



In Partnership





Be part of the Partnership

For the past four years, Newydd Housing Association has been focused on significantly improving the ways tenants can get involved with the Association. This has ensured that the changes tenants recommend are implemented, which has led to improved services.

Since 2006 there have been major changes in the ways tenants can get involved. You can join tenant meetings with the Community Panel or join a group for one or two meetings on a specific subject, for example with the Task & Finish Groups. If you don't like meetings you can take part in surveys, or join the Reading Panel to check how readable Newydd's publications are. You might also bump into staff on a roadshow or become elected to the Board.

There are so many ways to get involved in improving Newydd's services. Tenants make such a huge impact on how we deliver services that we have moved on from merely "involving" tenants. Involvement has now led to partnership and Newydd

Housing Association truly believes that all of its operations are now run **IN PARTNERSHIP** with its tenants.

We have had a "Tenant Involvement Strategy" to get us to where we are now. For the future, we will be developing a "Tenant Partnership Strategy" to ensure that your opinions and ideas remain the driving force behind improving the services that Newydd Housing Association provides.

This newsletter celebrates that partnership and also gives you some idea of the ways you too can work in partnership with Newydd to get the services you want and the best value for money for your rent.

I hope you take the time to browse this newsletter, and please do contact our Community Involvement Team (details inside) if you want more information, or would like to join in the partnership.

Paul Roberts
Chief Executive
July 2010

Contents

How tenant involvement has changed	03
Why get involved with Newydd?	04
Tenant Scrutiny begins!	05
What options do I have if I want to get involved?	06 - 11
Glyntaff Estate celebrates 30 years	12
Newydd's Community Fund 2010	13
"Holding out for a hero"	14
Changes to tenant election and Newydd shares	15
Taking care of business	16
Mystery Shoppers wanted!	17
Who's on board the Partner-ship?	18
What coming up? and contact details	19

How tenant involvement has changed the way we run Newydd

A message from the Newydd Board's Tenant Involvement Champion

It is hard to believe that just a few years ago we were struggling to find ways to involve tenants in the running of the Association. As a result tenant involvement for Newydd was mainly about organising events at schemes or estates, and deciding how to distribute money to tenants associations.

How things have changed in a short space of time; our last Board meeting was attended by Tenant Scrutiny Group members, and included our 6 monthly report on our strategy. Throughout the whole organisation, tenants work with staff and Board members across a whole range of areas that are core to the working of the Association.

My role as Tenant Involvement Champion on the Board is just one of many ways that tenants now influence and help make decisions. The Board are responsible for Newydd's actions and have the chance to:

- receive better quality information as to what is important for us to improve, for example anti social behaviour
- listen to fellow Board members that are also tenants, to better understand the impact of some of Newydd's decisions
- hear how we are performing in areas such as customer care, rent arrears etc.

All of this would not be possible without three things:

1. the willingness of the tenants to give up their time and put so much effort into all areas of Newydd's work.
2. The staff that have really worked hard to help make all this happen
3. The Board who have welcomed these changes

We are all now working in partnership, the quality of our decisions and how we run the Association are all the better for it.

**Amanda Protheroe
Board Member & Tenant Involvement
Champion
Newydd Board**

Why get involved with Newydd?

Over previous years you may have been consulted on how Newydd should provide its services. You may have been contacted for the tenant's survey, Newydd 90 questionnaires or service charge questionnaires. You may have been on the Reading Panel, a member of a tenants and residents group, a Tenant Mystery Shopper or consulted in another of the wide range of ways that the Association involves its tenants.

The feedback we get from tenants results in significant changes in the way Newydd delivers services. To list everything that has changed, due to working in partnership with tenants, would run to several pages. Below is a list of just a few ways that service delivery at Newydd has improved by working in partnership with tenants.

