

South Wales Regional Network Meeting

Thursday 13th September 2018

Valleys to Coast Housing, Tremains Road, Bridgend

Apologies:

Rebecca Mollart, erosh

Andrew Burns, United Welsh

Collette Williams, Cynon Taf

Angela Hiscox, Caerphilly Gov

Chris Jones, UW

Mark Davies, Tai Calon

Claire James, Trivallis

Oliver Townsend, Cymorth Cymru

Sian Stephens, Carmarthenshire Gov

Rachel Rees, Tai Calon

Joanne Kirrane, Melin Homes

Leah Manna, Tai Tarian

David Watkins, RNIB

Anthony Rees, V2C

Elizabeth Willington, V2C

Stephanie Healey, Coastal

Ryan Harris, Coastal

Deborah Fellows, Newport City Homes

Alan Evans, Newydd

Present:

1. Judith Jeeves, V2C (minutes)
2. Richard Sheahan, Linc Cymru (chair)
3. Kerri Hunt, Cynon Taf
4. Asmut Price, Cardiff Gov
5. Buddug Lewis, Tai Ceredigioin
6. Lisa Evans, Coastal
7. Mandy Sharp, Bro Myrddin
8. Sian Kyte, MV Homes
9. Michelle Brewer, Melin Homes
10. Janet Bochel, FHA
11. Rena Karadogan, Trivallis
12. Lauren Howells, CCHA
13. Christopher Thomas, Trivallis
14. Roz Woolverton, Newydd
15. Sarah Burt, Newport City Homes
16. Sian Stephens, Carmarthenshire
17. Eleri Jenkins, Tai Ceredigion
18. Diane Thomas, City and County of Swansea
19. Sarah Wright, City and County of Swansea
20. Joe Frampton, CH Cymru
21. Mark Richards, Bro Myrddin
22. Karen Thomas, MV Homes

RS welcomed any new attendees. Action points from the last meeting minutes were addressed. RS asked JJ if V2C had managed to find any speakers that were requested at the last meeting. She advised that EW had contacted Adrian Moyse from SWFRS and John Williams from South Wales Police Senior Citizen Liaison Team. Neither could make this meeting, but she will pursue a future attendance. JJ requested any contacts people have for hoarding services. RC from Trivallis commented that they use a CBT approach towards hoarding and that someone in-house may be willing to attend a future meeting. It was acknowledged that it is one thing to support a person to de-clutter, but that a longer term strategy is required to address the mindset of the clutter.

Action; Please email Judith Jeeves with any contacts for hoarding services. Update - JJ to contact [www.respectmystuff.org.uk](http://www.respectmystuff.org.uk) to see if they are suitable and willing.

Update on Welsh Government Steering Group:

RS fed back that since the LHA is no longer an issue the main focus is UC and the potential problems that may arise in service charges. The concern that Extra Care services are treated differently in different local authority areas is an issue; some are classified as exempt accommodation and some are not.

<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Policy%20free%20download%20pdfs/what%20you%20need%20to%20know%20about%20support%20exempt%20accomodation%20and%20temp%20accomodation%20under%20universal%20credit.pdf>

The steering group took this concern on board and Paul Webb will take this forward. Clarification is needed about whether sheltered housing will continue to be classified as supported housing and whether there will be age restrictions. JF from CHC stated that he will look into and feed back on what specifically is classified as short- and what as long-term accommodation.

Updates from members:

Linc Cymru

Lots of development. New CEO settling in. Change in Exec Director from March. Two new Extra Care schemes still in process in Bridgend borough and due to open in the New Year.

Valleys to Coast

15th anniversary this month so a number of initiatives are in place to celebrate this in small ways with our tenants and staff eg 15 tenants ringing in win £15. Two 15 year olds receive a bedroom make-over! On-going process of looking at older persons’ service as a whole and where we are going in the future.

Melin Homes

SP funding for Newport ends in December. There is a major decant from a sheltered scheme still going on whilst redevelopment takes place. The plan is to reduce s/c by building extra blocks. There has been an external contract offered for cleaning of sheltered and Extra Care.

Tai Ceredigion

SP services in the borough are all being reviewed. Presentations about services had to be given by all providers wishing to continue with funding. They are waiting to hear back. Discussions taking place with Mid-Wales HA re merger or collaboration.

