

# Together at Taff



**Annual  
Report**  
2022/2023

**TAFF**

Follow us on:



# Introduction

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During 2022 we launched our new tenant engagement strategy.

“Together at Taff”

Together at Taff is all about our tenants and communities becoming involved in shaping decisions about the services they receive.

It sets out what we want to achieve together over the next three years.

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## Why is Tenant Engagement important?

Tenants and communities are at the heart of Taff and therefore it is important that they influence and shape how we provide our services.

# We know that by involving and listening to tenants we can deliver better services and...

1. Provide quality tenant focussed services.



2. Deliver services which provide value for money and rents which are affordable



3. Provide services that are inclusive and accessible by all.



4. Build positive relationships, trust and understanding between Taff and our tenants.



5. Develop individual and community skills and resilience.



## This report will focus on our progress during 2022/23 to meet these aims



# TAFF

housing & support

[taffhousing.co.uk](http://taffhousing.co.uk)

@taffhousing

0800 121 6064



Provide quality  
tenant focussed  
services.





# Have Your Say Group

Our Have Your Say Group meets monthly at our Taff offices. Our Leadership Team, together with other colleagues present information to the group for consideration, challenge and comment.

The group is able to raise issues, suggest improvements and talk through concerns.



## Key Achievements

The Have Your Say Group have coproduced the following strategies and initiatives.

Rent Affordability & Rent Setting Policy	Tenant Engagement governance structures and strategic approach
Cost of living action plan	The management of damp and mould in our homes.

## Outcomes



Keith Abdi ( Have Your Say Group Member) shared his experiences:



Being able to convey views and feedback to management face to face is really valuable. It is great seeing actions taken forward as a result of this feedback!



# Have Your Say Group

The groups recommendations are fed back to the organisation to drive continuous improvement and ensure we are improving services for our tenants.

Tenant Involvement	
They said:	Taff needed to address the lack of tenant involvement at a strategic level to ensure tenant voice is heard in all key decisions
We did:	We have reviewed and updated our current tenant engagement group structure to include a number of new groups. This includes a Tenant Strategic Panel who will engage with our Board and Executive Team and ensure a tenant voice at a strategic level.

Cost of Living	
They said:	Support tenants with the cost of living crisis
We did:	Delivered a comprehensive cost of living plan that delivered targeted support to tenants

Repairs and Maintenance	
They said:	Improve your approach to repairs and maintenance.
We did:	Began and root and branch review of how we deliver maintenance related services, including our approach to contractor management, planned investments and data management.

# Community Pop Ups

Our Community Pop Ups are our opportunity to engage with tenants and residents and discuss what really matters to them. Colleagues from across Taff attend so they can understand more about how our services are received.



We've 'popped up' in Canton, Old St Mellons, Riverside and Grangetown.

During 2022/23 we have delivered

5

## Community Pop Ups

We have learnt that it is better to have a wide selection of colleagues attend our Pop Ups, so we can address tenants queries immediately- this may include doing repairs, litter picking or resolving health and safety concerns.

Main areas of interest included:

*Estate Management*

*Repairs and  
Maintenance*

## Case Study

A tenant complained about damp in their property. Our repairs manager was able to attend the property to look at the issue and establish that there was an external leak on the guttering which was causing the damp problem. This was resolved immediately with a colleague attending to repair the external guttering. Follow on work was then completed to ensure that the damp issue was fully resolved for our tenant.

# Tenant Scrutiny

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Our Tenant Scrutiny Panel acts as a 'critical friend' to assess the performance of our services. The panel advises the Board, Senior Management Team and can influence decisions that the Board makes.



This means that our tenants will measure, test and monitor the services they receive and feedback on the performance of a particular area of service.