What was developed?	How were tenants involved?
DVD version of the Tenant's Handbook	Newydd's Equality and Disability Sub-group developed and led the project
New Newydd website	Community Panel chose the design and approved the final version
Staff out on estates more	The Tenants' Survey 2008 requested this change, and the Community Panel and tenants on the Board have been involved in the project
Changing the telephone system	Tenant Mystery Shoppers found that staff were not always responding to messages left on answerphones
Customer Services Standards developed	The Community Panel developed the Customer Service Standards for staff to follow
New Tenants Handbook and Repairs Handbook	The Reading Panel and Community Panel developed them
Tenant friendly performance indicators	The Tenant Powered Performance group have developed "tenant-friendly indicators" on maintenance, anti-social behaviour and service charges which will be published in the next Annual Review for tenants
The future of play areas on estates	The Community Panel set up a Task & Finish Group to decide what to do with the play areas that Newydd own
Estate Management policies	The Policy Review Sub-Group has reviewed all the estate management policies and created a new improved policy
Affordable Warmth Strategy	The Affordable Warmth Strategy was developed because of issues you raised in the Tenants' Survey

Tenant Scrutiny begins!

Following the appointment of the Tenant Scrutiny Group earlier this year, we caught up with the group to ask how they felt the whole process was going so far and to find out what it's like being a Tenant Scrutineer:

Q So, have you decided on your first topic to scrutinise?

Heather: We decided to break ourselves in gently and firstly concentrate on Customer Service because, as tenants, we thought it was a good place to start by looking at the face of Newydd and the front line services provided to its customers.

Q What have the first stages of your scrutiny involved?

Brian: We attended a Newydd Board meeting to find out how recommendations are made and how they come to make decisions about issues raised.

Alyson: We will be comparing practices with other housing associations so that we can help ensure Newydd tenants receive the best possible service.

Joan: We visited each area office and did estate walkabouts so that each member of the group could get a better understanding of local issues.

Q What training have you undertaken?

Jacky: We all received intensive training to begin with to make sure we were all capable of successfully undertaking the scrutiny process. Training is ongoing and we will be learning as we go along. We are also attending a TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) day to share the experiences we have had to date.



