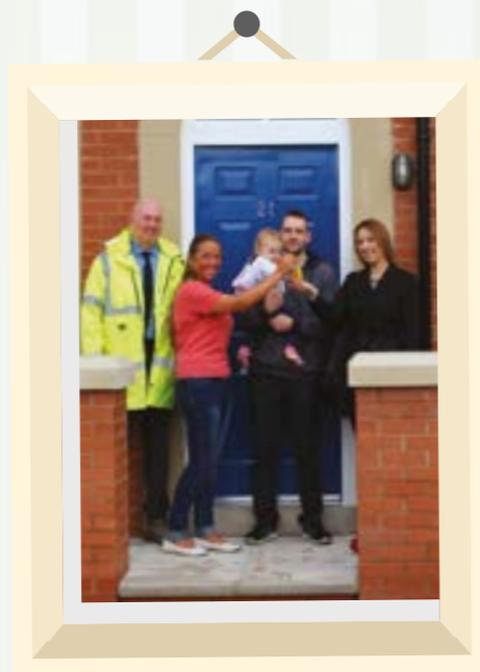


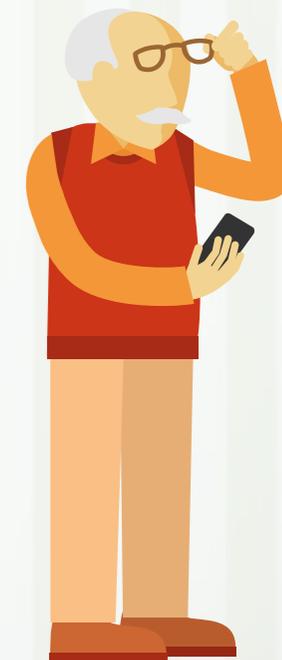


Annual Review 2016-2017



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Introduction

The last year has been a challenging time for North Wales Housing and with a change in Chief Executive there has been a period of change for everyone.

Paul Diggory, North Wales Housing's Chief Executive for 15 years retired in May 2016. Following a brief period by Interim Chief Executive Owen Ingram the Board's search for a new Chief Executive led to my appointment.

I started in my role as NWH's new Chief Executive in October 2016, and it has been a busy year! Thank you to everyone who has made me feel welcome during my time so far.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Board members and staff for their hard work, support and dedication. It is thanks to you that there have been lots of successes even in a challenging time, successes which show that we are well placed to face future challenges.

So what are these successes I hear you ask. Let us start with some of our developments. The Regeneration Team have been busy, creating 52 new homes of the highest sustainability standards in 2015 - 2016. One of these developments was Afallon Housing Co-operative in Rhyl, the first urban cooperative in Wales.

The first development was completed in January

2016, providing 7 new build family houses and 4 fully refurbished apartments.

Further good news is that all apartments at Hafan Gogarth, Llandudno by Domus Cambria have now been sold, enabling us to invest the profits into North Wales Housing.

As well as building new homes we have also been investing in our existing homes, upgrading kitchens and bathrooms to be compliant with WHQS and creating better places to live.

Our most important relationship continues to be with our tenants, and we have to understand their views, needs and expectations. The implementation of our Tenant Participation Strategy has helped us with this. Various tenant engagement and consultation activities have taken place, you can find out more on page 18.

We have a number of schemes specific for older people; three of these are Extra Care schemes. Having been open for a few years, these are now all established and continue to help people remain independent for longer. The case studies on page 10 are proof of the true difference it can make to people's lives.

Our Supported Housing team continues to help and support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, and have supported 458 get

their lives back on track and develop skills for independence.

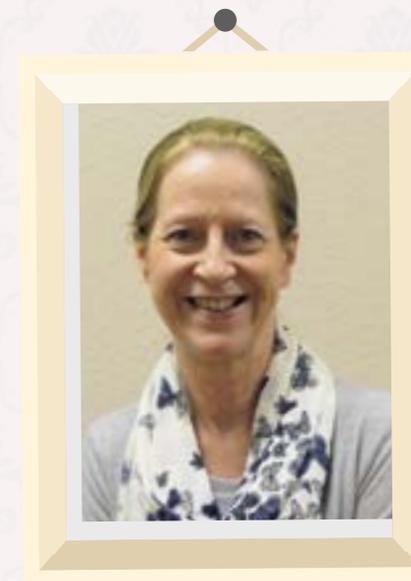
The truth is that North Wales Housing wouldn't be where we are today without the hard work and support of my colleagues; the people that we employ have worked hard to keep North Wales Housing on track and where we are today.

We are now looking to the future; part of this is developing a new Corporate Plan which sets out our priorities and objectives for the next three years. This will be available on our website www.nwha.org.uk. Thank you to everyone who took part in the consultation for the development of this.

I hope that you enjoy reading this Annual Review and looking back on the year. We would love to hear what you think; please get in touch!

Helena Kirk

Chief Executive



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Talking about Regeneration

There is currently a housing crisis in Wales. To meet current demand, **12,000** new homes are needed in Wales each year.