## What have they done so far?

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Since restarting their meetings in November 2022 the group have:

- Reviewed and re-established their aims and objectives
  - Agreed their focus for 2022/23 would be refresher training for the group following the pandemic.
- 

During February 2023 Taff arranged for TPAS Cymru to provide training to the group on successful Tenant Scrutiny. The training covered specific topics for the group including:

- What is scrutiny and how does it affect you?
- Key themes for tenants to ask about
- How tenants can get involved in strategic decisions



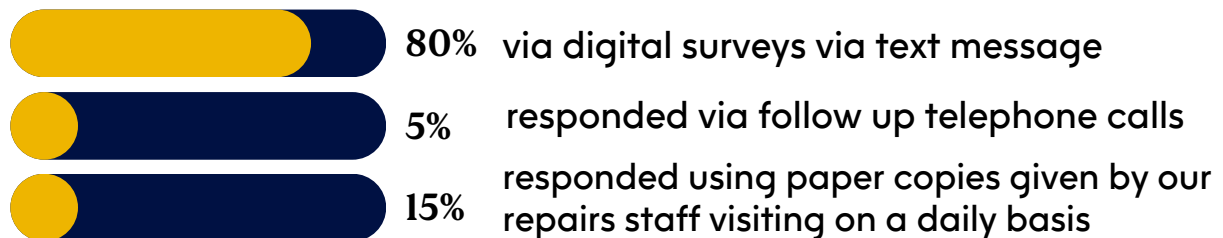
# Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

Completing tenant satisfaction surveys allows us to:

- Gain Tenant feedback on our services and performance.
- Ensure that we have the tenant voice on our services and helping us to learn lessons.
- Drive continuous improvement for our tenants and communities.

## Overall service satisfaction

From November to February this year we completed our annual tenant satisfaction survey. All tenants were surveyed via text message, with follow up surveys completed in person and via phone calls.

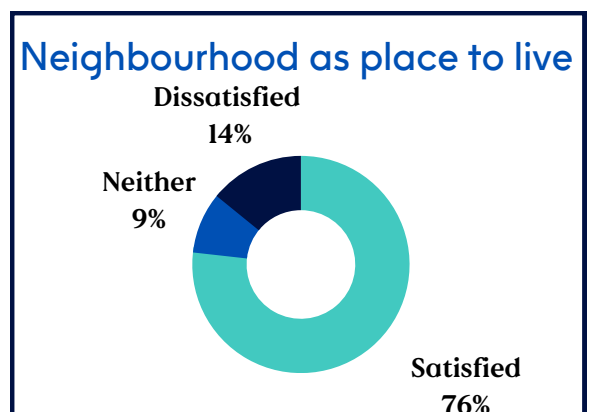
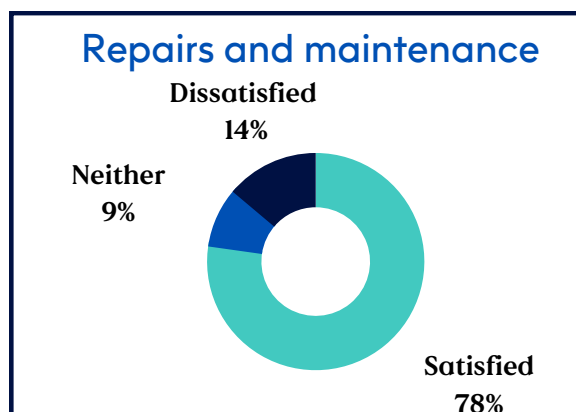
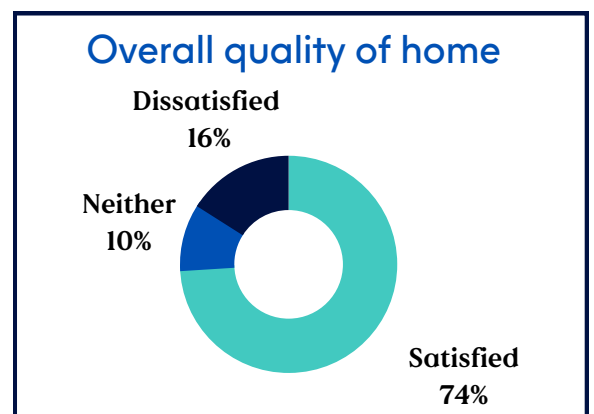
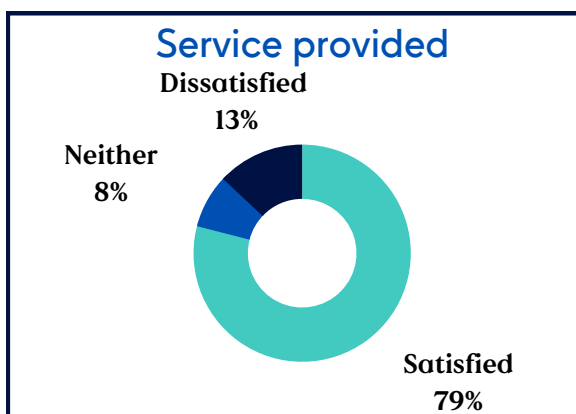