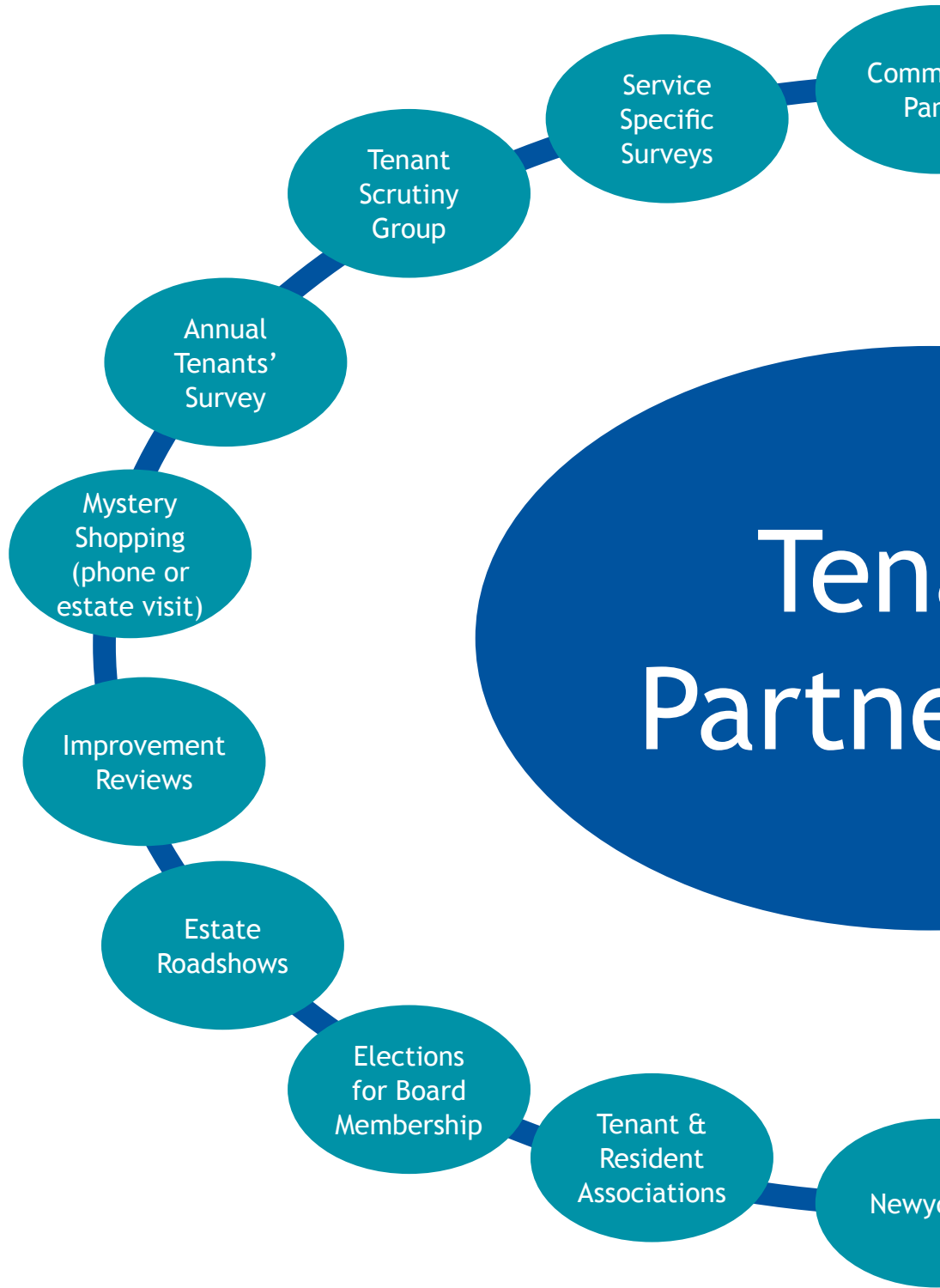
Steve: The training process has to be flexible as there is a steep learning curve and lots to take on board. I believe that the key to success is taking small steps to gain maximum knowledge.

Q What next for the group?