We are working with local authorities across North Wales and have a planned development programme each year to help bridge this gap.

52 units were completed by our in-house development team in 2016/17, **31** more than the previous year. **12** of these were at Clos Owen, our first development in Wrexham, making us truly a North Wales wide housing organisation.



Other new build properties completed over the year include:

- **Stad yr Ysgol in Llangoed, Anglesey, providing 10 much needed new affordable homes in the area.**

- **Garreg Domas, a development of 9 one bedroom two person flats built in Holyhead as part of a big regeneration project, funded by vibrant and viable places funding.**

23,000 properties are lying empty in Wales; therefore refurbishing properties is as important as building new ones. North Wales Housing have won awards for refurbishing properties and work with local authorities on their Empty Homes Strategies.

In 2016 – 2017 North Wales Housing have renovated five Empty Homes properties in partnership with Denbighshire Council. **Twelve** bedsits have also been transformed to **6** high quality, energy efficient and affordable apartments in John Street, Rhyl in partnership with West Rhyl Community Land Trust.

Due to the difficult climate to build homes, with reduced funding, means we sometimes have to be innovative in our approach to building homes. North Wales Housing formed a Cooperative in partnership with West Rhyl Community Land Trust, Afallon Housing Co-operative, the first urban cooperative in Wales. The first development was completed in January 2016, providing **7** new build family houses and **4** fully refurbished apartments.



Sustainability

In all aspects of our business we aim to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

SHIFT Sustainability Success

We successfully achieved SHIFT Silver in 2016's SHIFT sustainability assessment, a prestigious environmental awards scheme, for the second time.



The SHIFT (Sustainable Homes Index for Tomorrow) benchmarking scheme, endorsed by the government, analyses the environmental performance of housing associations. Being part of SHIFT demonstrates our commitment to play an active role in creating better homes and businesses whilst enhancing people's lives.

Community Energy Wardens

We have collaborated with Grŵp Cynefin to offer tenants in Gwynedd, Anglesey and Conwy the services of Community Energy Wardens. These wardens provide tenants with impartial help and advice on energy, and as a result save them money.

In the last year the Community Energy Wardens have:

- **Engaged with 112 of our tenants**
- **Processed 76 successful submissions of 'Warm Home Discount' applications worth £10,640.**



submissions of
'Warm Home
Discount'
applications
successful

- **Co2 saving of 81,950 kg per annum (by following the instructions of Directgov and Energy Saving Trust).**

The Community Energy Warden project was originally only available to residents in Gwynedd. The service was extended to Conwy this year.

Home ownership

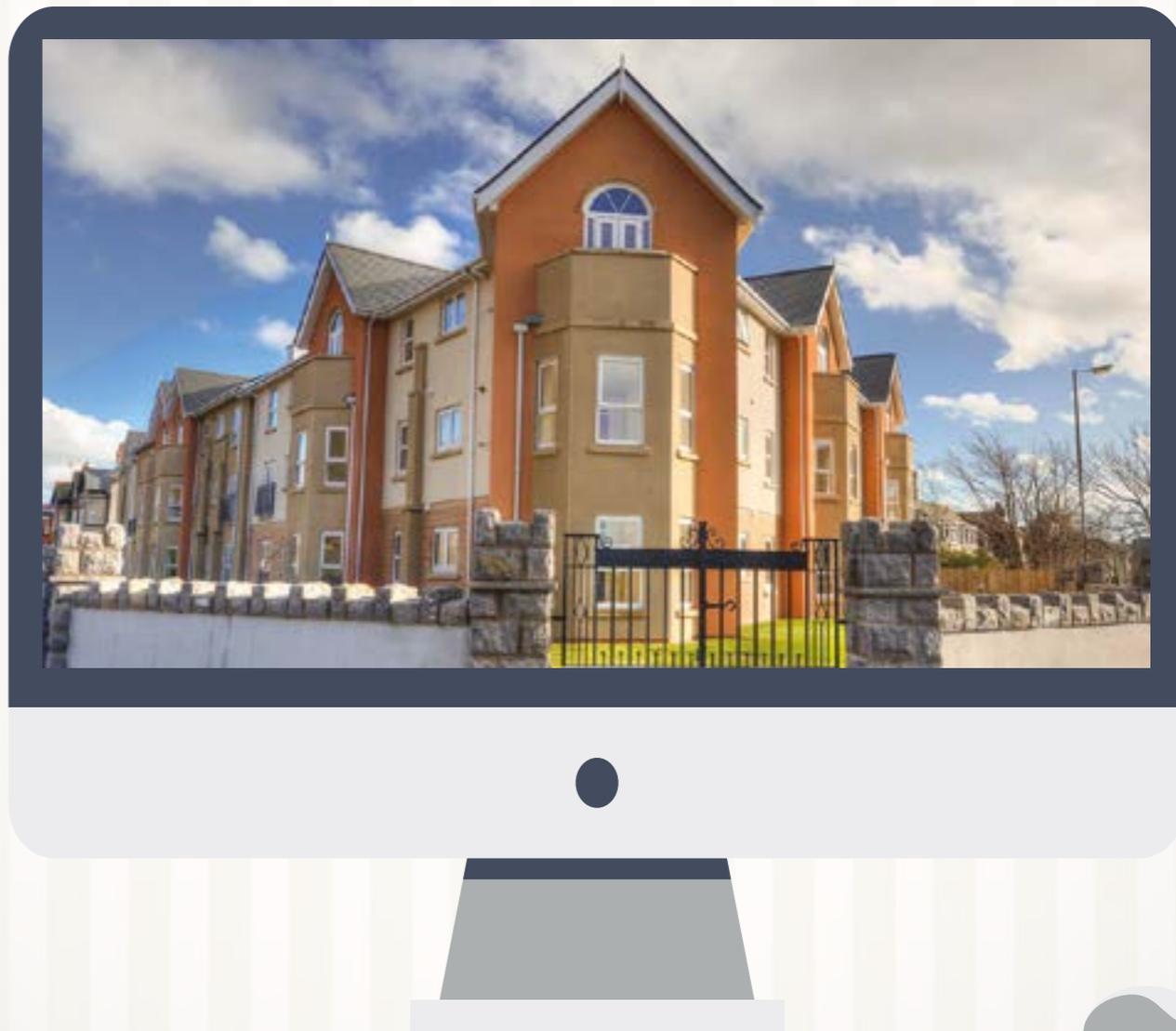
North Wales Housing set up Domus Cambria in 2011. A commercial subsidiary of North Wales Housing, Domus Cambria's aim was to develop homes and services commercially, reinvesting profits back into North Wales Housing and the community.