The survey was available in English, Arabic and Somali.

We had **301** survey responses

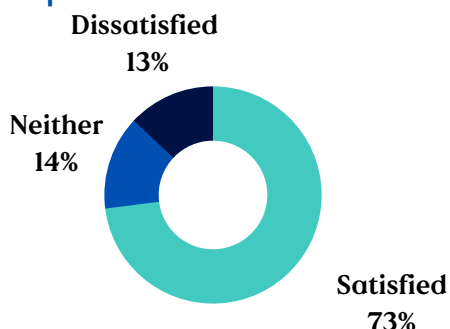
20% of our tenants

The results were as follows:

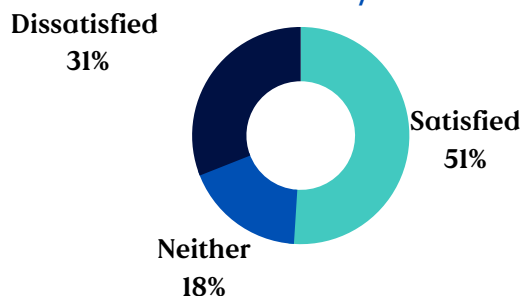


# Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

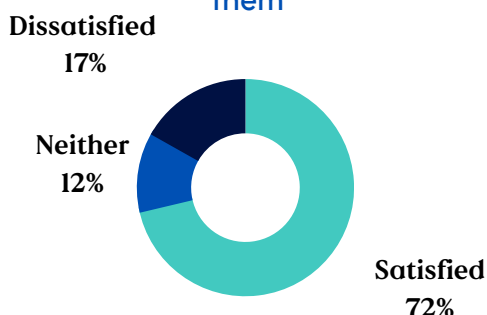
## Rent provides Value for Money



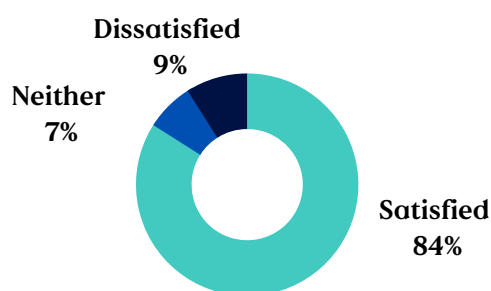
## Service Charges provides Value for Money



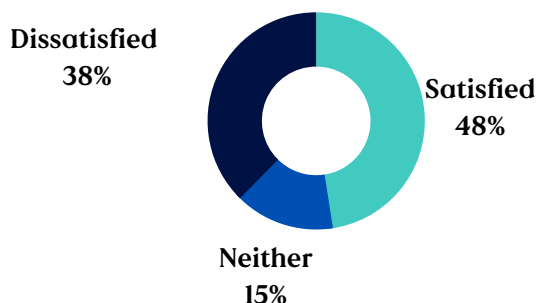
## Taff listens to views and acts on them



