



A Look Back



A review of our achievements
from April 2019 - March 2020



Looking back on another successful year...

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Welcome

from Jonathon and Linda



Reflecting on a successful year.

In the last year we have continued to make a huge difference to people's lives, enhanced communities and made a big commitment to fight climate change.

We've built more new homes and enhanced our existing ones, we've helped communities create areas where wildlife can thrive and spaces they can enjoy.

We've continued to build relationships with external partners to tackle anti-social behaviour and we've been at the forefront when it comes to tackling poverty and ending high cost credit.

We've also continued to create even more job opportunities for people in our communities, both within the organisation and through our contractors.

We have been busy looking to the future and have ambitious plans for our homes, communities and the planet. We are committed to creating homes where people can thrive, supporting communities to achieve their full potential and changing our behaviours today for the generations of tomorrow.

This will see us working closely with our tenants, employees, communities, contractors and partners over the next five years to deliver on our ambitious plans.

These partnerships will enable us to carry on doing what we're passionate about – making a positive difference to the lives of local people and the communities that we work in.

I hope you enjoy this brief look back at some of what we've achieved this past year.

Jonathon and Linda.

Jonathon

Chair, Jonathon Davies

Linda

Chief Executive, Linda Whittaker

Our Highlights



Two new housing developments opened – Heol Llwyn Celyn in Caewern saw eight, two bedroom properties built, whilst an old office block in Llansawel Crescent, Briton Ferry was converted into six new flats. The latter was the winner of the ‘Best change of use’ award in the Neath Port Talbot Building Excellence Awards.





More new homes

In keeping with our pledge to be carbon neutral by 2030, new homes will be energy efficient with plans to integrate solar panels, install more efficient combi-boilers and extra insulation. They will also feature extra ventilation and LED lighting.

At Parc Newydd, Briton Ferry our old flats were demolished and will make way for 31 new homes, which will be

built during 2020/21. Elsewhere, five new homes are nearing completion at Llys Wern in Caewern, whilst 10 flats are being built at Evelyn Terrace in Port Talbot with another six converted in the town centre.

Looking forward, we have had the go ahead to demolish and rebuild 20 flats at Melin Court, Neath, with many more new-build projects on the horizon.



Doing our bit for the planet

The last year really saw us step up and make a stand against climate change. We made a bold commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030 which will include our homes, offices and transport.

Although this is an extremely ambitious commitment, the passion of our staff to make this happen has meant work has already begun. 50 members of staff attended the climate strikes in Cardiff and Swansea in September, to address the fact that we are concerned about the climate emergency.

We opened our very own nature trail in the Afan Valley with new gardens created in Glynneath and Croeserw, some beautiful wildflower meadows in Cwmavon and at some of our Haven Housing Schemes.

Planting trees is one of the most powerful ways that we can reduce the impact of climate change.

As a result, we have planted almost 1500 trees in Croeserw and Pontardawe with many more planting days to come in the future. Our staff have been encouraged to reduce their carbon emissions by thinking about the way they travel to work. This has seen staff car sharing, cycling or walking as a result.

New homes that we have built all now come with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) 'A' rating, making them economical for tenants to live in and better for the environment. Work will soon start on improving our existing homes to increase their current rating.



Improving communities

Our programme to improve external areas continued with work being carried out in Cymmer, Seven Sisters, Ystalyfera, Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Pontardawe.



As part of the programme we held 'Get Together' sessions in each area, where tenants were invited along to meet our teams, partners and find out more about the work people could expect.

These sessions have proved very popular and will continue in other areas as the external improvement programme moves closer to them.

Our External Wall Insulation programme also continued as we strive to make our homes warmer and more energy efficient to benefit tenants.



Copper Foundation continues to grow

Our Copper Foundation has taken on 17 new trainees this year who have played a huge part in enhancing our communities through our external programme and special projects.

During the year 15 people finished the initial 12 months training which led to 5 securing permanent employment during the year, including Ryan, who joined our neighbourhood team here at Tai Tarian.

More recruits will be taken on by the Copper Foundation in 2020.



Speaking about his experiences, Ryan said:

I'm glad I enrolled on the Copper Foundation and I would recommend it to anyone looking for work. You never know, you may end up like me and go on to secure a full time role. Thanks to my experiences on the Copper Foundation, I've started training to become an arborist. I've already got my chainsaw and climbing qualifications and am hoping to gain more qualifications so I can expand my career further.