domus Cambria



The first development was Hafan Gogarth, Exclusive apartments for the over 55's on Llandudno's West Shore. These apartments have now all been sold.

We also continue to support people to own their own homes via low cost ownership schemes such as shared ownership.



Retirement Living

“Should not a decent home be a minimum expectation for our older population in Wales?”



The older population is increasing in Wales and there is insufficient accommodation to meet demand.

North Wales Housing has invested in Older Persons accommodation, opening three Extra Care schemes across North Wales over the last 3 years. We also have a number of Sheltered Housing schemes. All of these housing options enable residents to live independently in an easy to manage home, leaving them free to enjoy life with the peace of mind that support is on hand when they need it.

A video was recently produced for Cae Garnedd, our Extra Care scheme in Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor. The video depicts the day to day life at the scheme, highlighting the difference it can make to the residents' lives and enables them to live independently.

Our Older Persons residents came to the rescue of our homeless hostel St Mary's over the winter as they sent out an urgent appeal for donations as supplies ran critically low for their homeless gate service.

Our Older Persons residents came to our homeless hostel, St Mary's rescue over the winter as they sent out an urgent appeal for donations as supplies ran critically low for their homeless gate service. Residents from all of our schemes pulled together and collected donations from family and friends, handing over food, warm clothing and bedding to help street homeless in Bangor over the winter.



Case Studies

Extra Care helps couple remain living together

A couple in their late 80's/early 90's were struggling in their own home due to the demands of the upkeep of their house and their carer also suffered a breakdown. The responsibility of looking after a partner with dementia and other health conditions took its toll.

Moving into Extra Care has provided them with a new manageable and safe home, onsite care and support that takes the pressure off the partner relieve partner and a home-cooked lunch daily. This new solution means that the couple can remain living together instead of one having to move into a nursing home.

New lease of life for resident previously housebound

An elderly lady had become housebound in her existing home due to the steps in and out of the existing property. The property's large size also meant that it was tiring to move from room to room, and she would just sit in her chair all day unless a family member called as it was easier.

She loved her garden but due to her declining health she had not been able to 'potter' in the same way. Having moved to a ground floor flat in one of our Extra Care schemes the resident gained a patio area and she is delighted to be able to attend to her pot plants once more and can enjoy being outside.

Initially she required a few care calls but these have been substantially reduced and mobility is much better. She has made lots of friends at the scheme and joins in with all the social activities; she displays a notable vibrancy since moving which she puts down to feeling so much better after moving.

Supported Housing and Homelessness

North Wales Housing is an established supported housing provider in North Wales and has provided homes and services to vulnerable service users for over 28 years.

Over 458 vulnerable people have been supported in the past 12 months, changing many lives for the better. These could be people who were homeless, people with drug and alcohol problems, mental health issues, ex-offenders, people with learning disabilities or young people leaving care.

83 people successfully moved on to general needs social housing accommodation and living independently thanks to the support of their project workers.



moved to general needs social housing

Our services bring significant social value in the form of savings made to the public purse. We reduce the demands on emergency health services, social services, policing and criminal justice.

We also add value to the grants we receive to fund our services, by supporting vulnerable

individuals to claim benefits and grants that they are entitled to, and bringing in funds for training and qualifications for homeless people e.g. construction skills and emergency first aid.

Range of Services

We provide a wide range of Supported Housing services including for people with mental health support needs; people with learning disabilities; women and children escaping domestic abuse; young care leavers; young offenders; people with a range of vulnerabilities. We provide these services in shared and self-contained accommodation and through “floating support”, directly through managing our own services and through specialist partner agencies.



