



Cartref



What's next for Chris?

We caught up with former British and Commonwealth boxing champion Chris Jenkins to find out what's next now that he's called time on his boxing career. More on **page 2**.



Benefits are changing

With legacy benefits transferring across to Universal Credit, find out how this could affect you on **page 7**.



Competition time

Do you have a glorious garden that you're proud of? Let us know and you could be in with a chance of claiming a prize in our annual garden competition, details on **page 4**.

Knowing our tenants

As a landlord with over 9,000 homes, knowing our tenants is important to us.

That's why we have set ourselves the challenge of

visiting everyone over the next few years, getting to know you better, checking you are okay and to see if you need any additional help from us. We caught

up with our housing liaison team in Cimla to find out how it has been going.

More on **page 4**.

Family first for Chris

Ystalyfera based tenant Chris Jenkins isn't your average dad of three.

He's a former British and Commonwealth boxing champion who competed 33 times as a professional, with a record of 23 wins, seven defeats and three draws. Chris won a light-welterweight version of Prizefighter in 2013, six years before he achieved British and Commonwealth titles at welterweight, holding the titles until 2021.

After giving everything to the sport since the age of 12, a routine brain scan earlier this year showed an abnormality compared with last year, forcing him to retire.

"Scans are something routine that we pay for every year as boxers, the abnormality means I'd be putting myself at risk if I was to carry on.

"A hard fight or hard spar could result in greater risk of having early dementia or Parkinson's, a risk I can't contemplate taking with a young family.

"My life has always been about boxing, so it's been a big adjustment not having that in the early days. I'll be honest, I felt lost. Boxing gave me so much – respect, discipline, fitness. So, I asked myself what could I do with these attributes and help others at the same time?"

"So I started boxing classes at ISO:Fitness, a gym in Ystalyfera. It's for kids currently in years 7 and 8 in comp and we run every other Sunday. Things are going well and the kids are working on fitness and boxing techniques. They are enjoying and growing in confidence which is great to see.

"I'm also helping some young boxers with training and have been roped into some football coaching for Ystradgynlais Under 14s.

"But the biggest thing is spending more quality time with my wife and three boys. Boxing has meant I've made loads of sacrifices over the years but now the focus is on family."



Welcome from Linda



Since the spring, lots of work has been going on to establish a new operations directorate to deliver joined up services between our housing and asset teams.

We have taken on new staff, formed new teams and, as tenants, you will soon start seeing the benefits of these changes. We have also welcomed another Copper Foundation cohort to the business who will support our external programme to enhance your outdoor areas.

We have again partnered with the Fed Line Project to offer another cookery

course for tenants. Over four weeks, they got to grips with cooking healthy, nutritious and family friendly meals. To give you some inspiration they have provided our summer recipe on page 8.

I have continued to be involved in the Tata transition board, leading on outplacement and skills which looks at the employment needs of those directly affected by the transition together with the skills, training and support needed to enable individuals to take advantage of current and future opportunities.

An online hub with information, help and support for people

and businesses affected by blast furnace closures has been launched you can find the details on page 5.

Steph's column on page 7 covers everything you need to know about benefit changes taking place now, an important read for those that claim what's called legacy benefits.

We are in the process of planning some community sessions this summer, keep an eye on our social media pages to find out more.

Linda
Chief Executive

Don't forget to scan the QR codes for more details.

If you see a QR code in Cartref, grab your smart phone, open your camera and hover over the code. This will bring up the website page you need. Just tap to open. If you don't have a smart phone, you can visit our website and use the search bar to find info on the topic.
www.taitarian.co.uk

Fairyland group take the win!

Residents of Fairyland were smiling last month when the work of their community group Forward 4 Fairyland was recognised at an award ceremony in Neath.

The group were crowned CVS Community Group of the Year for the difference they make to the local area.

Over the last twenty years, the group have built a sense of community, served as a focal point for community engagement, tackling important issues such as

the local environment, loneliness, social isolation, and anti-social behaviour.