Community Benefits

This year our communities have really benefitted, with our contractors delivering their promise to giving sometime back locally.

16 of our biggest contractors have made almost £21,000 worth of contributions to local organisations.

Junior sports clubs, primary schools, scout and guide groups and foodbanks have all been beneficiaries. Our Haven scheme Maeshir in Glynneath has also benefitted with a new outdoor space being created for the residents.

As an added boost, contractors have also given job opportunities and work experience to local people, SERS, RT Contractors and ASW Scaffolding have been among the companies to do this.





Working with schools and the community

We've also worked closely with comprehensive age pupils at Ysgol Bae Baglan, encouraging them to embrace local arts and culture.

As part of our End High Cost Credit work, life skills such as financial literacy, numeracy and employability are being taught weekly, standing pupils in good stead for the future.

Regular money saving classes are also being held in the Sandfields community, with a focus on people's wellbeing too.





For younger pupils an educational programme around bees, bugs and hedgehogs has given an understanding of the important role wildlife plays in society, giving them resources to allow them to turn their own school spaces into wildlife havens.





Haven schemes get Visibly Better awards

Eleven of our Haven schemes have been awarded the RNIB Visibly Better gold standard, with one scooping a platinum accolade.

The aim of Visibly Better is to improve accessibility of the homes of people with sight loss, helping them live independently and enhance their wellbeing. Many of its principles also help people with dementia and mobility problems.

A Visibly Better Tenant Assessors Group undertook RNIB training on identifying and addressing situations that could affect those with sight loss.

The group decided on suitable kitchen and bathroom styles for residents and good contrasting colours for communal areas. Lighting, layout, signage, together with contrasting furniture and décor was also chosen, all whilst ensuring residents that were experiencing sight loss were kept in mind.



Recognition at a National Level

There's been plenty of recognition for our work with nominations for various awards.

Our Fusion project, which uses arts and culture as a means to encourage learning and employment for local youngsters, came out on top at the Welsh Housing Awards in the Supporting Future Generations category.

We were runners-up in the Building Safer Communities category for our work with South Wales Police to combat anti-social behaviour and county lines drug dealing. Our work with the police was also shortlisted at the UK Housing Awards, where we

were also a finalist for Landlord of the Year.

Our Corporate Services team were shortlisted at the Women in Housing Awards, the Copper Foundation at the 24Housing Awards, and our End High Cost Credit work was recognised at the Housing Heroes Awards.

Our Haven schemes at Tŷ Gnoll Newydd and Gwyn Court were ranked amongst the best in the UK at the Elderly Accommodation Counsel Awards.





Staff dig deep for Maggie's Swansea

Over £3000 was raised for our chosen charity of the year, Maggie's Cancer Centre in Swansea.

Staff voted to support the charity at the beginning of 2019 and then

set about raising money throughout the year.

Fundraising events included cake sales, raffles and social events. This was the eighth year in which Tai Tarian has raised money for a specific charity. The money brings the amount raised in that time to over £28,000.

Sarcoma UK is the charity chosen for 2020 with bake sales already proving popular to raise funds for the cause.



Top Marks

We received the highest possible rating from the Welsh Government in our latest Regulatory Judgement.

Each year Welsh Government carries out an assessment on how we're performing and sets out whether we're meeting the standards expected.

The key areas of focus are **governance, including services,** and **financial viability.**

The purpose of the assessment is to ensure we are a well governed organisation, that we have good levels of tenant involvement, that we have robust processes in place to assess our own performance, that we manage risks facing the business and are continually striving to improve the services we deliver to our customers.

The assessment also looks at our financial performance to ensure we are financially sound and are delivering value for money in all areas of the business.

Our judgement for 2020 provides assurance to our tenants, leaseholders and stakeholders that we are achieving the highest level of compliance.



Our Performance



Community Reinvestment

Using the Welsh Government's Value Wales Toolkit we have been able to demonstrate that, for every £1 spent on our major works programmes, £1.99 is reinvested in our local community out of a maximum £2 achievable.



Financial Inclusion and Universal Credit

Our financial inclusion team provides help and advice to customers experiencing financial difficulties.

