wipe away grease in kitchen areas.

Please don't take your fan apart. If you're unable to clean it yourself, our damp, mould and condensation team can help.

Trickle vents and window latches

Our homes have trickle vents and secondary window latches to improve airflow.

To get the most out of these:

- Leave trickle vents open
- Use the secondary window latch to allow a small amount of airflow while



keeping windows secure

- If possible, leave windows on the secondary latch 24/7

These simple steps help fresh air circulate and allow moisture to escape.

Burping your home

Another great way to refresh your home is through purge ventilation, or as we like to call it, burping your home.

Open your windows for around 10 minutes each day to let fresh air circulate and remove stale, damp air. This can help reduce condensation and improve air quality without making your home too cold.

We're here to help

If your fan isn't working properly, or you're having problems with your windows, please let us know.

For more advice on damp, mould or condensation this winter, scan the QR code or contact us on 0300 777 3000.



Fire safety at home

We've teamed up with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service to share practical tips to help keep you, your family and your neighbours safe.

A few simple checks can help reduce the risk of fires at home.

Don't overload sockets

Overloaded sockets and faulty wiring are a common cause of house fires. Follow the one socket, one plug rule where possible and make sure high-powered appliances, such as washing machines, have their own socket.

If you're using an extension lead or adaptor, check its capacity and avoid overloading it.

Look out for warning signs

Be alert to loose wiring, scorch marks, hot plugs or sockets, damaged cables and flickering lights. Unplug appliances when they're not in use, particularly overnight.

Charge devices safely

Always use the correct charger for phones, tablets, laptops, e-bikes and other rechargeable devices. Avoid leaving devices charging unattended or overnight. If a battery becomes damaged, swollen or unusually hot, stop using it immediately.

Check electric blankets and heaters

Check electric blankets for signs of wear and tear and unplug them before getting

into bed unless designed for overnight use.

Keep portable heaters well away from curtains, furniture, bedding and clothing, and never use them to dry clothes.

Candles and smoke alarms

Never leave candles unattended and keep them away from anything that could catch fire.

Smoke alarms provide a vital early warning and can save lives. Test them regularly.

Problems with electrics or your smoke alarms? Get in touch with us by calling 0300 777 3000.

Get insured

While we take care of the buildings insurance for all homes, your personal belongings are your responsibility. Contents insurance can help protect furniture, clothing, carpets and electrical items if they're damaged by fire, flooding, theft, vandalism or burst pipes.

Affordable contents insurance is available through our scheme with Aviva. For more information or a quote, call 01639 506091, email insurance@tairarian.co.uk or scan the QR code.



Keeping communal areas safe

In our flats and Haven housing schemes, communal areas such as corridors, staircases, landings, gardens and pathways must be kept clear to meet fire safety requirements and help keep everyone safe.

If you live in a flat or Haven scheme, this is part of your contract.

Items regularly found in communal areas include prams and pushchairs, bikes, mobility scooters, children's toys, plants, doormats, rubbish bags, electrical goods, furniture and bulky items such as sofas and fridges.

In the event of a fire, these items can:

1. Block escape routes
2. Make it harder for emergency services to gain access
3. Increase smoke and fumes, making the situation more dangerous

If our staff identify items that could present a safety risk, we will try to contact the owner and ask for them to be removed. Where an item poses a serious risk, we may need to remove it without notice to protect tenants and visitors.

We're here to help

If you're unsure what can be kept in communal areas, contact your housing officer or call 0300 777 0000.

Our survey says

More tenants are telling us they would recommend Tai Tarian as a landlord, according to our latest tenant satisfaction survey.

Over the summer 1,338 tenants shared their views, with 91% saying they would recommend us. That's an increase of nearly 4% compared to 2024.

Trust has also improved, with 78% of respondents saying they trust Tai Tarian, up from 72% two years ago.

The survey covered a range of topics including the quality of your home, repairs, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and how well we listen to tenants and involve them in decisions.

85% of tenants feel we provide a safe and secure home, while 82% are satisfied with the quality of their home. Both figures have improved compared with previous surveys.

Facing challenges head on

Feedback from surveys, Tenant Voice groups and repair co-design sessions helps us understand what's working well and where we need to improve.

Encouragingly, there was also a 10% increase in the number of tenants who feel we listen to their views and act on them.

Repairs and ASB were among the issues tenants told us matter most.

Satisfaction with repairs has increased by 7% to 78%. Over the past year, tenants have worked alongside us to help shape our repairs policy and repairs charter, ensuring lived experience helps drive service improvements.

Satisfaction with how we deal with ASB has also increased to 63%. During the past year we've strengthened partnerships with other agencies, recruited a new ASB lead and launched a good neighbour procedure to help tackle issues affecting local communities.