In the last year, the group gained a new lease of life, holding a pride party, summer fun day, opening a Christmas grotto, a garden clear up, and a community clean up. Courses for committee members including safeguarding, first aid and fire marshalling have also taken place.

Secretary of Forward 4 Fairyland, Luke Lavercombe had this to say:

"It is an absolute honour to be recognised by the CVS for all the tremendous work we have done in Fairyland. The awards night was a very inspirational evening, we could not have achieved this without the residents of Fairyland. Congratulations to all of the amazing people in Neath Port Talbot who are doing great things in their communities".

Huge congratulations to Luke who also won Neath Port Talbot's Mayor's Good Neighbour Award 2024.

Managing your bins

Missing your bin day makes things stressful, especially in the summer months when rubbish can attract flies and rodents.

The council have a handy bin day finder tool on their website where you can check your bin day. Don't forget to recycle as much as you can and store your rubbish in bins and bags provided. There is no limit on the number of recycling bags you can put out each week, you can order more from the council website.

Check your bin collection day here:



£60,000 worth of donations help communities

We have recently totted up the amount of donations made to our local communities in the last year, a fantastic £60,000 worth of goods and services.

The amount is a combination of grant funding, fundraising efforts and donations from staff and contributions from contractors as part of our community benefits programme. We have upgraded community facilities, carried out biodiversity projects, made monthly food bank donations, and funded cookery and first aid courses. Donating funds and goods to local community groups and charities and giving employment opportunities to local people have also made a difference.

Things that stood out included donating 350 nutritious lunches to children talking part in NPT Pass sports camps, and our Community Challenge initiative saw Glynneath Training Centre and Blaenbaglan Primary School benefit from improvements.



But the biggest project of the last year was £17,000 worth of improvements made to Graig Trebanos Community Hub & Garden in Pontardawe.

Using money from the Welsh Procurement Fund, we called on the help of our contractors ASW Property Services to bring the centre up to date. Among the changes were a new kitchen to cater for coffee mornings and events, new electrics, lighting, a hot water system and

fencing around the community garden.

The team have a busy summer ahead with Community Challenges taking place, donations arranged for local groups, extra deliveries for foodbanks and support with back-to-school supplies.

Could we support your community or a local charity with a donation? Get in touch, email community@taitarian.co.uk



Knowing our tenants



Continued from page 1

Back in spring 2020 when we were all confined to our homes due to the pandemic, our teams set about the mammoth task of calling all 9000 of you, to make sure that you were all safe, well and had everything they needed.

You told us that you appreciated the calls and so, as restrictions eased and things returned to normal,

we decided that we would continue with periodic check-ins, but this time in person rather than over the phone.

With over 9000 homes to visit, we caught up with our housing liaison team to find out more about why we are doing this:

“It’s an ambitious task, calling at all 9000 of our properties over the next few years”, says Lydia, a member of

the team carrying out the checks, “but we have to start somewhere, so we are here in Cimla today carrying out some of the first visits.

“The visits are a good way for us to make sure our tenants are okay and to see if they need any help with anything.

“We basically just have a chat and tell them about the services we can offer, things

like advice from our financial and benefits experts, if they need any adaptations to their home to allow them to live a little easier, or if they need some specialist assistance to help them lead independent lives. We’ll also take a quick look around the home and help them report any repairs that need doing or offer advice on what to do if they have signs of damp, mould or condensation.

“We can go years without coming into contact with some tenants, so it’s not only important that we check-in with them to see how they are, but also for them to get to know us and who they need to contact if they have any queries.”

As you can imagine, visiting 9000 properties is quite a logistical challenge for the team, as Lydia explains:

“We are still in the early stages of the project and so are still trying to figure out

the most efficient way of us carrying out these visits.

“At the moment we are concentrating on Cimla and taking one street at a time. We send letters out to the homes on that street about a week in advance saying we’ll be in your area the following week and will give you a knock between certain times. Of course, if the tenants would rather us call at a specific time, then they can give us a call to arrange an appointment.”

“The whole team try and be in the same street at the same time to make sure we’re visible, so people can approach us. It also helps that when we’re seen, the neighbours start talking and reassure each other about the nature of our visits and dispel any myths or fears.