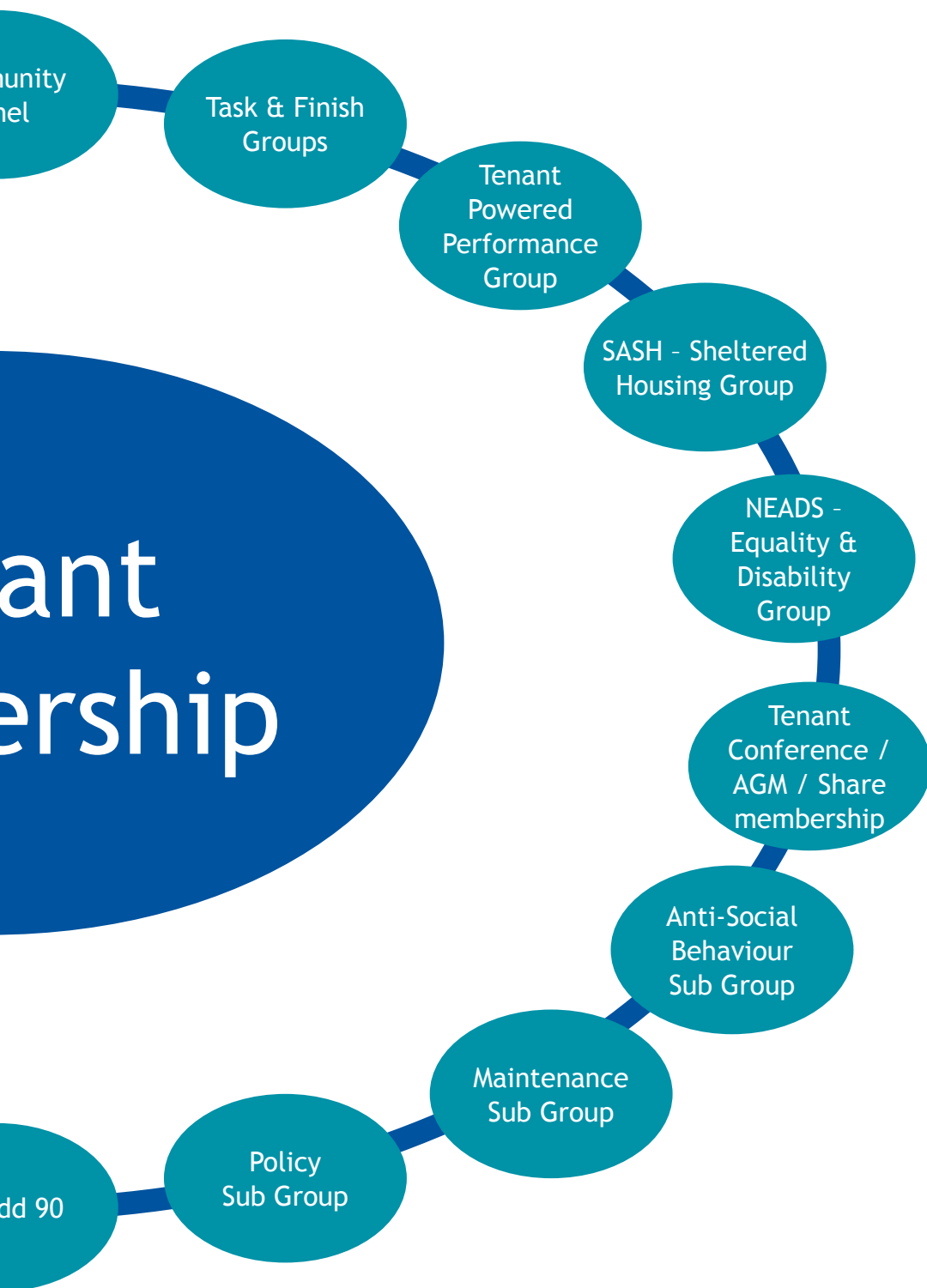
Jacky: We will now be reviewing all the information that we have received e.g. results of mystery shopping, tenants surveys, audit reports. We will soon be interviewing staff, drawing conclusions from our findings and then drafting a report that will go to the Newydd Board along with recommendations.

If you have any queries about the customer service you receive from Newydd and would like to pass on your views to the Scrutiny Group for consideration, please contact Jackie Holly on 01443 408080.

What options do I have if I want



to get involved in Newydd?



Different involvement opportunities	What is it about?
Community Panel	Oversees all involvement activities to raise new issues and concerns. Decide whether to set up Task & Finish Groups or sub-groups to address issues. Reports back to the Newydd Board after every meeting.
Task & Finish (T&F) Groups	Set up by the Community Panel to tackle and improve a specific issue. For example, a T&F Group was set up to discuss the future of play areas and decide how to invest in them. There are T&F Groups on Service Charges, Tenant Involvement and Play Areas. Groups report back to the Community Panel.
Tenant Powered Performance	<p>A group of tenants that develop performance measures for services that Newydd provide. This allows tenants to assess how well a service is provided.</p> <p>Performance measures have been developed for the maintenance and anti-social behaviour services and they are currently looking at service charges. The group plans to look at estate services next. All performance measures get published.</p>
SASH - Supporting All Sheltered Housing	A group that meets regularly to discuss issues in sheltered housing. Summaries of discussions and issues are fed back to the Community Panel.
NEADS - Newydd Equality & Disability Subgroup	A group that meets to discuss equality and they regularly meet Newydd's staff equality group to ensure all minority groups receive a service that does not discriminate. Reports back to the Community Panel.
Tenant Conferences/ Annual General Meeting/ Share membership	Each year Newydd holds an Annual General Meeting (AGM) of shareholders. All tenants are eligible to be a share member and simply complete a form and pay £1. Being a share member entitles you to vote at the AGM on important decisions affecting Newydd. The AGM is usually combined with a Tenant Conference where the Community Panel reports on the progress of each group in improving services.
Sub-Groups	If a service needs regular monitoring or has issues that a Task & Finish Group could not address, the Community Panel may set up a permanent sub-group. Currently there is a sub-group for maintenance and one for anti-social behaviour. The Panel has also set up a sub-group to review all of Newydd's policies to ensure there is tenant input for every service delivered. The sub-groups report back to the Community Panel.

