



## *In-depth Briefing*

### **Employment and Skills Development initiatives provided by Housing Associations in Wales**

Housing Associations (HAs) in Wales are playing a crucial role in the provision of employment and skills development for their tenants and communities and this briefing highlights the support that they are involved in.

Social landlords house some of the most vulnerable people in society as they work in the most deprived communities in Wales, with limited employment opportunities, high levels of health inequalities and low levels of educational attainment.<sup>1</sup> The Office of National Statistics ONS Labour Force Survey (2015) highlights that just under two-fifths (39.1%) of those households renting from a social landlord were workless, compared with 15.7% of those renting privately.<sup>2</sup>

Housing Associations recognise the importance of providing services that can support tenants to move out of unemployment through employment and training opportunities to help tackle poverty, raise aspirations and improve communities. Supporting tenants to increase and maintain a steady income mean that tenants are in a better position to pay their rent, minimising the incidence of rent arrears. This makes good business sense for HAs as it results in increased tenancy sustainment, reducing time spent chasing rent arrears and a decrease in voids.

#### **Welsh Government Support**

The Welsh Government currently funds a number of initiatives to provide employment and training skills across Wales. This includes youth engagement and progression, aimed at reducing the number of young people not in education,

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<sup>1</sup> A Job A Home A future National Housing Federation 2014-<http://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/pub.housing.org.uk/A-Home-A-Job-A-Future.pdf>

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<http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/workingandworklesshouseholds/2015-10-06>



employment or training (NEET), Jobs Growth Wales, Apprenticeships support programmes and work based programmes.

The Cabinet Secretary for Children and Communities, Carl Sargeant has committed that the Welsh Government will support 100,000 new apprenticeships within this Assembly through working with the Communities First and Communities for Work programme. This forms part of the Welsh Government's strategy to address anti-poverty and skills.

### **Role of Housing Associations**

Housing Associations in Wales make a significant contribution to the Welsh economy through their provision of skills and employment support to tenants and residents in their communities. The CHC Socio-Economic Impact survey responses for 2015/2016 shows that the sector's provision of employment support and apprenticeships is valued at £1.5m.

Employment and skills development provided by housing associations is supported through a number of funding mechanisms including core funding, grant funding and partnership funding. The provision of schemes is facilitated through a number of approaches including targeting specific groups of tenants and residents, and providing one to one or group support. Housing Associations also offer a variety of educational and vocational courses including cookery, food safety, healthy eating, budgeting and money management, arts and crafts, and local history.

### **Value Wales Toolkit- Community Benefits**

A number of housing associations are at the forefront of the provision of apprenticeships and work programmes by utilising community benefit clauses in their contracts. This value is captured through completing the Value Wales Community Benefits Toolkit.

In 2014/15 the returns from social landlords to the Welsh Government Value Wales Community Benefits Toolkit indicated that housing association contracts had



assisted 461 disadvantaged people into employment and provided over 13,000 weeks of training.<sup>3</sup>

### **Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Contract and Community Benefits Case Study**

Core social clauses were included as part of CCG's WHQS contract stipulating that 15% of the contractor's workforce had to be new entrants into training – either undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship, and that 52 training weeks were generated per £1M of expenditure. Non-Core social clauses were also included with an expectation for contractors to engage in community projects and initiatives. The above were monitored monthly and the Welsh Community Benefits Toolkit was used to determine the relative impact of the contract on the Welsh economy. In relation to the above contract, specifically for 2014/15 the following benefits were generated:

- 4 apprenticeships started and completed.
- 33 apprentices employed during the course of the contract.
- 844 training weeks generated
- 92% total expenditure spent on people living in Wales
- 63% of expenditure spent on businesses based in Wales with 100% of this on Welsh SME's.
- Community contributions to the value of £17,840 donated to community projects and initiatives through labour or cash donations such as CCG's 'Young Wardens Scheme' and installing a new floor at a community co-operative in the Dwyfor area.
- LM3 figure of £1.78 generated through Welsh Community Benefits Measurement Tool (this figure had increased from £1.49 in 2013 and £1.58 in 2014).
- Core and Non-Core social clauses were included in all WHQS contracts during the investment period resulting in CCG engaging with over 200 trainees including 138 apprentices. During its peak in September 2012 the WHQS investment programme employed 69 trainees with 39 of these being full time equivalent apprentices. Support to the value of £100,533 has been given to a number of community causes.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://hcymru.org.uk/en/view-news/latest-findings-from-the-value-wales-community-benefits-toolkit>



## **CHC survey of housing associations**

In June 2016 CHC undertook a survey of HAs to ascertain their level of involvement in employment and skills provision for tenants, and to identify any barriers that are being experienced which are preventing them from providing support (Appendix 1). The employment and skills survey aims to showcase the good work taking place within the sector, to share good practice, and to identify opportunities for continued funding and collaboration with existing programmes which will assist Welsh Government in meeting the 100,000 new apprenticeships target.