Graduation success for Dispersed Supported Housing resident

Audrey Danby, a Gwynedd Dispersed tenant graduated from Coleg Menai in 2016 having completed an ‘Access to Social Sciences’ qualification. Congratulations Audrey! Audrey then went on to do a part time degree course in Bangor University.

New ‘move on’ properties for hostel

10 new move-on units were created for Colwyn Bay hostel Noddfa following refurbishment projects in Llewelyn Road and Marine Road, Colwyn Bay. These new flats ensure there is suitable



accommodation available for people to move to, whilst still retaining close links with Noddfa and the support it offers. It also enables service users to take the first vital step towards independent living.

Services showcased to partners

The Supported Housing Team went on the road in September in Conwy and Gwynedd to showcase the services and support they offer to vulnerable residents. The events were tailored for service providers, agencies, organisations and interested parties who wanted to find out more about what services we can offer and how to refer people to our services.



Getting involved

Engagement is an important part of preparing Supported Housing service users for independent living and successful move-on.

A number of engagement activities have gone on over the year that have helped up-skill individuals as well as building their confidence levels.



These include art workshops with a well-exhibited local professional artist, informal music sessions with talented hostel staff as well as outdoor activities such as hill walking, canoeing and climbing. Healthy living is also promoted through growing and cooking nutritious food, including fruit and veg from our hostel kitchen garden.

Homelessness

North Wales have a number of Homelessness Services that help people who are homeless, or threatened with homelessness.

Our Outreach and Resettlement Team in Gwynedd are on hand to provide housing advice and support for rough sleepers to find and maintain their own accommodation. The Team support people who have complex needs and work with street homeless people, who are, sadly, increasing in number across North Wales.

We also have homeless hostels in Conwy and Gwynedd providing support to help vulnerable people live independently and move on to their own accommodation. St Mary's hostel in Bangor also offer a "gate service", offering daily advice, support, survival equipment and food, drink and clothing to people who are street homeless in Bangor. A campaign for donations to help keep this service going proved very successful again this year, and many we can't accommodate were provided with donations to help them survive the very tough experience of life on the street.

Case Study

Homeless Hostel helps James rebuild his life

James* had been a carer for his elderly mother. Sadly she passed away and her house had to be sold and as he had no other family he could stay with he became street homeless. James was single but had a teenage son who lived with his ex-wife.

James moved into Noddfa, a hostel in Colwyn Bay that provides temporary, supported housing accommodation for single homeless people and families who are vulnerable and need support.

He was extremely keen to gain full time employment as a security guard and had gained all the relevant qualifications. The Noddfa team supported him to look for work and assisted him to complete application forms. As a result he worked at a local shopping centre on a trial basis before being offered a full time, permanent position.

Soon after gaining employment James was assisted to find private accommodation and his landlord agreed to allow James to move in and pay the deposit on a monthly basis. This, along with a successful application for a crisis loan enabled him to move into private accommodation.

This, along with a successful application for a crisis loan, enabled him to move into private accommodation.

Better places to live

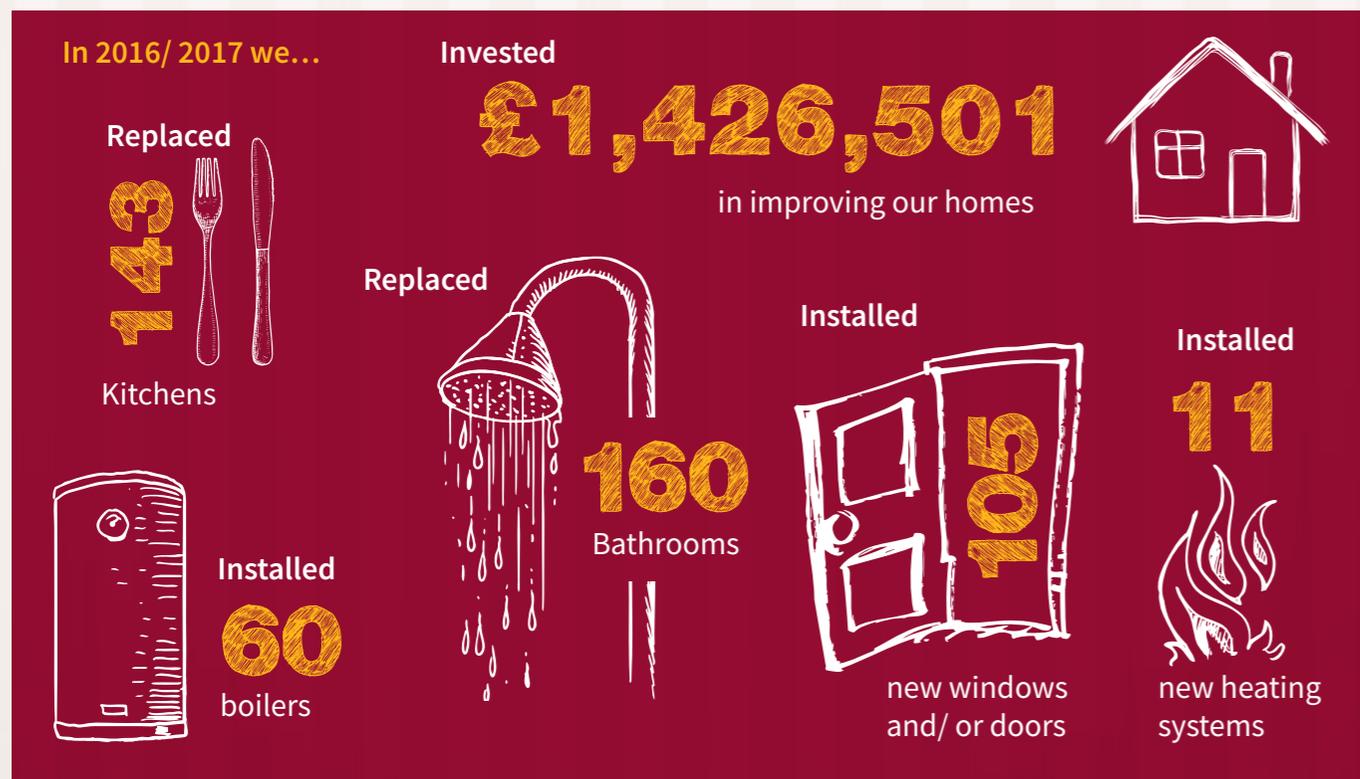
It is in our interest as well as our tenants to maintain the condition of homes. We have an in-house Repairs Team who carry out day to day repairs to tenants' homes.