Merthyr Valley Homes

Current CEO is retiring. They are trialling a project for an agency working with people with learning difficulties to provide cleaning services.

Tai Calon

Review of sheltered housing taking place; daily welfare checks; H&S checks. The decision is to be more flexible.

Cardiff council

There are still scheme managers on-site. They act as hubs for older people. Recruitment is taking place for tenancy sustainability posts. Two new sites are being built at present. Daily welfare checks have been reintroduced as compulsory for tenants after several deaths in schemes. A discussion took place about this as most landlords have removed this function.

Innovate Digital Alternative is being considered. Smart Homes are a possibility. Use of tech such as ‘Alexa’.

A discussion was had about use of tenant kitchens and whether tenants should be free to cook in them at any time. Should they be locked in the evenings or at weekends in case of fire? Some felt that they should and others felt that independent living means taking some risks, and that the good in terms of community connection outweighs the possible risks.

Bro Myrddin

Tenancy Support; SP will pay for this until 2020. Will they pay for the Warden Call service? This seems to vary widely amongst providers according to funders. Query that Best Practice is not being kept as it is different in nearly every local authority area. Each LA takes a different approach. Staff are trying to address this.

Carmarthen

What will Sheltered Housing look like? Will there need to be different levels in future?

Trivallis

The tender for Floating Support for the area has gone out. There will be generic services and not any specifically for older people.

CHS accreditation. Social activities have been removed from staff remit due to reduction in staffing hours. Tenants are now running these inter-scheme and driving themselves between schemes. They have run a gardening competition.

Newydd

Collaboration with Innovate.’ Live Music Now’ organisation link up where volunteers go into schemes and teach tenants such skills as beat-boxing.

City and County of Swansea

Have finished retrospective fitting of fire safety sprinklers in all sheltered schemes. There is a commissioning review of housing taking place.

CCHA

Recruiting for a new CEO. SMT and maintenance restructure. No longer have older persons scheme co-ordinators. 50+ age in schemes. Emergency calls; there are 7 out of 144 tenants who chose to pay privately for welfare checks on the warden call system.

Coastal Housing

Two Extra Care schemes. Big restructure going on. The support worker role that used to exist has been remodelled after asking tenants what they want. There are now separate day support workers, night assistants and cleaners. The role used to be a mixture of all of these elements. Also a handyman service for tenants. All funded by the landlord. 10 year anniversary of Coastal this year (since merger of Dewi Sant and Swansea Housing).

Family Housing Association

Restructure of ops services. Decision making given to tenants. Extra Care funding is different for each scheme. No ‘wardens’ any longer. Floating Support delivered by The Wallich. Fire officer inconsistency.

Welfare Reform - Joe Frampton for CHC

Funding for rent & eligible service charges for supported accommodation is to remain with the HB system. This is based on being classified as Specified by the  Local Authority. UK government is looking at whether this will remain the definition. UC – Full Service is being rolled out across all of Wales and will be completed by December 2018.

In Wales 40k households currently claim UC and an additional 360k will migrate over to Full UC by 2023. This may lead to loss of entitlement for those of working age claiming UC in sheltered housing classified as General Needs.

 DWP are inviting housing associations in Wales to become ‘Trusted Partners’ and to sign up to the ‘Landlord Portal’ which will support HAs in management of UC claiming tenants. Currently 2/3rds of large HAs are Trusted Partners.

Scooter Policy including Storage – Richard Sheahan

RS discussed mobility scooter guidance in residential buildings and mentioned the National Fire Chiefs’ Council Guidelines. Fire officers had stated to Linc that charging of scooters should be restricted at night. A discussion was had about whether this was desirable or ethical. A suggestion was made about removing scooter batteries at night. Some responses were that this was not desirable in Independent Living. Consent would have to be sought. It was agreed that Housing Providers need to take control when there are scooters in the building. Some providers make Third Party scooter insurance compulsory for tenants and others do not. Trivallis insists on an OT assessment to prove need before allowing scooter use on site. JJ reminded members of the erosh website which has various guidance documents on scooters.

RS asked if others did PAT testing on scooters. JJ said that V2C had recently decided to take on this task. It had been discussed internally whether to a) advise tenants to get their scooters tested, b) do it for them and ask them to pay or c) do it for them and carry the cost. C was decided upon as the most efficient method.