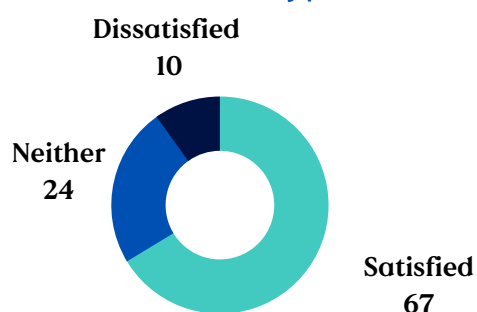
## Safe and secure home



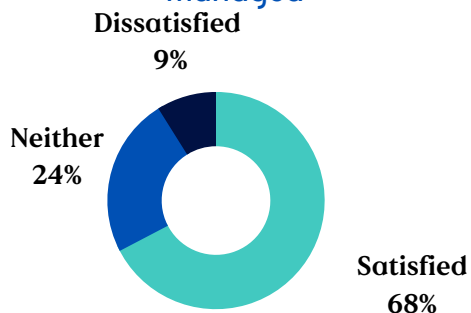
## Anti-social behaviour



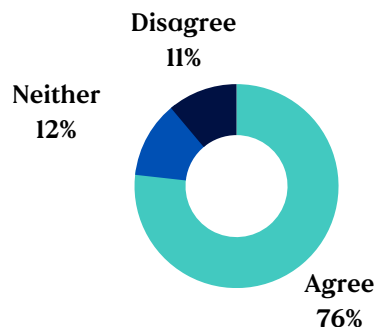
## Opportunities to participate in decision making process



## Given a say in how services are managed



## Trust Taff



## Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a customer loyalty and satisfaction measurement. Our score is calculated by asking how likely tenants would recommend Taff to others based on a scale of 0-10:

Our NPS for 2022/23 is

37

# Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

As part of this survey, we asked all respondents to leave a comment explaining their responses. We received some valuable feedback which demonstrates the colleagues are living and delivering services based on our values.

Fabulous company so helpful with anything you ask them so good with the community helping with so many things fab staff I could go on how good they are

Your maintenance staff are outstanding, always polite, caring and professional. . As someone who has rheumatoid arthritis and is not able to do much maintenance, it's a great comfort to know that they will sort out any problems that you have. It's a great asset for anyone.

However, we recognise that we don't always get it right and where we receive feedback when things don't go right, we want to understand this data to ensure we get things right in the future.

102

left comments included areas where we can improve services, with 15 of these being managed as complaints. The main areas of concern were:

adaptions (2) area (2) asb (5) case (4) charges (7) cleaning (4)  
cleanliness (9) communication (17) completed (1)  
condition (7) crime (14) discrimination (1) drugs (1) estates (2) follow (8)  
improvements (3) involvement (1) length (1) matter (1) multiple (9) neighbour (2) nuisance (2)  
outstanding (1) parking (1) pests (2) property (7) quality (4) rent (5) repairs (12)  
security (2) service (2) speed (4) tenancy (1) theme (1) unknown (2) unresolved (5)  
upkeep (9)



# Tenant Satisfaction Surveys

After reviewing tenant responses and speaking to tenants who expressed concerns, it was clear there were two key themes driving dissatisfaction:

## *Repairs and Maintenance*

Tenants Feedback:	Taff's Response:
"Communication is not good enough on jobs that get given to contractors"	We are reviewing our relationship with contractors and seeking to reduce the number we use. We will also ensure we manage the contracts effectively to drive better service.
"Don't always hear back about work in their home"	<p>We have moved to a Locality Surveying model, ensuring tenants know who to contact about maintenance issues in their home.</p> <p>We have also improved our text service, providing more access to information about work in their home.</p> <p>We are carrying out a review our processes for work that is contracted out so we can provide more information to tenants and ensure work is done on time and to a good standard.</p>
"More information about when things will be renewed in their homes"	We are improving the data we hold on our homes so we can inform tenants about planned improvements more accurately.

## *Estate Management*

Tenants Feedback:	Taff's Response:
"There is not enough hours allocated to do the cleaning on sites"	<p>We have introduced a quality assurance system to ensure all sites are cleaned at least once a week.</p> <p>We are reviewing the number of hours we dedicate to cleaning on our sites to make sure there are enough.</p>
"The landscaping service is not good enough"	We are moving away from our current contractor and looking at the option to bring services in-house.



**Deliver Services  
which provide value  
for money and rents  
which are affordable**

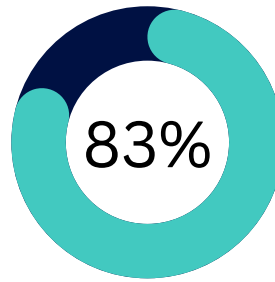


# Affordability and Cost of living survey

We consult with tenants annually around rent affordability, to ensure that our rents are fair and affordable. During 2022, in response to the cost of living crisis, we included wider questions around affordability not just focusing specifically on rent.