“Naturally tenants can be a little wary or nervous when we first appear on the doorstep, but once we explain what we’re doing they often become more relaxed. We’re not there to check up on them or find fault. The visits are purely there to allow us to have regular contact with our tenants and be in the best position to help them with any issues.

“The whole team is experienced with backgrounds in housing or support

services, so we know where we can access any help that’s from our colleagues in other departments or from external partners. Whatever problems exist, we try and intervene early and nip them in the bud, and that makes these visits worthwhile.”

“The whole team try and be in the same street at the same time to make sure we’re visible, so people can approach us”.



Lydia and the team prepare for their next visits

Enter our garden competition!

Do you have a glorious garden? Then you need to enter this year’s garden competition to be in with the chance of winning a £50 Zoar’s Ark Garden Centre voucher.

We have three categories:

- Best grow your own
- Best wildlife garden
- Best overall garden

There’ll also be a special award for the best ‘Haven Housing’ garden.

No matter how big your outdoor space is, if you are

proud of it, please enter.

Rebecca, our Economic and Social Regeneration Manager will have the tough job of picking the winners:

“We never fail to have a great response to our garden competition, and we are always impressed with the way people have transformed their outdoor spaces. If you are not green fingered yourself but know a neighbour who is, please nominate them or encourage them to enter. To take part just email community@taitarian.co.uk with pictures of your garden by 28th August.”



A look back at 2023/24

Our annual review takes a look back at the last financial year, including our highlights, performance and progress against our corporate plan. Take a look here:



Tata Steel hub

An online hub with information, help and support for people and businesses affected by Tata Steel Transition has been set up. Access it here:



Rent article clarification

The Tai Tarian rent figures printed as part of the rent comparison table in the spring edition of Cartref, were for the last financial year (2023-2024) and did not represent any new charges from April 2024 to March 2025.



New homes update



The Eaglesbush development is coming on well with stage one due to be complete by August

Development work has continued at sites in Neath and Port Talbot as we do our bit to address the demand for affordable housing.

With so many people desperate for a home, we work with the local council to support those most in need, whilst also making homes available on our Homes by Choice bidding system.

At Port Talbot town centre, on the site of the old Eagle House, timber frame work is in progress as we build 18 apartments, which are expected to be ready for let during summer 2025.

At phase 2 of County Flats, Sandfields, existing tenants

have moved into Brecon and Gwent House so work on Flint and Morgannwg House can get underway.

Modular units which have been built at the Sevenoaks factory in Neath arrived on site recently with additional units to follow later in the summer.

At Eaglesbush, Neath the building of 52 homes, a mix of apartments, bungalows and family homes, is going well. The first tenants will begin moving in during August, with more following in September and October. A visit from Melin Primary School will take place in the autumn with pupils who named the development (Clos Castan), burying a time capsule containing artefacts found whilst excavating the site.

Demolition has taken place at Heol Crwys, Cwmavon and groundwork has begun. The development will create 43 new homes. The first stage of the build will be completed

winter 2025/26, with the second phase to follow.

We regularly share progress on our social media, so give us a follow!

Heol Crwys



Contract talk – loss of a loved one

The passing of someone close to us can be one of the hardest things we ever have to go through.

There are certain practical things that need doing, such as registering their death.

The 'Tell Us Once' service allows a person to inform all the relevant government departments when someone dies. However, we are not part of this service, so if your loved one is a tenant you need to get in touch with us directly.

It is important to inform us of the death as soon as you can and provide a copy of the death certificate so we can make the required changes. This includes putting 'the late' on our records and any correspondence for a period of time, something we legally must do.

Our housing team can give advice about what happens with the contract, which depending on circumstances could include clearing the property, survivorship, or succession rights.

The government have a check list of what you need to do when someone passes, you can find it by scanning the QR code.

Grief can be overwhelming, Cruse Bereavement can help. Call 0808 808 1677 or visit their website www.cruse.org.uk



Steph's top tips: If you claim benefits, things are changing



Traditional benefits known as legacy benefits are ending and being replaced by Universal Credit (UC), this is known as managed migration.