Working jointly with our income team they provide support on benefit changes, budgeting and digital support. Tenants are also supported to claim and manage their Universal Credit claims.



1,165

referrals to the team for **benefit advice**



1,265

telephone calls providing benefit advice



957

tenants received **Universal Credit claimant support**



1,916

successful **benefit claims**



207

tenants received **digital support**



259

food bank vouchers issued



1,993

homes visits to support tenants and give benefit advice



89

tenants supported with **benefit appeals**



445

surgery appointments providing benefit advice



86%

benefits appeal **success rate**



£5,743,921

money raised in unclaimed benefits



Staff

Turnover is low.
88%
of our staff
stayed with us
during the year.



77%
of employees
live locally.

They receive
72%
of our
wage bill.



Training

We are passionate
about developing
our employees
and invested



£213,000

on training over the last year.

£502

average spend per
staff member.

Online

680 days.



£93,742

spent on health and safety training
44% of the overall budget.

£42,000

spent on
supporting
staff with

61 qualifications.



**Face to
Face
training**

equivalent to
2,626 days.

Customer Feedback

We want to hear from our customers when things go wrong and aim to resolve problems as quickly as possible.

This year we dealt with 100 complaints.

This year we received 200 compliments from our customers and here are some of the things they said:



“I can’t thank you enough, honestly I’m so happy I could cry. Staff from the lettings team explained there’d be a few things that need doing but that’s absolutely fine I’m just happy we will have a family home at last.”

“I would just like to thank the neighbourhood team for their support yesterday in cleaning flood damage and house hold debris from my bathroom. This was very short notice and I appreciate the fast response from the team.”

“Please can I highlight the professionalism and customer service from my Tenancy Relations Officer during a recent visit. Their knowledge and communication was also exceptional.”

“I just want to compliment your staff on their customer service. Whenever I telephone for any reason, I am always greeted with pleasant, helpful staff. They are a pleasure to talk to and will always help resolve the issue I may have.”

Repairs

We want our customers to feel proud of their homes and our dedicated staff and contractors are committed to delivering a high quality repairs service.

99.93%

of our homes were gas safe

(as at 31st March 2020)



We completed

135

new roofs

Over 757 properties have benefitted from improvement works to their external areas



Overall customer satisfaction with our repairs and maintenance service

1194 surveys completed



Customer satisfaction with the latest repair completed at their home is **99%**

10,840 surveys completed

We completed:



We completed
27,774
repairs



34
new kitchens

346



new heating systems

16



new bathrooms



309
rewires



233
external wall
insulations

Customer Satisfaction



97% would **recommend** us to family and friends

94% say we provide the **service tenants expect**

94% overall **service satisfaction**

90% say we **listen** and act on tenant views

95% satisfaction with the overall **quality** of their home

95% **trust us**

94% **neighbourhood satisfaction**

61% satisfaction with the way we dealt with **anti-social behavior**
- 104 tenants surveyed 2019-20

92% say our rent provides **value for money**

1194 tenants surveyed during **2019-20** .



Savings through new contracts

During the year we **awarded 38 contracts**. Of these, five of the contracts awarded show a like for like saving on previous contracts, with a **total saving of £373,000** over the life of the contracts.



Involving our Customers

Our Academy, which is mostly comprised of our customers, assisted us in assessing how we've performed. By working jointly with our staff and reviewing performance information, they helped us to develop a set of improvement actions, all of which are set out in our Making a Difference Storyboards. Our Academy also reported their findings to the Board before the Storyboards are published on our website.

They play an important role in our self-evaluation as they help us to continually improve services to customers.

Through their assessment the Academy suggested areas they would like to see improved or things they would like to see introduced. These suggestions are included in an action plan for the business to take forward. Here are some of the improvements suggested:



<i>They said:</i>	<i>We did:</i>
<p>Explore feasibility of involving members in key decisions.</p>	<p>We have conducted a number of co-design events with tenants and members, including setting Principles for Affordability when reviewing rents. We have consulted with our Academy members on key documents, before they have been presented to our Board and we will continue this approach in the future.</p>
<p>Create a database of our communities to identify issues in the area and what resources are needed to tackle these.</p>	<p>The Tenancy Management Register is populated from existing information and visits by the Housing Liaison Officers, this is building a database to understand issues within each area and helps plan what resources are needed moving forward.</p>
<p>Look at ways to encourage more women to apply for the Copper Foundation.</p>	<p>The Copper Foundation openly encourage females to apply for the scheme. There have been four successful female recruits to the scheme.</p>
<p>Replicate drop in centres in problem areas across communities.</p>	<p>Currently there are no significant issues in other communities, therefore additional drop in centres are not needed at present. However should this change, Tai Tarian will look to replicate this approach if needed.</p>