The results from the survey show that over 96% of respondents are providing employment and skills training and development programmes. These programmes are mainly targeted at tenants but in a lot of areas they are also eligible to residents from within the area.

This briefing highlights the current provision of employment and skills support by HAs in Wales, and the results of the survey outline the different initiatives that housing associations are involved in and case studies showcasing efforts to enhance the skills levels of those they engage with.

CHC initiated a survey on HAs employment and skills support initiatives for tenants to find out the level of engagement of HAs. The survey asked a number of questions to identify;

- How long the programme had been running
- The types of support provided
- The partners involved
- The groups or types of tenant targeted
- The method used to measure success
- The numbers of tenants supported over the past year
- The barriers and constraints faced by HAs
- Whether or not HAs intended to continue with their programmes or schemes.

69% of HAs responded to the survey which was sent out to the sector. The results show that over 96% of all the respondents manage a skills and employment project to support tenants and in some cases the wider community. This shows that our



members are heavily engaged in the employment and skills agenda and support thousands of tenants that would otherwise be unengaged in employment and skills.

Over the period 2015/16, the respondents assisted over 1700 tenants with employment or skills development, and the level of assistance varies depending on the scale of provision by the housing association and the area covered. This number increases when we also consider non-tenants that are also supported by HA and also any apprenticeship schemes offered by the organisations or any local recruitment drives, which target tenants.

When calculating the numbers of staff involved in these programmes we find that this varies from one organisation to another, with some organisations utilising the services of one member of staff and others having larger teams of between 10-20 members of staff. On average HAs have 4 members of staff responsible for employment and skills initiatives. For a number of organisations even though there is core staff responsible for provision of the service, a number of staff from other areas are drafted in to support the service. The introduction of Universal Credit (UC) is sighted as a particular area where other staff have been called in to assist with employment and skills development. HAs are aware of the need to provide more support to tenants to help them access employment, especially as many tenants will face benefit caps under UC and may subsequently have problems in maintaining their tenancies.

Also emerging from the survey is that the members of staff working to support tenants in the employment and skills area are specialised in a variety of areas, including sheltered and support staff, community regeneration, housing front line staff and in some cases partners through contractors. This shows the vast areas of competence available to those receiving support from HAs.

## **Types of provision**

In terms of the activities undertaken by HAs the survey revealed that HAs are engaged in a variety. The majority are providing one to one support to help with confidence building, CV writing and developing on the job skills. HAs work with some of the most vulnerable individuals who have been unemployed for long periods, lost their confidence and require support to build up that confidence. Activities are also closely linked to funding streams where some funding is specific to certain projects and certain areas.



**Chart 1: Range of Activities**

Apprenticeships-providing placements to tenants within your organisation	50.00%
Apprenticeships-supporting tenants into apprenticeships with partners, contractors or in the local community	59.09%
Adviser led coaching and support	68.18%
Confidence building	86.36%
CV writing/help with job search	95.45%
Information advice and guidance	86.36%
Job brokerage	36.36%
Job clubs	63.64%
Job specific qualification	59.09%
Vocational training	59.09%
Non-vocational training	68.18%
Pre-employment training	77.27%
Self-employment	40.91%
Volunteering	81.82%
Work experience- paid	27.27%
Work experience -unpaid	86.36%
Other (please specify)	18.18%

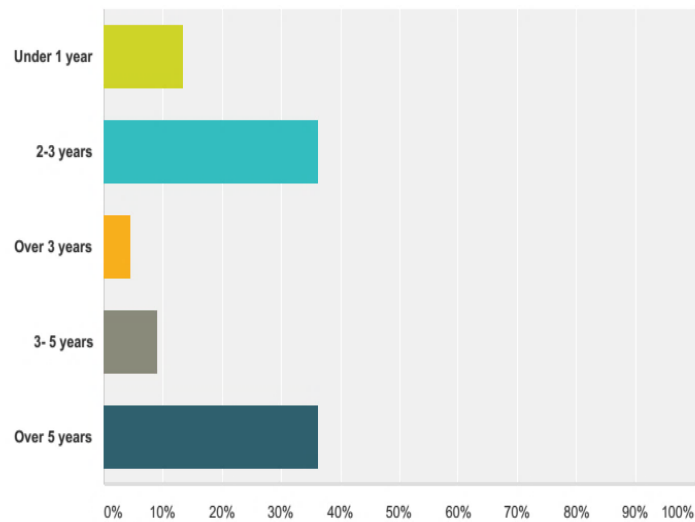
Source: CHC RSLs employment and skills support initiatives survey June 2016

**Length of Projects**

In response to the question on the length that projects have been in existence, 36% have been running for 2-3 years and 36% over 5 years, showing that on average projects have been running for over 3 years. This shows that HAs have built capacity and capability to run employment and skills training programmes for tenants as well as residents. This also shows that investment into projects has steadily been growing over the years.