Legacy benefits are:

- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit (under pension age)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support

Other benefits, such as Personal Independence Payment (PIP), will stay the same.

When are the changes happening?

The following benefits are being replaced by UC this year:

- April: Income Support, Tax Credit with Housing Benefit (under pension age)
- June: Housing Benefit
- July: ESA – income based with Child Tax Credit
- September: income based JSA and income based ESA with or without housing benefit

What do you need to do?

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) will send you a letter to let you know when it is time for you to make a claim for UC and how to do it.

When you get your letter, make your claim as soon as possible.

Leaving it until last minute could mean you will be without financial support until your claim is processed.

Doing it straight away will also mean your UC matches your previous benefit income to make sure you're not worse off financially because of the move.

So how do you apply?

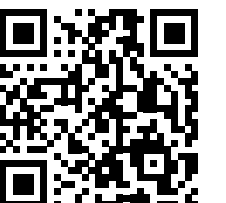
This is something you need to do yourself online, but only once you have your letter. If you need any help with this or any advice about the move to UC, please contact the team.

Information on how to apply will be outlined there but if

you do need help, you can get in touch with us, call the Universal Credit Migration Notice helpline for free on 0800 169 0328 or visit your local job centre.

Find out more:

Scan the QR code for more about Universal Credit, when you need to apply and support available.



Reporting your repairs



Making sure that your home is well looked after is a key priority for us, so it's important that you let us know if anything goes wrong.

It's easy to report non-urgent repairs via our website. Just add the details of the repair, tell us when you are available and one of our customer service team will assess if it's our responsibility and get back to you to book a suitable time to carry out the job.

If your repair is an emergency, such as an immediate danger or health hazard, please call us to report this as soon as possible. When you get in touch, our team will ask several questions to allocate your repair into one of the following categories:

- Emergency repair – endeavour to complete within 24 working hours
- Urgent repair – to be attended to within 7 working days

- Non-emergency (timescale dependant on the nature of the work)

We will then book an appointment for the job to be carried out.

We may advise you to carry out repairs to your own property such as replacing toilet seats, changing sink/basin plugs or light bulbs, but we can assist over the phone with this.

Our contact centre is open from 8am-6pm Monday-Friday and our out-of-hours service is available if you need to report an emergency repair outside of these working hours by calling the same number, 0300 777 3000.



Ydych chi eisiau dysgu Cymraeg?

Do you want to learn Welsh?

We'll be hosting another Welsh language course for tenants, starting this September at our head office in Baglan.

The entry-level course is ideal if you have little or no experience of the Welsh language.

Sessions will take place every week for 30 weeks.

With limited spaces please get in touch with stacey.southam@tairarian.co.uk or 01639 505897.





Bacon and Cheese Quiche

After our last cookery course, tenants were armed with a raft of gorgeous recipes to enjoy at home, so they wanted to share this favourite with you! Thanks to the Fed Line Project for the details.

Ingredients

- 60g plain flour
- 30g soft butter
- 3 eggs
- 6 tbsp milk (90ml)
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- 2 rashers of cooked bacon
- 1 tbsp of sweetcorn
- 15g grated cheddar cheese

Method

Rub the flour and butter together in a bowl, add some cold water (3 to 4 teaspoons) a little at a time. Stir until the mixture forms into a ball of pastry.

Sprinkle a work surface with flour and roll out the dough until it is slightly bigger than the tin. Lift the

pastry over the tin and push the pastry gently into the tin to form a pastry case.

Break the eggs into a bowl and whisk. Add the milk to the bowl and season with a pinch of salt and pepper.

Cut the bacon into small pieces and add to the pastry case. Next, add the sweetcorn and sprinkle with the grated cheese.

Lift the tin onto a baking tray and pour the egg mixture into the case. Place in the oven at 200°C fan, gas mark 6 for 20 minutes.

For a tutorial on the recipe scan the QR code here.

For a tutorial on the recipe scan the QR code here. ▶



Tea break challenge

How to play?