What type of person would be interested?	How often would I get involved?
<p>Enthusiastic about tenant involvement and interested in finding out how tenants work with Newydd.</p> <p>Based on a formal meeting format and not for individual issues. The average attendance is about 30-40 people. You can email or post in comments if required.</p>	<p>The Panel meets quarterly and tries to visit most regions in the year.</p>
<p>You would need to be interested in a specific issue. The groups have informal meetings and often visit Newydd estates. Usual attendance is between 5-10 people. You can email or post in comments if required. Does not meet again once it has reported back to the Community Panel.</p>	<p>Task & Finish Groups usually last no more than 2 months, although it depends on the topic.</p>
<p>Interested in helping other tenants understand how the performance of Newydd is monitored. The group does not monitor and comment on the services. The meetings are fairly formal as they are facilitated by a consultant but does help decide what an excellent service would like.</p>	<p>The group covers two or three services each year and meets approximately 4 times for each service.</p>
<p>Tenants of sheltered housing. Meetings tend to be informal, although you can email or post in comments.</p>	<p>The group meets 4 times a year, usually at one of Newydd's sheltered schemes.</p>
<p>Interested in addressing any type of discrimination and committed to ensuring a fair access for all tenants. Meetings tend to be informal, although you can email or post in comments.</p>	<p>The group meet 4 times a year.</p>
<p>Interested in the governance and running of Newydd. The AGM deals with Board membership, audited accounts and appointing auditors, as well as major decisions, such as rule changes.</p>	<p>The AGM is held once a year, usually in September.</p>
<p>You would need to be interested in a specific service (at the moment either maintenance or anti-social behaviour), or in discussing Newydd's policies with staff and other tenants. Tend to be informal meetings, although you can email or post in comments.</p>	<p>The meetings occur when required, but usually about 4 times a year.</p>

Different involvement opportunities	What is it about?
Newydd 90	Newydd 90 is a paper or internet based survey that is sent to tenants that have registered an interest in being involved in this way. Surveys are usually about a particular service or issue and are relatively short. The results are fed back to the group that asked for them, as well as the Community Panel.
Tenants & Residents Associations	Many estates have set up their own Tenants & Residents Group. Any resident can set up a group and as long as some criteria are met the group can bid for funding from Newydd to assist its aims. They report directly to the Community Panel.
Tenant Board Membership	Elections are regularly held for people who wish to become members of the Newydd Board. All tenants are eligible to vote.
Estate Roadshows	Each year during the spring and summer members of the housing and maintenance staff tour the larger estates. They will ask you to complete the annual Tenants Survey but will also discuss any issues you may have.
Improvement Reviews	Every time Newydd fully reviews a service, we ask tenants that are interested in that service to join the review group.
Mystery Shopping	<p>Tenants test out our services to see if they meet the customer service standards that the Community Panel developed. Mystery shoppers currently use the telephone to call Newydd staff and test scenarios. These results are then given to a consultant who analyses the results and produces a report.</p> <p>In the next few months we will also be developing estate inspections in which tenants will be taken to an estate to assess the services provided there.</p>
Tenants Survey	Newydd runs an annual Tenants' Survey to test the quality of services. Some surveys are completed face-to-face during the estate roadshows, and the remainder are posted out.
Tenant Scrutiny Group	In 2009, the Community Panel set up and recruited six tenants to scrutinise the services that Newydd provides. They report directly to the Board.