Planned Replacement and Improvement Works

North Wales Housing have to maintain the

quality of our homes according to Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS), a national standard of quality for homes set by the Welsh Government.

As our homes get older we may need to replace or improve items such as bathrooms, kitchens and doubling glazing to make sure they reach that standard.



Working together to maximise neighbourhoods

We have also been working towards the Chartered Institute of Housing's Neighbourhood Charter, one of a few in the country to have its neighbourhood working frameworks accredited.

Titled 'Working together to maximise impact in neighbourhoods', the aim of the project is to improve neighbourhood working, transforming our approach to delivering services and resources and act as a catalyst to optimise neighbourhood interventions.

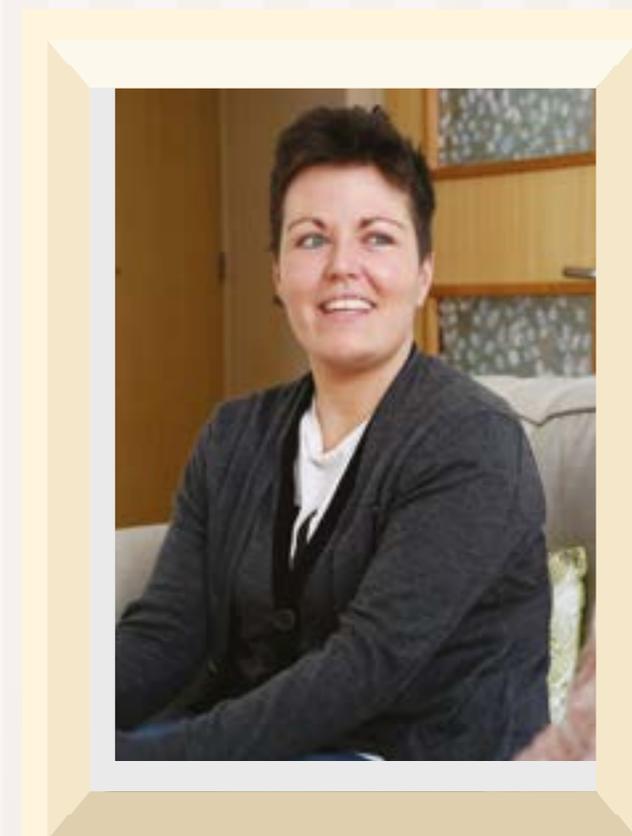


Sustainable Tenancies

We are dedicated to making sure tenants can sustain their tenancies, assessing possible new tenants before they are given their new home.

There is also a team at North Wales Housing who provides advice and support to tenants on financial inclusion and debt advice. 165 tenants were provided with advice over the year, gaining £230,988 and helping them save £21,806.

A Tenancy Sustainment Officer has now been employed to help support sustainable tenancies further.



£21,806

Saved by the advice given

Engage, Listen, Act

We are committed to delivering a Local Tenant Participation Strategy called "Engage, Listen, Act" which is strengthening our tenant engagement and the 'tenants voice' in the shaping of our services.

We organise a number of events and activities to engage with a wide selection of tenants. These events and activities give tenants the opportunity to get involved at North Wales Housing to improve the quality of life in communities in which our tenants live. They can also give the opportunity to learn and develop new skills.

Since April 2016, 407 tenants have engaged with us.

407

engaged tenants

Opening Doors to the Outdoors

A new project called Opening Doors to the Outdoors was launched with Gwynt y Môr. Also funding in September 2016. The project is a partnership between North Wales Housing, the Outdoor Partnership and the Conway Centres Anglesey.