258

Tenants responded  
to the survey



Of tenants felt that we should protect the level of service we provide when setting our rents.

- Tenants that responded to the survey were clear that they want protect service levels. However, it was clear that there was concern that the impact of any rent rise could be unmanageable for some.
- We engaged with the Have Your Say Group on survey the results and on our Rent Setting Policy.

Our Rent Setting Policy links to rent levels to local income:

Income data released by Office of National Statistics for Cardiff.

'Living Rent' model- maximum of 1/3 of total income to be spent on housing.

Lower quartile earning used.

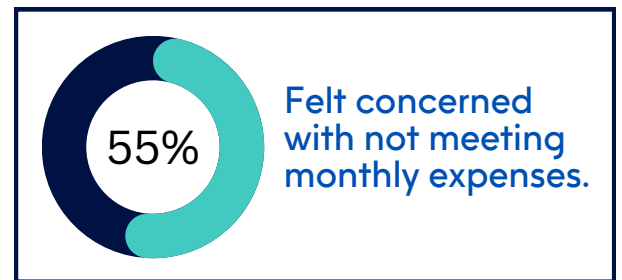
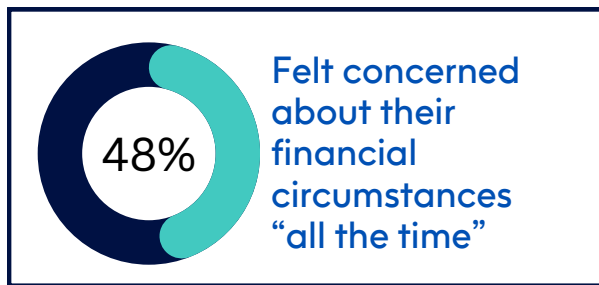
Increases applied for larger homes where earning will increase.



# Cost of living response

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Tenants also responded to our cost of living questions:



The highest concern being "energy prices" with "food prices" being their second highest concern.

As a response to the survey we have introduced a number of measures:

Doubled our community allotment



Free IT Equipment



Providing more support around money advice



Fuel Vouchers



Hardship Fund



Energy Saving



Presents for children at Christmas and Eid



# Service Charge Consultation

Our Service Charge consultation for 2022/23 was led by our Income Team. The consultation aimed to ensure service charges are fair and reasonable for our tenants and we are transparent in how they are set.



We sent letters of the proposed service charges



Tenants could contact via phone or arrange a call back later.



Any queries or feedback were recorded to ensure we could learn and improve.

49 tenants responded and the three main themes were:

Transparency	
Tenants Feedback	Confusion around what parts of the service charge meant
Taff's Response	Breakdown of each part of the service was provided with the rent increase letter to ensure transparency and clarity with how we set our service charges.
Value for Money	
Tenants Feedback	Queries around how money was being spent and what the increases were for
Taff's Response	Value for money was particularly important due to the impact of the cost of living crisis on our tenants. An additional extra information sheet was provided with the rent increase letter too give tenants further transparency around the increases and what money is spent on.

# Service Charge Consultation

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Estate Services	
Tenants Feedback	Concerns around cleaning and the condition of the blocks particularly the internal areas.
Taff's Response	After visiting the blocks, it was apparent that the flooring needs to be replaced and the walls needed painting. This information was passed on to our Assets Team for action who would ensure tenants were made aware of when works will be completed.

## Future Plans



Next year the breakdown of the service charges will be improved to ensure that tenants have clarity during the initial consultation on services charges and what they mean.

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# Disability Awareness Group

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The Disability Awareness Group aims to represent tenants and resident who consider themselves to be disabled, through promoting their rights and working to eliminate discrimination.

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The group is affiliated with Disability Wales



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The focus for 2022/23 has been to increase membership to support these aims and the group have created an advert which Taff Communication team have filmed to share on social media and our website to encourage new members.