Our Vision:
Making a Difference

Our Mission:
Great Homes, Great Communities

Corporate Plan Progress

In 2017 we launched our Corporate Plan for 2017-20, 'Focus on Our Future'. Since then work has continued on all of the initiatives within the plan.

Our Corporate Plan sets out four key priorities:

- 1 Continue to invest in our homes and communities
- 2 Develop our workforce to improve effectiveness of service delivery
- 3 Maximise our use of technology to deliver what matters to customers
- 4 Pursue opportunities for growth



Corporate Plan Progress Summary

Pursue opportunities for growth

In 2019/20, we built 14 and bought 27 properties.



External Boundary Programme

Our external boundary programme will see us complete external improvement works to our homes. Since commencement of the programme, 1584 properties have benefitted from improvement works to their external areas and we have worked with over 3030 tenants using the opportunity to visit all of our homes to ensure there are no issues.

Continue to invest in our homes and communities

Copper Foundation

During the year 15 people finished the initial 12 months training which led to 5 securing employment.

Further information on this initiative can be seen on page 8.



During the year we've developed our new Corporate Plan, which will take us from 2020 to 2025.

Our priorities over the next five years will include:



Sustainable Homes

Creating homes where people can thrive

- a. Affordable homes for our tenants
- b. Tailored services to support tenants in their homes



Sustainable Planet

Changing our behaviours today for the generations of tomorrow

- a. Carbon neutral (net zero) by 2030
- b. Implement the principles of the circular economy* and maximise any potential for the foundational economy



Sustainable Communities

Communities achieving their full potential

- a. Community partnerships delivering services that matter to our customers
- b. Tenants supported to be healthy and active within their communities through focused and targeted involvement and learning opportunities

*The circular economy is a system that aims to reduce and eventually eliminate waste and the continual use of finite resources, such as fossil fuels. As well as the obvious environmental benefits, a circular economy also brings financial savings and helps to make us more efficient in the way we do things.

Who are the Board and Senior Management Team?

We are governed by a Board of Non-Executive Board Members made up of tenants, Council nominees and independent members. The Board provides strategic leadership and has overall responsibility for:

- setting the direction of the organisation and ensuring the organisation is accountable to tenants and other stakeholders
- approving and monitoring policies to support the Corporate Plan
- monitoring our performance and ensuring the organisation is meeting the outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan.



Linda Whittaker
Chief Executive



Claire Maimone
Director of Housing
& Corporate Services,
Company Secretary



Sian Ross
Director
of Finance



Andrew Carey
Director of Assets



Retired - Steve Tucker
Interim Director of Assets

Non-Executive Board Members



Jonathon Davies
Chair of Board



Shelley Bosson
Vice Chair of Board



Harry Lloyd
Chair of Audit and Risk
Committee



Mike Jones
Chair of Development &
Asset Disposal Committee



Samantha Jones



Denise Davies



Andrew Lycett



Daniel Smith



Jonathan Hughes



Samantha Taylor
Co-Optee



Steffan ap Dafydd
Council Nominee



Sonia Reynolds
Council Nominee

Resigned Board Members

Peter Maggs

Retired Board Members

Steve Mundy



Our money

On 1st April 2019 we had total cash of..... **£8.7m**

We had money coming in from ...

Rents	£41.7m
Service charges	£2.3m
Grants from Welsh Government and Local Authority	£6.2m
Property sales - Right to Buy and other	£2.4m
Other income	£0.9m

Total **£53.5m**

We spent it on...

Improving and repairing your homes and communities	£28.2m
Buying and building more homes for rent	£5.8m
Service costs	£2.8m
Tenancy management and support services	£7.6m
Interest payments and other finance costs	£7.6m

Total **£52m**

To do this we had to borrow... £0
this left us with total cash of £10.2m





For our highlights video of our annual review visit www.taitarian.co.uk