Tenants are offered high quality outdoor activity experiences, with the option of gaining a qualification and improving employment opportunities in the outdoor sector workforce.

The first taster was climbing and four tenants successfully earned a Level 1 NICAS (The National Indoor Climbing Award Scheme). Future activities include hill walking, canoeing and mountain biking.

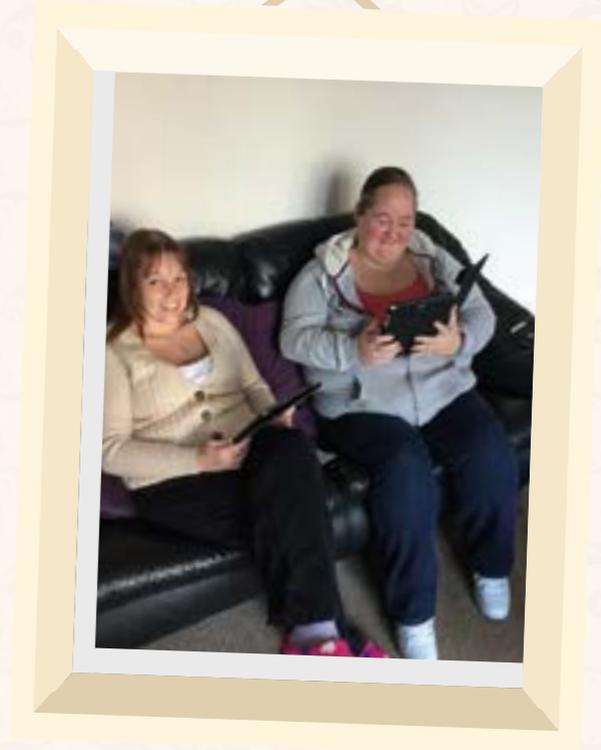
Let's get digital

A Digital Officer was appointed and targeted sessions were run at schemes where there are lower levels of digital inclusion; These include Parc Clarence, Llain Cytir and in Extra Care schemes Cae Garnedd and Hafod y Parc.

The Officer spent time with segments of our tenants identifying their digital needs and building up their skills and helping them get online. In a matter of months 18 tenants were supported to become more digital and 99 people were helped to access the internet.

99

people helped to access the internet



Feeling Supported

Residents supported by our Supported Housing team have benefited from activities designed to enable them with skills to prepare them for independent living. These include regular healthy cooking and eating sessions and budgeting and planning skills.

Residents have also taken part in art groups and music sessions to improve their emotional and mental well-being, social inclusion and build their confidence.

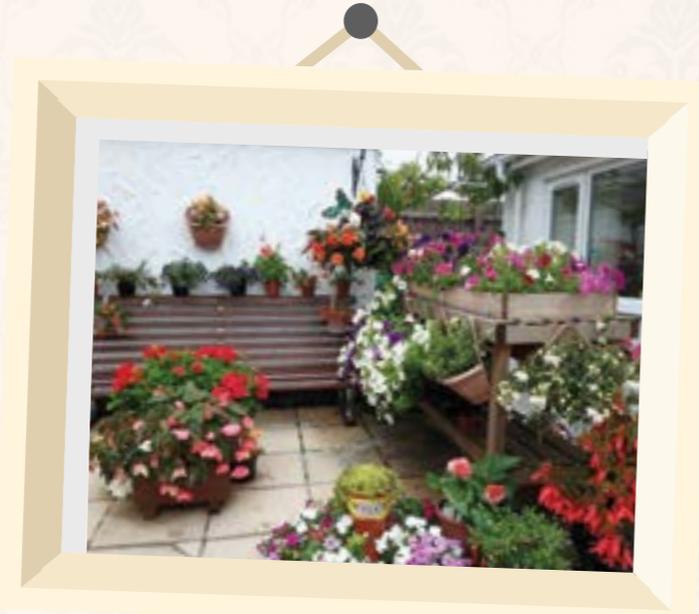
Some healthy competition

For the first time we held two resident competitions; a gardening and photography competition. Both were successful and helped us engage with residents in a fun, informal way.

Working in partnership

Our partnership with Bus Stop Community Project continued to be successful, facilitating activities and arts and crafts sessions with some of our younger residents on our estates as well as our older residents in schemes.