Within the rows and columns are 9 “squares” (made up of 3 x 3 spaces). Each row, column and square needs to be filled out with the numbers 1-9, but these can only be used once, and columns are 9 “squares” (made up of 3 x 3 spaces).

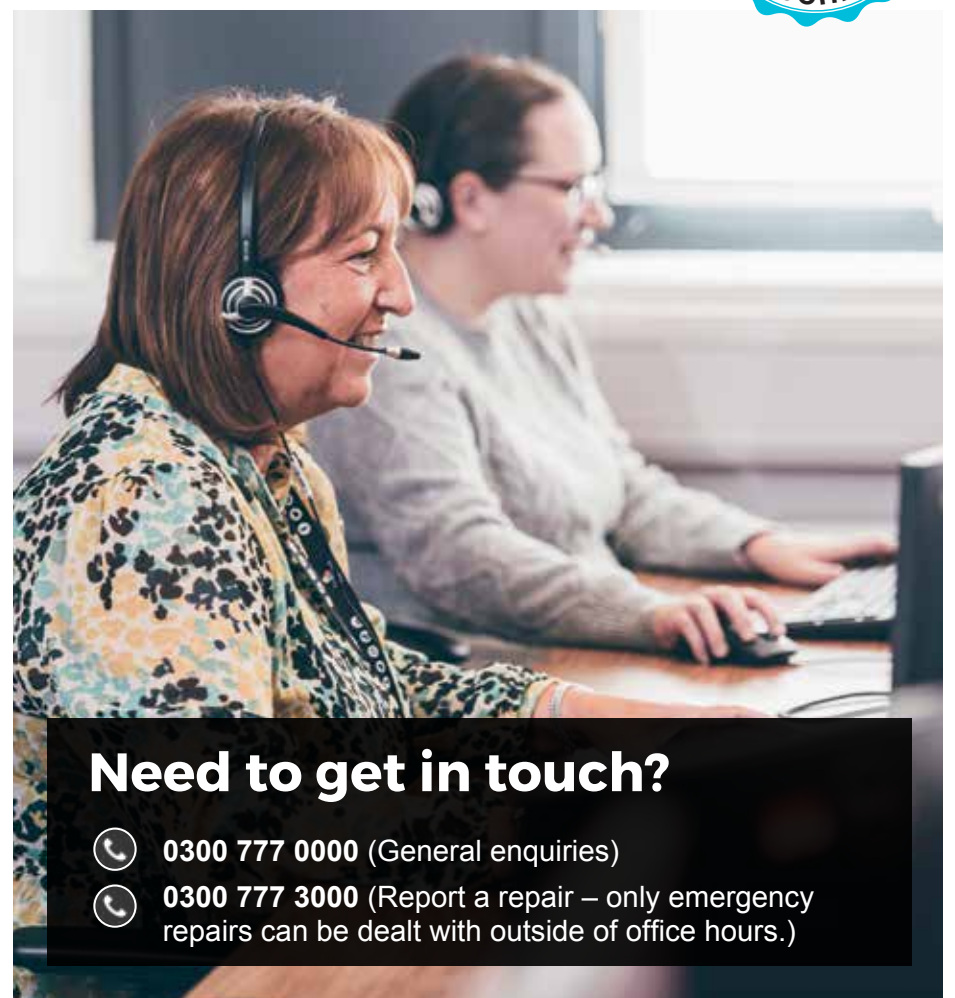
1	2	8					3	
7	3		6				5	1
5	6		8	3	1			
3				5	6			
9	5		2		8			
	4	6	7	9			1	
	1			8	7	6	2	
							3	4
9			3	2	8			

Give it a go!

Win £50 by going green

If you fancy receiving future editions of Cartref via e-mail instead of post, please let us know by emailing media@taitarian.co.uk All those who get in touch before 10th August will be entered into a prize draw to win a £50 shopping voucher.

Congratulations Miss Wynters, winner from our spring edition.



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.)

Struggling with the cost of food?

Our Financial Inclusion team can issue food bank vouchers. Get in touch with them on **01639 315000**.



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