Value for money

More than 81% of tenants said their rent represents value for money, while satisfaction among leaseholders regarding service charges also increased.

Thank you to everyone who took part. Your feedback helps shape our services and ensures tenant voices remain at the heart of the decisions we make.

Contract Talk

Thinking of making changes at home? Don't forget to ask first!

Planning improvements or alterations to your home? Before you start any work, please remember that some changes need our permission.

Getting in touch with us first helps keep you safe, protects the property, and makes sure any work meets the right standards. It's also part of your contract, which means doing work without permission could count as a breach.

Carrying out work without permission may mean the home has to be put back to its original condition, and you could be charged for the cost of doing this.

To keep things simple, you can find clear guidance on what does and doesn't need approval on our website. If you're unsure, just contact us, we're always happy to help and can advise on whether you need permission before going ahead. Find out more here:



Clear the clutter for Christmas cash

Christmas is fast approaching, making now the perfect time for a clear out. Unwanted clothes, toys, books, furniture and household items could be turned into extra cash for gifts, festive treats or winter bills.

Selling platforms such as Vinted, Facebook Marketplace and eBay make it easy to find buyers. To help items sell quickly, take clear photos, be honest about their condition and set a realistic price.

A few hours spent sorting cupboards and wardrobes could leave you with a tidier home, more space and a welcome boost to your Christmas budget.



Ask Ana: A reminder for tenants who receive benefits

Recently, our team has supported tenants who have been asked by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide additional information about their benefit claim or household circumstances.

Our financial inclusion team (FIT) can provide advice and support, often helping to prevent issues that could affect benefit entitlement. If you are asked to complete a questionnaire, provide information about your claim or circumstances, update your Universal Credit (UC) claim, or supply further information, please contact us first so we can help you.

financialinclusion@taitarian.co.uk · 0300 777 0000.

Warm home discount scheme

Eligible households receiving means-tested benefits may receive £150 off their utility bills this autumn. If your energy supplier is part of the scheme, the discount should be applied automatically. The warm home discount is separate to winter fuel payments and cold weather payments and does not affect eligibility for either. Visit the warm home discount website or contact your energy supplier for more information.

The annual budget process also begins this month. During this time, the Government decides how much benefits will increase in 2027, reviews the Benefit Cap, considers possible changes to Universal Credit work allowances and taper rates, and receives the findings of the national PIP assessment review.

Winter fuel payment

Payments of between £100 and £300 will begin for eligible pensioners born before 27th June 1960 to help with winter heating costs.

Cold weather payments

The 2026 scheme opens on 1st November. Payments are made automatically to eligible households on means-tested benefits if temperatures in their area fall to 0°C or below for seven consecutive days. Payments are usually made within 14 days.

In December look out for the DWP's early payment calendar, which will confirm benefit payment dates over the Christmas and New Year bank holiday period.



Benefit focus

What is PIP?

Personal Independence Payment (or PIP for short) helps people with the extra costs of living with a disability or long-term health condition. It can be claimed whether you are working or not, and is not affected by income or savings.

Who may be eligible?

You may be able to claim PIP if:

- You are aged 16 or over and below state pension age when you apply
- You have a physical or mental health condition, disability or long-term illness.
- Your condition makes everyday activities or getting around difficult
- Your difficulties have lasted at least three months and are expected to continue for at least nine months

PIP is based on how your condition affects your daily life, not the condition itself.

What does PIP look at?

PIP has two components:

Daily living component is available for people who need support with everyday activities such as preparing or cooking food, washing and bathing, getting dressed, managing medication, communicating with others and managing their money.

Mobility component is available for people who have difficulty moving around, walking certain distances, or planning and following journeys.

You may qualify for one component or both, depending on how your condition affects you.



How do I claim?

To claim PIP, contact the DWP. You will usually need to:

- Complete a claim form
- Explain how your condition affects you day to day
- Provide supporting evidence, such as medical letters or reports
- Attend an assessment if required

Possible changes to PIP

The UK Government is reviewing PIP to ensure it remains sustainable while continuing to support people with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

Proposed changes are expected later this autumn, with any changes unlikely before spring 2027. No decisions have been made, there is nothing current claimants need to do, and existing PIP awards will continue as normal.

Need help?

If you think you may be entitled to PIP, our financial inclusion team can help you check eligibility, complete forms, gather supporting evidence and challenge decisions where necessary.

Round up on our new homes

As demand for affordable housing remains high, we continue to build new homes across Neath Port Talbot to meet local housing need.

At Golwg Y Foel, Cwmafan, all bungalows and apartments will be handed over and occupied before Christmas.