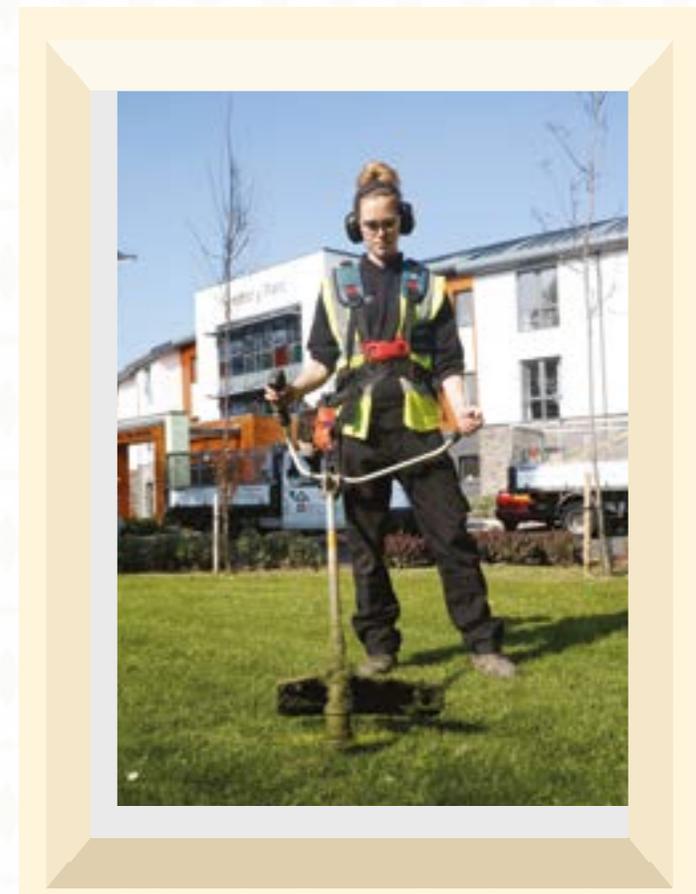
A festive children's Christmas art competition also helped bring some Christmas cheer to North Wales Housing in December.



Social Enterprise

In keeping with our social enterprise ethos, in October 2014 we launched Rakes and Ladders to deliver a range of gardening, grounds maintenance and minor property maintenance services to tenants. The service has gone from strength to strength and North Wales Housing has invested in their development, with apprentices and trainees working towards qualifications in horticulture.

We have collaborated in a Conwy-based group of social enterprises called Social Enterprise Business Solutions (SEBS) and this coalition has been successful in achieving Social Enterprise Place status for Conwy. The group provides a forum where we can influence each other and partners like Conwy Council and encourage other social enterprises to do more.



Employing people who add value

People are at the centre of everything we do and this year we developed a new People Strategy which will be implemented over a three year period.

Importance of the Welsh language

We recognise the importance of the Welsh language and culture and have developed our own Welsh Language Scheme to explain how we do this. We recognise that we're not perfect and have put an action plan in place to improve this.

We encourage our colleagues to learn Welsh if they are not Welsh speakers and offer weekly Welsh lessons to all staff in work time. Such is the success of the lessons that four members of staff were shortlisted for 'Welsh for Adults Awards', leading to Julie Jones, Personnel Officer winning the Foundation level.

Creating opportunities

North Wales Housing is committed to apprentice training within our business. Four apprentices were employed by us in 2016 - 2017, mainly in the Homes Team.

One of our Customer Services Assistants, Hannah Roberts was nominated for an award at Coleg Llandrillo's Apprenticeship Awards 2016. Each tutor at Llandrillo was given the opportunity to nominate the student they thought had done outstanding work throughout their course. Only a handful of students from each course were successful.

Working together for charity

In April each year North Wales Housing choose a charity and staff pull together to fundraise. In the last year we raised nearly £7,000 for St David's Hospice, a local charity providing end of life



care, free of charge, to adult patients from across North West Wales and supporting those closest to them.

The total amount has been raised by a steady stream of activities that have taken place since

The total amount has been raised by a steady stream of activities that have taken place since April 2016. These have included taking part in a Dragon boat race, summer fete, a Christmas fair, Bake off challenge as well as an online Facebook auction.



Value for money

Value for money is not just about increasing efficiency and effectiveness; as a social enterprise we also recognise the importance of our social purpose.

Value for money is important for us and we have developed a Value for Money Strategy, outlining our approach on how to manage social value. Each year we publish a Value for Money

Statement which can be found on our website <https://www.nwha.org.uk/about-us/value-for-money/>

This statement shows that we understand what it costs us to run our business, how our costs compare or differ from our peers, and know why we are different.



Governance

A new governance structure was introduced in January 2017. The objective of this review was to streamline the reporting and governance arrangements to allow the Group Board more time to concentrate upon strategic issues and to oversee and implement the Regulatory Plan tasks.

5 new members were co-opted on the Group Board in December 2016 strengthening the Board's diversity, skills, competencies and experience required to enable it to challenge and scrutinise effectively.

You can find out more about our new board members by reading their short bios here:

John Keegan

John is the Chief Executive at Monmouthshire Housing. He has worked at a senior level in the housing sector for over 20 years, the last nine years as a Chief Executive. He has recent board experience with Community Housing Cymru as Chair and also at Agored Cymru an awarding body for further education colleges and courses.



William (Bill) Farnell

Bill is a Chartered Certified Accountant and works as a Finance Manager at Bangor University responsible for day to day financial transactions within the College of Business, Law, Education and Social Sciences. He previously held the post of Finance Manager/Company Secretary at the Management Development Centre, Bangor.