What type of person would be interested?	How often would I get involved?
People who do not want to attend meetings, but would like to give their opinion on services.	Surveys are sent out when required, but there are rarely more than two a year.
People who are concerned about issues in their own locality and want to meet with other local people who may have the same concerns.	It is up to each group how often they meet.
People who want to become directly involved in the governance of Newydd in a formal setting.	Elections are held annually (if there are vacancies) and attendance is approximately every two months.
Anyone who doesn't want to discuss issues in meetings, but wants to speak face-to-face to staff.	Annually.
You would need to be interested in a specific service and sharing your views.	As and when services are reviewed.
Tenants who want to test the services by telephone or judge the quality of Newydd estates. There are no formal meetings involved and each time you can opt in or opt out.	Every three months.
People who don't want to go to formal meetings, or meet with staff but want to give their opinion.	Once a year, usually in the summer.
Tenants who are interested in scrutinising Newydd's services and are able to look at improvements for the benefit of all tenants.	The Tenant Scrutiny Group sets its own timetable for meetings.

Glyntaff estate celebrates 30 years of community action

Glyntaff Tenants & Residents Association (GTRA), Newydd Housing Association and partners hosted a two day celebration event on 14 and 15 May 2010. The event was to commemorate 30 years of community action on the estate, 21 years of the Glyntaff Credit Union (part of Dragon Savers) and also 10 years of GTFM, the local radio station.



A theatre performance was put on by children from the local Hawthorn High School which looked at the problems young people faced during the Second World War.



The event began with a community conference in Rhydyfelin Labour Club which was attended by over 200 tenants and guests. A range of guest speakers reflected on the history of the estate, including Keith Edwards (CIH Cymru), Ashley Williams (tenant & former TPAS staff member), Jackie Yeo (Chair of GTRA), Paul Roberts (Newydd Chief Executive), Nicola Gale (former Newydd staff member), Councillor Maureen Webber, Councillor Russell Roberts, Jane Davidson AM and Owen Smith MP.



Jane Davidson planted two commemorative trees with the members of Junior GTRA. This is part of a larger project which will see 500 trees planted later in the year adjacent to the Ilan Centre.

Lauren Lewis, (Project Co-ordinator Newydd), Lyn Bond (Project Chair) and Ashley Williams (Project Advisor) helped co-ordinate

the production of a booklet celebrating the history of the estate. They also worked with local children to design a piece of artwork depicting their vision of the estate in 30 years, this will be displayed permanently in the foyer of the Ilan Centre.



Iris Williams OBE returned to offer continued support to the estate by putting on a concert at the Hawthorn Leisure Centre. The place was full to brimming as local choirs and local performers also showcased their talent.



The event concluded on the Saturday with a Fun Day at the Ilan Centre which included 'Glyntaff's Got Talent', where local children sang and danced to entertain all present.

The event was hugely successful with over 1,000 people attending over the two days. A big thank you to everyone involved and best wishes for continued successful partnership for the next thirty years!

Newydd's community fund 2010

On an annual basis, our tenant & residents associations and social groups are invited to apply for funding from Newydd's Community Fund to carry out projects or hold events for their communities.

This year, the criteria was extended to enable informal groups to also apply in order to carry out projects that benefit Newydd's community. The table below shows who were awarded monies:

Scheme/Project	Amount Awarded (£)
Philippa Freeth Court	1750
Alltwen	2500
Arthur Davis Court	1500
Elis Fisher Court	825
Gofal Cymru Newydd Tenants Group	3000
Thompson St	1830
ANTRA	3246
GTRA	11603.75
MYERA	2850
Total	29104.75

There is funding left to allocate, if you have a project that you would like to undertake this year, please contact your Community Involvement Team on 01443 408080/01446 701501 for further information on how to apply.