In Sandfields, work continues at the former Red Dragon site. A recent community engagement event gave locals the opportunity to find out more about the development and share their views, with many welcoming the investment and expressing an interest in applying for the new homes.

Good progress is also being made at the former Tudor Inn site in Cimla, where we are building 22 new homes, including one-bedroom apartments and a mix of

two-, three- and four-bedroom properties. Footpath and utility works will continue over the coming months, while a new site entrance is due to open shortly.

Elsewhere, proposals for the redevelopment of Carmarthen House continue to progress through the planning process, while work is ongoing to support residents as properties become available ahead of future redevelopment plans.

Design and planning work for new homes at Menai Avenue, Croeserw, and Heol Tabor, Cwmafan, is also continuing as part of our commitment to providing modern, energy-efficient homes.

Our veterans' housing scheme remains in the planning process. The development will provide six high-quality self-contained homes with shared

communal spaces, helping tackle social isolation and promote independent living.

We're proud to be delivering high-quality, affordable homes that people can thrive in, helping meet the need across our communities.



Everyone belongs at Tai Tarian

We're committed to creating communities where everyone feels respected, valued and included.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (or EDI for short) means making sure everyone can access our services fairly, regardless of their background, identity or circumstances. It reflects our values of being bold, fair and kind, and helps us build stronger communities together.

What are we doing?

We're working to make our homes, services and communities welcoming and inclusive for everyone by:

- Improving accessibility across our services
- Listening to tenant feedback to better understand and respond to people's needs

- Carrying out equality impact assessments to help ensure policies and decisions are fair
- Supporting community groups and activities that bring people together
- Working with partners to promote equality, diversity and social justice across Wales
- Tackling digital exclusion through support and digital skills
- Supporting the Armed Forces community through our commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant
- Learning from lived experiences

Recently, staff and members of our Tenant Voice group took part in the

Autism Reality Experience.

The session provided an insight into some of the challenges people with autism may face every day. Participants completed simple tasks while experiencing sensory distractions through specialist equipment, helping them understand how everyday situations can sometimes become overwhelming.

Alison took part in the training:

"It's fantastic that tenants and staff are learning more about autism and other neurodivergent conditions. Knowledge is key. The more people understand neurodivergence, the more accepting and supportive our communities can become."



Local support

- Mental health: **NPT Mind (01639 635840)**
- Carers: **NPT Carers Service (01639 686306)**
- LGBTQ+ support: **Swansea and Neath Port Talbot LGBTQIA+ Hub**
- Disability support: **Sensory support team (01639 686306)**
- Welfare and advice: **NPT Gateway (01639 686668)**

Tuna and vegetable pasta bake

Made with simple cupboard staples, this pasta bake is an easy, affordable meal that’s perfect for families, couples or even cooking for one. Any leftovers can be enjoyed the next day or frozen for another meal, helping save both time and money.

Ingredients:

- 300g pasta
- 2 tins tuna, drained
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tin sweetcorn, drained
- 1 onion, diced (optional)
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- 100g grated cheese
- 1 tbsp oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

1. Heat the oven to 180°C (160°C fan/Gas Mark 4).
2. Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions and drain.
3. Meanwhile, soften the onion in a little oil for 5 minutes.
4. Add the chopped tomatoes, sweetcorn and mixed herbs. Simmer for 5 minutes.
5. Stir in the tuna and cooked pasta.
6. Transfer to an ovenproof dish and sprinkle over the grated cheese.
7. Bake for 20-25 minutes until golden and bubbling.



Serves:
4-6





Prep/Cook time:
30 mins



Money-saving swaps

- Use frozen mixed vegetables instead of sweetcorn.
- Swap tuna for leftover cooked chicken or a tin of beans.
- Use any cheese you already have in the fridge.
- Make extra portions and freeze for another day.

Did you know?

Using tinned and frozen ingredients can help reduce food waste, save money and make it easier to prepare healthy family meals without multiple trips to the supermarket.

Struggling with the cost of food? Our financial inclusion team can issue food bank vouchers. Get in touch with them on 0300 777 0000.



Win a £100 shopping voucher!

Fancy some extra spending money before Christmas?

For your chance to win **£100** worth of shopping vouchers, simply count how many times the word “tenant” appears in this edition of Cartref.

Email your answer, along with your name, address and contact number, to media@taitarian.co.uk. Closing date: 20th November.

Our summer edition go green competition winner was Caroline Evans from Glyncorrwg.



Need to get in touch?



0300 777 0000
(General enquiries)



0300 777 3000
(Report a repair – only emergency repairs can be dealt with outside of office hours.)



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