

Taff Annual Report 2019/20

TAFF



Dianne Bevan

Chair of the Board



Helen White

Chief Executive

2019/20 has been an eventful year for Taff!

The coronavirus pandemic hit at the very end of the financial year meaning we had to end the year delivering services in a very different way. Both colleagues and tenants embraced these changes, and we would like to thank everyone who has shown amazing amounts of resilience and determination to make sure we have been able to keep our tenants, colleagues and homes safe at such a challenging time. We are immensely proud of the commitment and dedication shown by all our colleagues.

Being able to maintain the delivery of essential frontline services, with the vast majority of colleagues working from home, has demonstrated that we can do things differently. As we move towards our 'new normal' we want to capture all the learning and opportunities having to think and act differently have presented – working towards becoming more agile in how we work.

During the year Taff said farewell to outgoing Chief Executive Elaine Ballard. There has been a focus on building on the legacy left by Elaine, keeping our core values central to decision making and making sure tenants continue to play key role in influencing how we deliver services. Our Tenant Scrutiny Panel continue to lead the way in Wales, in November they won the prestigious Pat Chown Award for Innovation in Housing.

The publication of this report coincides with the launch of our new branding. We hope you agree this is a fresh and vibrant new look for Taff. While we are making a lot of exciting changes, rest assured our commitment to our tenants, services users and communities has not changed. Our new brand represents our commitment to providing great quality homes and services, being an excellent employer and enabling local communities to thrive.

We have continued to deliver much needed new homes in Cardiff. During the year we completed 52 new homes. Making sure all our homes are safe remains a key priority, during the year we have focused on tightening up on health & safety policies and procedures.

We have maintained our Standard Standard regulatory judgement from Welsh Government on both governance and services and financial viability – the highest award possible.

We would like to thank Taff Board members, colleagues, tenants, partners, contractors, and funders for the crucial role they have played in helping us deliver great results and making a positive difference to lives and communities.

Keeping you safe

Keeping you safe in your home is our number one priority.

Safe homes

We carry out regular inspections and tasks to keep our tenants' homes safe.

Including:

- regular checks of gas appliances and electrical installations
- our blocks are assessed for fire safety
- where necessary we undertake tasks to prevent legionella infection
- we service lifts and manage asbestos to ensure it is kept safe

Adaptations

We've invested £300,000 in adaptations for our disabled tenants.

These works included fitting level access showers and other modifications to make homes more accessible and suitable to the specific needs of residents.

Our planned maintenance programme replaced...

115

fire doors

115

boilers

86

kitchens

12

bathrooms

7

electrical
installations

3

roofs

Homes & communities

We've focussed on making sure our homes are secure, well maintained places to live, that our services are easily accessible and that there's support available for those who need it.

No evictions

Our Hardship Grant has helped **35 tenants** during times of financial difficulty.

Due to the support we have in place for those that need it and the clear emphasis we put on the importance of having a place to call home

Universal Credit

The roll out of Universal Credit has been the biggest change to the benefit system in a generation so we've deliberately prioritised supporting tenants who have moved on to UC.

We've continued to offer individual money advice and support, as well as training and volunteering to **67 tenants**.

ASB

We achieved a **96% satisfaction rate** as we continue to offer an individual ASB service, where we focus on achieving long lasting solutions for all parties



4000
repairs have been
carried out by our
in-house team

achieving a...

99%
satisfaction rate
for our repairs
service

We know how important it is to have a decent place to live and support available if you need.

Everything we do is focussed on achieving that aim.



Clive, a single male pensioner aged 76, contacted us as was struggling with his utility bills on a low income.

On the first visit we discovered that Clive was a wheelchair user and he explained how he was unable to use his kitchen as he couldn't reach the cooker.

Clive wasn't receiving all of the benefits he was entitled to or the discounts available for his utilities.

So, we supported him to:

- obtain a PAG grant of £21,000 to fit a new disabled adapted kitchen allowing him to cook for himself safely
- a £200 winter fuel grant
- a £140 warm home discount for his electric
- increase his income by £86 per week in unclaimed



Clive is now more financially secure and with our support, we eased his worries around paying his bills.

Getting involved

Scrutiny panel

Our tenant Scrutiny Panel presented two reports to our Board with recommendations.

The voids scrutiny went on to win two National Awards which looked at voids from a tenant perspective with a specific focus on those being rehoused from the Local Authority's Homelessness list.

The findings and subsequent recommendations have had life changing effects for some tenants.



Pat Chown Award Winners

Training

20

trainers went on
to higher or further
education

6

apprenticeships created
as part of targeted
training and recruitment
opportunities with our new
developments

95%

said they had learnt
new skills

Social Work/Youth & Community Work Placements

We've continued to host Social Work & Youth & Community Work Placements in our Support Services which gives a great opportunity to students, colleagues and service users.