“Holding out for a hero” at the 2010 Housing Heroes Awards

On Friday May 14 2010, a group of us went to London for the Housing Heroes Awards Ceremony. We set off at 8am, from the Coryton office and had an uneventful journey until we reached the outskirts of London. From then until we reached the hotel, we drove in fits and starts.

Along with hundreds of others, we were shown to a small(ish) ballroom for a drinks reception and from there to the main ball room for the pre-awards lunch. The food was fabulous and then Ben Fogle, TV celebrity, presented the awards.

The IT Team from Cadarn won the award for the IT Team of the Year, we were all extremely pleased. The Newydd Tenant Powered Performance (TPP) team were short-listed but didn't win an award, but although we were disappointed, we can always try again next year!

All the members of the TPP team deserve a great big round of applause for all their hard work since we formed the group and as everyone at the ceremony in London said, to get down to the last six was an achievement in itself! So to all the TPP team members who didn't go to the awards, we were all thinking of you and hopefully you can attend next time!

Written by Linda Chamberlain,
member of Newydd's Tenant Powered
Performance group (TPP)



The Tenant Powered Performance team

Changes to tenant elections

Two years ago we held our first tenant elections for places on the Board of Newydd. We now have four tenant elected Board members.

We intended holding elections every year with two of the elected tenants having to stand down (they can stand for re-election if they wish). The Board has reviewed this policy and has decided that a three year term would be more appropriate.

This change means that tenants can make a more meaningful contribution and can make better use of the training that we provide to support them in their role.

As a result, there will be no tenant elections in 2010 and the current tenant elected Board members will remain in post.

However, we are planning training events for people who might be interested in standing for election in the future. If there is enough interest, training will be held in the autumn and it will be free of charge.

If you would like to attend this training please contact Michelle Salter on 02920 629364 or michelle.salter@newydd.co.uk and leave your name and contact details.

Invest in Newydd Shares - they will not lose their value

Newydd is a not for profit organisation but does issue shares. This might sound a little odd but the shares that Newydd issues are valued at £1 and do not increase or decrease in value. Share members do not receive any financial return such as dividends or bonuses. Shares cannot be sold and each person is only allowed to have one share.

Holding a share in Newydd means that you can have a part to play in important decisions that affect the running of the organisation. Share members are invited to participate in the Annual General Meeting and other meetings called from time to time to make important decisions. These decisions include the appointment and removal of Board members and changes to the rules. If you are concerned about the future of Newydd then becoming a share member will give you the opportunity to help decide its future.

If you want to apply for a share in Newydd, contact any of Newydd's offices or e-mail enquiries@newydd.co.uk

Taking care of business

by John Phillips, Chair of the Community Panel

Since the implementation of the joint community panel, the success of the group has escalated beyond all expectation. Numbers who attend the meetings have continued to rise, so much so that new larger venues have had to be found. Tenant members have been genuinely encouraged by the fact that their opinions are actually being listened to. They are having a direct impact on the way that Newydd delivers its services to you!



To inform the work that is carried out and ensure that we are steered in the right direction, the panel have the power to request task and finish groups on any area of concern. They regularly receive feedback from the advisory groups, NEADS (Newydd's Equality and Disability Sub-group) & SASH (Supporting All Sheltered Housing) and also from the Tenant Powered Performance group who have so far reviewed policies on anti-social behaviour (ASB) and repairs and

who will soon be looking at service charges. They also receive feedback from other subgroups (policy, playground and voids & lettings). The newly appointed Tenant Scrutiny Group will also have an important role in highlighting areas of weakness that need to be addressed.

As tenants are represented from all regions, meetings are held quarterly on rotation between the Vale, Valleys and Newtown. Cross regional representation ensures a diverse range of people can attend and a variety of opinions are considered. This helps Newydd to make appropriate decisions and improvements to service delivery.



The panel's progress is fed back to the Newydd Board, so the whole process is completely transparent and ensures a free flow of two way communication. Any changes to practice are also communicated to all tenants through the In View magazine.