Christopher Taylor

Christopher is a Chartered Public Finance Accountant and is a Technical Director with Arlingclose Limited, an independent treasury advisory company which provides financial advice and capital financing expertise for the public, private and the third sectors. He has previously worked for Clwyd County Council and Denbighshire County Council and his latter position was that of Principal Management Accountant.



John Ghader

John is currently the Group Chief Executive of Prima Group, having been in post for nearly four years. He has a wealth of experience in the housing sector having previously worked for the Anchor Trust, Headrow Housing Group, Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council and the Tenant Services Authority. He has also worked as a Lead Housing Inspector for the Audit Commission. He is currently a National Board member with the National Housing Federation.



Ian Alderson

Ian is a partner with Brabners LLP and specialises in advising the social housing sector and other clients on housing management, property and commercial disputes and litigation, employment related litigation and judicial review and human rights cases. He is a qualified mediator and member of CIH and the Property Litigation Association.

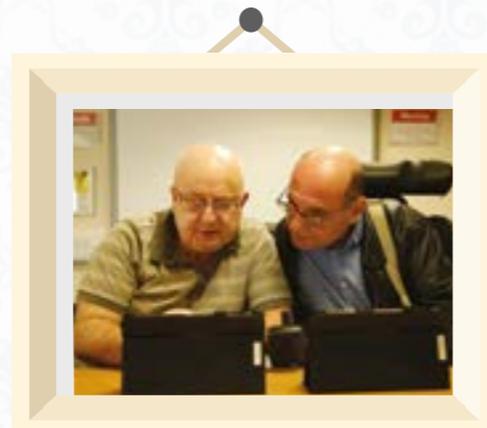


To further improve our Governance we have signed up to the Community Housing Cymru Code of Governance, a Code designed to help housing associations to develop good governance structures and support continuous service improvement for tenants.

We have assessed ourselves against the code and progress has been made. However further work is required for us to be 100% compliant.

The Residents' Advisory Panel (RAP) is also part of our formal governance structure and plays a significant role in scrutinising, challenging and providing advice to us. The Panel now has 9 members.

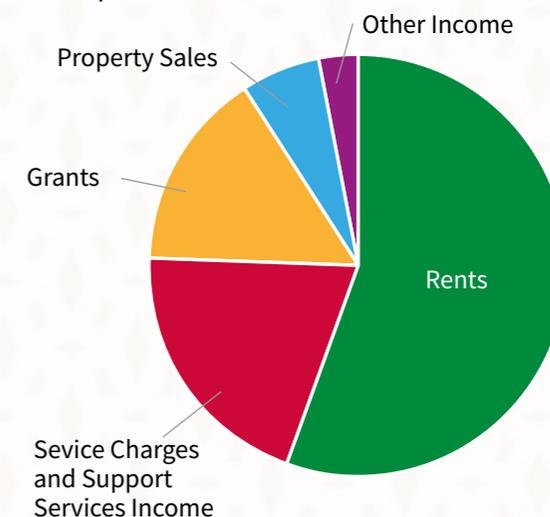
Over the year the RAP have participated in a number of projects. Some of these include undertaking a review of effectiveness and have identified areas of improvement, development of a new Customer Charter, scrutiny of performance and a review of the Customer Focus Strategy.



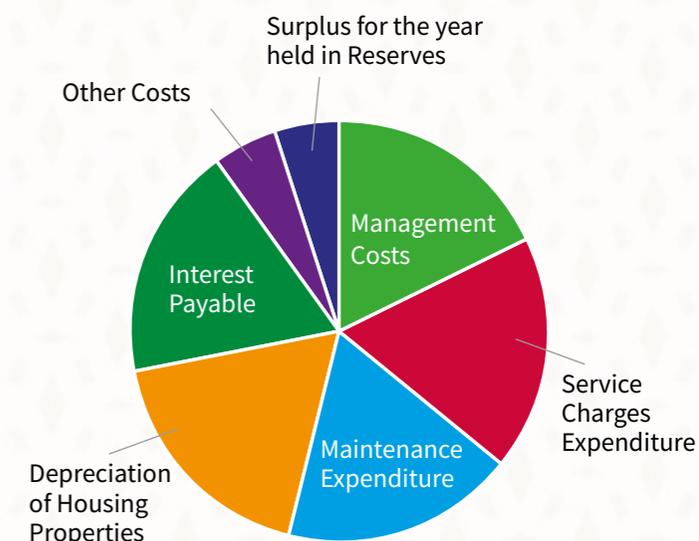
What about the money

A summary version of our income and expenditure account is presented here:

The money comes from	£(000)
Rents	£11,074
Service Charges and Support Services Income	£2,915
Grants	£941
Property Sales	£662
Other Income	£317
Total	£15,909



The money goes to	£(000)
Management Costs	£2,010
Service Charges Expenditure	£3,323
Maintenance Expenditure	£2,528
Depreciation of Housing Properties	£2,532
Interest Payable	£2,769
Other Costs	£1,305
Surplus for the year held in Reserves	£1,442
Total	£15,909
Capitalised Development and Major Repairs Expenditure	£4,651





Got a question?

If you have any questions of feedback on this Annual Review please get in touch on:

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