Students gain a great experience working in our specialist services and both colleagues and service users gain from the knowledge and expertise these students bring with them.

Building homes

We completed **52** new homes at a cost of £5.3m

in October

tenants moved into 19 new homes at Llys Saltmead in Grangetown

in February

33 people moved into Llys Eurwg, St Mellons as we successfully let our largest single new housing development at Taff, providing much needed homes

And we've started on site developing in...

Radyr

where we're building 36 homes at a cost of £4.2m

Clive Lane in Grangetown

where we're building 12 homes at a cost of £1.4m



Support

We've provided housing related support for over **800** individuals and families to avoid homelessness.

Young People Consortia

This year we saw the recommissioning of Young People's supported accommodation and we embarked on a partnership that incorporates Taff, Salvation Army and Church Army providing 106 units of supported accommodation across Cardiff. This includes Ty Seren, Ty Haul and the Foyer services at Taff.

The partnership focusses on addressing youth homelessness in a Psychologically Informed way, preparing young people for independent living and providing opportunities to build their skills, confidence and aspirations to make sure they never experience homelessness again.

Through all the **106** units and outreach support we have supported **194** people

Embedding PIE (Psychologically Informed Environments)

We've further embedded PIE into our Supported Housing services, developing a Psychological Framework which demonstrated how we interact and work in a more psychologically informed way.

We are looking at how we apply the Psychological Framework throughout the department Taff wide over the next year.

We've continued to support refugees

We continue to support families across Cardiff & the Vale as part of the UK's Resettlement Scheme. This year we also gained the contract to provide this service in Bridgend.

These projects have so far supported 46 displaced refugee families settle in Wales, many surviving or fleeing from extreme situations like war and persecution.

We've extended our services into Bridgend

We were successful in gaining a new contract in Bridgend called START (Support to Achieve Resettlement Together) providing housing related support for prison leavers, assisting them to find and maintain a tenancy which in turn reduces the chances of re-offending.

This project works closely with Probation, the Council, local prisons & the Private Rented Sector.



“This experience has changed how I view myself and how much I can push myself when I put my mind to it”

For one week in June, six residents from Ty Seren set sail on a tall ship to learn skills in teamworking, problem solving and effective communication.

Accompanied by the charity The Island Trust and four staff members, residents learnt how to put up sails, tie knots and even had the opportunity to take part in a Royal Navy exercise.

Time away from home gave our residents the chance to reflect on where they are in their lives and what they want their futures to look like.

“I never thought it would be something I would be able to do”



Our people

We've continued to invest in our staff through learning and development.

Work Based Learning / Apprenticeship

Learners started or were working towards their work-based learning qualification with 5 providers in 2019 with ACT is our preferred provider:

- 6 Learners left the program (5 left employment with Taff)
- 10 Learners have completed their qualifications (3 are progressing to the next level)
- 4 Active on programme



and we've...

welcomed

53

new starters

made

6

**internal
appointments**

advertised

64

vacancies




Finance

March 2020 is the end of the third year of Taff's Five Year Business Plan (Building Foundations for Better Futures). The year saw considerable change within the leadership team and the Board which has led to a change in focus.



The year resulted in a positive financial position despite some challenges.



A revised forecast was issued in November and the team worked together to ensure that this was achieved. Subsequently we had to adjust again to manage the impact of COVID19 on the organisation and its tenants.




A successful implementation of Risk Management software allowed risks to be more visible and better monitored and helped in our approach to dealing with the pandemic.




The work continues to embed this Risk Management software across the organisation. Part of the task is developing better data and reporting, aided by our new internal audit programme that looks at Data Integrity and Key Controls.



During the year we worked on developing our key performance management suite that covers the link between performance and risk.




Clear indicators and commentary are essential for our Board to be able to understand the issues within the organisation in order to make better strategic decisions. This work will continue as the focus changes with the changing external environment.




Discussions on Value for Money and Affordability of Rents were two important conversations that we had with our tenants.

Taff has developed its principles of Value for Money and now has the task of ensuring these are reflected in its policies and buying decisions.




Affordability for rent is essential for the sustainability of our tenancies. A supportive team has worked with our tenants, and is rightly proud of its record, as no tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent. In addition, our arrears compare favourably with other similar organisations.

After last year's Treasury review..



We commissioned an independent consultant to help us develop a policy that will simplify the administration of our loan portfolio whilst improving the controls and maintaining the low interest rate costs into the longer term.





We always want to hear your views
so get in touch



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