New members are always welcome, so if you have an interest in the way your landlord delivers its service contact

a member of your Community Involvement Team on 01443 408080/01446 701501 and they will add you to the mailing list. Meetings are very informal and Newydd staff, from frontline staff to Directors and the Chief Executive attend. Everyone is very friendly and travel and child care costs are covered so don't let this put you off attending meetings.

I can honestly say that I have seen a marked improvement in service delivery since being involved with the panel and am proud to say that I am the Chair of such an innovative and productive group.

Mystery Shoppers wanted! Do you fit the bill?

Mystery shopping is now being expanded to include visits to our estates as well as the usual telephoning of our various departments, or visiting our office receptions, to see if we are meeting the Customer Service Standards we have set.

Mystery shopping is having a significant impact on the service we provide to you. The NEADS group and staff Equality and Diversity group had a joint meeting in February to devise specific questions relating to equality and diversity in order to delve deeper into these issues.

If you would like to be a mystery shopper and help us evaluate and improve the service we provide to all our tenants in exchange for a small thank you payment, we would love to hear from you!

For further information please contact your Community Involvement Team on 01443 408080 or 01446 701501.





Who's on board the Partner-ship?

Partner	What projects are going on?
Mi-Space Creative Communities	Garden Project in Heol y Llongau Garden Project in Arthur Davis Court
Gofal Cymru	Aspire Project - a tenant empowerment training programme
DIC Development Trust	Garden Project at Philippa Freeth Court
Police	Tall Ships Project Youth Project in Castleland
Drop In Centre, Thompson St Estate	Vulnerable Adults Strategy Friday Night Club
Glyntaff Tenants and Residents Association (GTRA)	Foodbank Garden Project
Citizens Advice Bureau	Financial Inclusion Project
Tai Pawb	Equalities Project
Communities First	Neighbourhood Employment and Training Scheme (NEATS), an advocacy project for those not in employment, education or training.
Future Jobs Fund	Work placements
Local Artist	Waterfront Art Project
Aberaman Newydd Tenants and Residents Association (ANTRA)	Children's Football Club
Newtown Partners - Powys County Council etc.	Development of a community hub Time Banking Play Rangers
Open Communities	Scrutiny Group
Housemark	Mystery Shopping
LGBT Excellence Centre	Rainbow Mark

What is coming up?

17 August	Open Day on 'Estate Stigma', venue to be confirmed
20 August	Maes yr Eglwys roadshow and fun day, Pontypridd
21 August	Glyntaff Carnival, Glyntaff
28 August	Thompson Street roadshow and fun day, Barry
3 September	Rearranged roadshow for Maes yr Ysgol and Heritage Drive, Barry
7 September	Maintenance Advisory Group - Castleland Ward, Barry
15 September	AGM and Community Panel, Coryton, Cardiff
22 September	Managers Surgery - Castleland Ward, Barry
22 September	Joint NEADS and Staff Equality group meeting, venue to be confirmed

Contacts

To ensure we deliver the best possible Community Involvement service, staff now cover all areas and are no longer linked to a specific region. If you have a Community Involvement issue feel free to contact any member of staff for assistance.

If you want more information on anything you have seen in this newsletter, or want to join any of the groups or projects mentioned please contact:

Keiron Montague

Senior Community Involvement Officer
keiron.montague@newydd.co.uk
01443 408080

Tracy James

Community Involvement Officer
tracy.james@newydd.co.uk
01446 701501

Jackie Holly

Community Involvement Worker
jackie.holly@newydd.co.uk
01443 408080

Or contact your housing office:

Valleys Regional Office

Trem-y-Cwm, Masefield Way
Rhydyfelin CF37 5HQ
01443 408080

Vale Regional Office

121 Broad Street
Barry CF62 7AL
01446 701501

Newtown Office

St David's House, New Church St
Newtown SY16 1RB
01686 621965

Or speak to any member of staff at Newydd!