LGBT and Diversity in Sheltered Housing - Rena Karadogan

RK raised the issue and asked if tenants in other schemes are open to understanding of possible exclusion by LGBT individuals. Do schemes feel inclusive to all? Is there prejudice? What can we do to support people and enable or further understanding? Chris Thomas from Trivallis said that he felt LGBT people might ‘go back into the closet’. Are there any support services for older LGBT people? There is Silver Line but nothing aimed at LGBT. There is a group called Silver Circles in which groups of tenants meeting together (can’t recall which area this is in). They could possibly set up a separate LGBT group?

CT mentioned that some older persons’ schemes were accredited via the LGBT Switchboard. However this is in Brighton and it was acknowledged that this English town is much further advanced in provision of LGBT services. Can Pride Cymru help? Best Practice? Tenants do not receive E&D training so sometimes the language used is not acceptable. What can we do? Could Diverse Cymru be asked to provide training for staff in what to do? Tai Pawb? CT mentioned that Gentoo Housing in England were complimented by Stonewall on their LGBT policies.

RS suggested that this was an issue that CIH and CHC could take forward.

Action; JF to take this back to CHC. RS/ JJ to forward to CIH

Cleaners and other independent visitors to schemes – Judith Jeeves

JJ raised the issue of external cleaners to older persons’ schemes and asked members how they deal with confidentiality issues when these staff are not ours. She explained that there have been a few issues where confidential information on tenants has been passed around to others, and it appears that this came from the cleaners. There have also been concerns regarding safeguarding, where there have only been suspicions, so nothing could be acted upon. A discussion was had about this. Some felt that it was ok to take cleaners aside and others felt it was not going to make a difference as they are not our employees. One provider offers the schemes cleaners employed by them to tenants, at their own cost, which alleviates this problem. No consensus was found, other than that it is a tricky issue to resolve, and monitoring any situations is really the only option.

RNIB feedback – Judith Jeeves

JJ fedback some information from David Watkins, who could not be present, as follows:

“I stated in last erosh meeting I would update on what my involvement has been with the Welsh government advisory forum ‘Living Well in the Community’.  The forum is focussed on older people and housing and how to increase quality of life’s for older people in things like moving to more appropriate homes, current developments for older people and inclusive design.  To date I have highlighted that some but not all housing associations are applying design that support older people and people with sight loss such as adequate lighting and tonal contrast to help reduce falls and improve confidence when moving.

 In the WHQS part 7(d) states that social landlords should provide reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of the household and it refers to RNIB inclusive design.  I have met with a member of welsh government recently who oversees the WHQS and he stated that **this is not a choice but an obligation to do this inclusive design** and has invited us to re-word parts of the WHQS to reflect that it is an obligation.

 So hopefully next year the WHQS, in its cyclical review will display section 7(d) as a definitive criteria rather than a choice.”

Fire Safety/Evacuation of immobile tenants – Richard Sheahan

RS requested on behalf of Angela Hiscox that anyone who has policies on FRAs that they can pass on to Angela on what they do in-house would be helpful.

Action: anyone to send docs through to AH where possible.

Topics for future speakers

At previous meetings it had been identified that we would like speakers on:

* Adrian Moyse from SWFRS
* John Williams from South Wales Police Senior Citizen Liaison Team
* Hoarding speaker

Action: JJ and EW are looking into these options.

JJ reminded members on behalf of Rebecca Mollart that the erosh/ CIH conference is going to be on December Delta Wellbing is sponsoring it.

Action: book places soon if you wish to attend the erosh conference in Swansea on 4 December.

<http://www.cih.org/resources/PDF/Wales%20Events/Older%20people's%20housing%202018/Older%20people's%20programme.pdf>

Next meeting: RS suggested that the December meeting be postponed as often it is not an easy time for members to meet. All agreed that the next date will be Thursday January 17th. Asmut Price offered to host the meeting in Cardiff. At the next meeting we will decide the dates for the rest of 2019.

Next Meeting: City and County of Cardiff

Date: Thursday January 17. Start time 13.15

Address: Willcox House, Dunleavy Drive, Cardiff, CF11 0BA

Parking: on site either in visitors or buzz on the intercom to allow through barrier.

NB there will be no lunch provided, but tea and coffee will be available.

Minutes: Judith Jeeves 23/10/18