# Black Asian and Minority Ethnic Group

## The Aim of the Group is...

To raise awareness of barriers faced by, and lobby for, the rights of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Groups in Cardiff and the Vale. They do this by providing feedback recommendations for improvements to the member Associations and other organisations.



We have strengthened links with the tenant engagement team in Cardiff Community Housing Association (CCHA) to work collaboratively with them to deliver this group.

Supported Taff to review and deliver its commitments contained in its Deeds Not Words Anti Racism Plan.

The group has refreshed their constitution to ensure that the aims and objectives are still relevant

They have welcomed new members and will be continuing to advertise the group during 2023/24 to expand membership further





Build positive  
relationships, trust  
and understanding  
between Taff and  
our tenants





# Communications

One of the actions raised by the Have your say was to bring back the Taff talks magazine to increase communication between tenants and Taff.



In response Taff has relaunched their Taff magazine in a digital format. This enable us to share important information with our tenants.

The first edition has information around

- Our winter wellbeing club

- Locality Surveyors

- Damp, Mould and Condensation

The magazine was developed collaboratively with our Have Your Say Group. They review and contribute content and agree the design prior to it being circulated to tenants.

## 2023/2024

In 2023/24 we will continue to involve tenants in its design and seek to understand whether tenants are accessing the magazine in its digital format.

# Winter Wellbeing Club

In response to tenants feedback, in October we launched our  
**‘Winter Wellbeing Club’**



Over a series of 11 fortnightly lunch clubs, we:

Served

248

Cardiff Third Sector  
Council grant funded  
hot meals

Welcomed

6

External speakers offering  
advice/support

Distributed

270 & 73

Grant funded fruit bags  
and bags of useful toiletries

- Promoted wellbeing through workshops including art therapy, armchair yoga and advice from health professionals
- Provided one to one advice and support including access to grants and vouchers
- Welcomed a visit from Jane Hutt Ms for Social Justice and even featured on BBC 6pm News!

## Outcomes

“It was so much fun, something different. I haven't smiled this much in a while, I would love to do again!”

“It was nice to switch off and focus on something else for an hour. I've had a free lunch and got help with a food bank voucher. I'm so glad I came today”

# Complaints

We acknowledge that complaints offer us an opportunity to learn and improve our services.

## Complaints 2022/23

We had **110** complaints

17 Formal Complaints

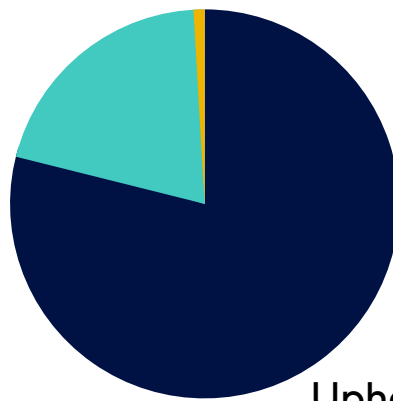
92 Informal Complaints

1 Ombudsman

Not Upheld  
22

Ombudsman not upheld  
1

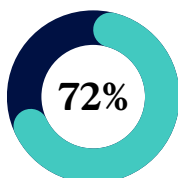
Upheld  
86



Upheld (Agree with complaint)

Not Upheld (Disagree with complaint)

Ombudsman Not Upheld (Ombudsman disagree with complaint)



complaints were resolved within the timescale the timescales set out in our policy

# Complaints

## Themes

In order to drive improvements in our services based on what our tenants are telling us. The complaints data is reviewed to understand whether there are any common themes or trends.

The most common themes are:



A word cloud containing various complaint themes. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with some words appearing larger than others. The words include: bathroom, boiler, car, carpet, ceiling, cleaning, damage, damp, fence, fire, flooring, garden, health, kitchen, leak, mould, neighbour, noise, reception, rent, repair, roof, rubbish, surveyor, unhappy, waiting, walls, washing, water, weeds, windows.

## Lessons Learnt

It is important for us to learn from our complaints, and where we can make improvements to a service we will:

A number of complaints highlighted that tenants were experiencing a poor service due to a lack of ownership for specific repairs works.

As a result, we have introduced Locality surveying (where each area has one responsible surveyor) . This means tenants and colleagues have clarity of who is dealing with the repair and who they can contact.

This information was also shared with tenant via our Taff talks magazine.





Develop individual  
and community skills  
and resilience





# Digital Skills Training

During some of our tenant engagement meetings it was evident that there was a gap in some digital skills and the tenants felt that they would benefit from some digital training.

Taff worked in partnership with Digital Communities Wales to provide bespoke digital inclusion training.

Training was provided in person at the Taff offices for two full day training sessions on:

Essential Digital Skills

Communication and handling information

Transacting and problem solving



The trainer provided some feedback on the sessions:



I wanted to say I enjoyed the recent sessions with the group, and I hope they found it useful and beneficial. It seems like the group are interested in helping others to learn skills too, so further training would be good for them and hopefully they can pass this to others. I feel the Digital Champions course I mentioned previously would be good for them further down the line, once they have more digital skills and confidence.



Further training is will be provided in 2023/24

# Summer Community Fun Days

As a response to the rising cost of living with the energy price predicted to rise again during the winter we took the decision to hold two summer events, and a further event during autumn half term.

## Summer Term Event

- Riverside SRCDC
- Grangetown Pavilion

## Autumn half term event:

- Taff Head Office, Canton

Following a pause on large community events due to the pandemic, these outreach events provided an opportunity for us to talk to tenants face to face, as well as connecting tenants with a wide range of support organisations.



Over the 3 events we  
connected :

over 400 Tenants and  
local community  
members

11 partner  
organisations

The summer events also provided a range of diversionary activities as they took place during the school holidays and were sponsored by local businesses and some of our contractors.

# Christmas Activities

## Children's Christmas Party

Our Tenant Resident Association supported us to organise The Children's Christmas Party.

The free event provided children with food, a present from Santa, face painting, Christmas karaoke and party games!

28  
children  
attended



I attended with my 4 children of 4 different ages and it was amazing for them all. We all had such a lovely time and really appreciate what you do for people. The members of staff there were so helpful and caring.  
Thank you very much & merry Christmas to you all

## Little Wish 2022

The Little Wish project gives an opportunity for tenants struggling with the cost of Christmas to get free gifts for children and young people living in a Taff property. Christmas 2022 has been the busiest year so far for Little Wish!



We received donations to the project from local businesses, contractors, members of the local community and staff members



99 children  
received a gift



# Looking to the future

## 2023 - 2024

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### Summary

During 2022/23 we have spent a lot of time engaging with our tenants and communities to build back the relationships following the pandemic.

As a result we have gathered a lot of feedback about what matters to our tenants and the areas they would like to see improve over the next two years.

## Expand our Tenant Engagement Groups

- Focus on strategic tenant engagement through the introduction of a Strategic Panel to involve tenants in key business decisions
- Expand our Have Your Say Group to operate as both an 'in person' and online group so it is as inclusive as possible.
- Provide a full suite of training to new and existing members

We Will:

## Engage with tenants as we improve the energy efficiency of our homes

- Deliver a programme of energy efficiency measures in our homes over the course of the next year.
- Engage with tenants prior to, during, and after work is completed on their home, ensuring tenants feel fully informed and we understand if it has made a positive difference.

We Will:

## Improve our Satisfaction Surveys

- Use an independent company to gather satisfaction surveys on our Repairs and ASB service.
- Introduce a survey after we close a complaint to ensure we are evaluating how tenants feel we deal with complaints.

We Will:

## Improve our Communication

- We will publish performance information on our website to ensure transparency with how Taff are doing.
- We will publish anonymised complaint information on our website and explain what we have learnt and changed as a result.

# TAFF

[www.taffhousing.co.uk](http://www.taffhousing.co.uk)

A photograph of three people working in a garden. On the left, a man in a grey shirt and dark trousers stands with his hands on his hips. In the center, a woman in a white t-shirt and dark trousers is bent over, working. On the right, a man in a green polo shirt and dark trousers stands with his hands on his hips. A rainbow flag is hanging on a line in the background. The scene is outdoors with trees and a blue sky in the background.

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