**Chart 2: Length of Projects**



**Source: CHC RSLs employment and skills support initiatives survey June 2016**

## Funding

In terms of funding the projects, the survey shows that there is diversity of funding supporting employment and skills training initiatives. However, a large proportion of the programmes are funded through core-funding from the organisations' own resources. This highlights the importance that HAs place on the provision of skills training to tenants. However, there is the challenge that providing core-funding may not be sustainable for all organisations, especially as budgets reduce and also tenants' needs increase as a result of cuts from welfare reforms and benefit cap. The introduction of UC and changes to housing benefit to meet LHA levels is likely to lead to an increase in rent arrears. This will affect HA business plans and their budgets for employment and skills provision at a time when tenants' needs are increasing.

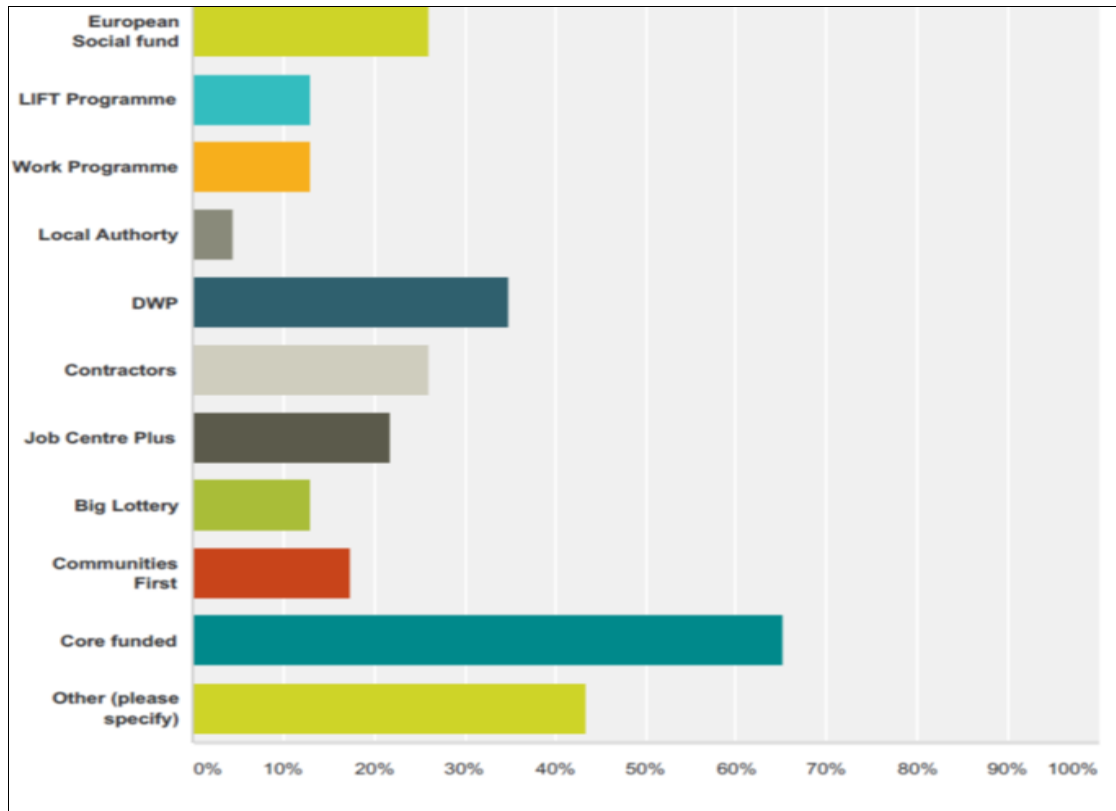
HAs have also utilised diverse funding streams on individually run schemes or work closely in partnership with organisations such as DWP to fund their programmes.

Other sources of funding identified from the survey include Welsh Government Supporting People Grant, WCVA, Community benefit investment sums and other small funders working at the community level. Organisations have also partnered up



with others to try and utilise other funding streams to support core funded programmes.

**Chart 3 Funding for Programmes**



Source: CHC RSLs employment and skills support initiatives survey June 2016

### Targeted Groups

In the survey we were interested to find out which particular groups were targeted for support. The results revealed that members are involved in wide ranging activities with projects targeted at a range of tenants and non-tenants which is covered in Chart 3.

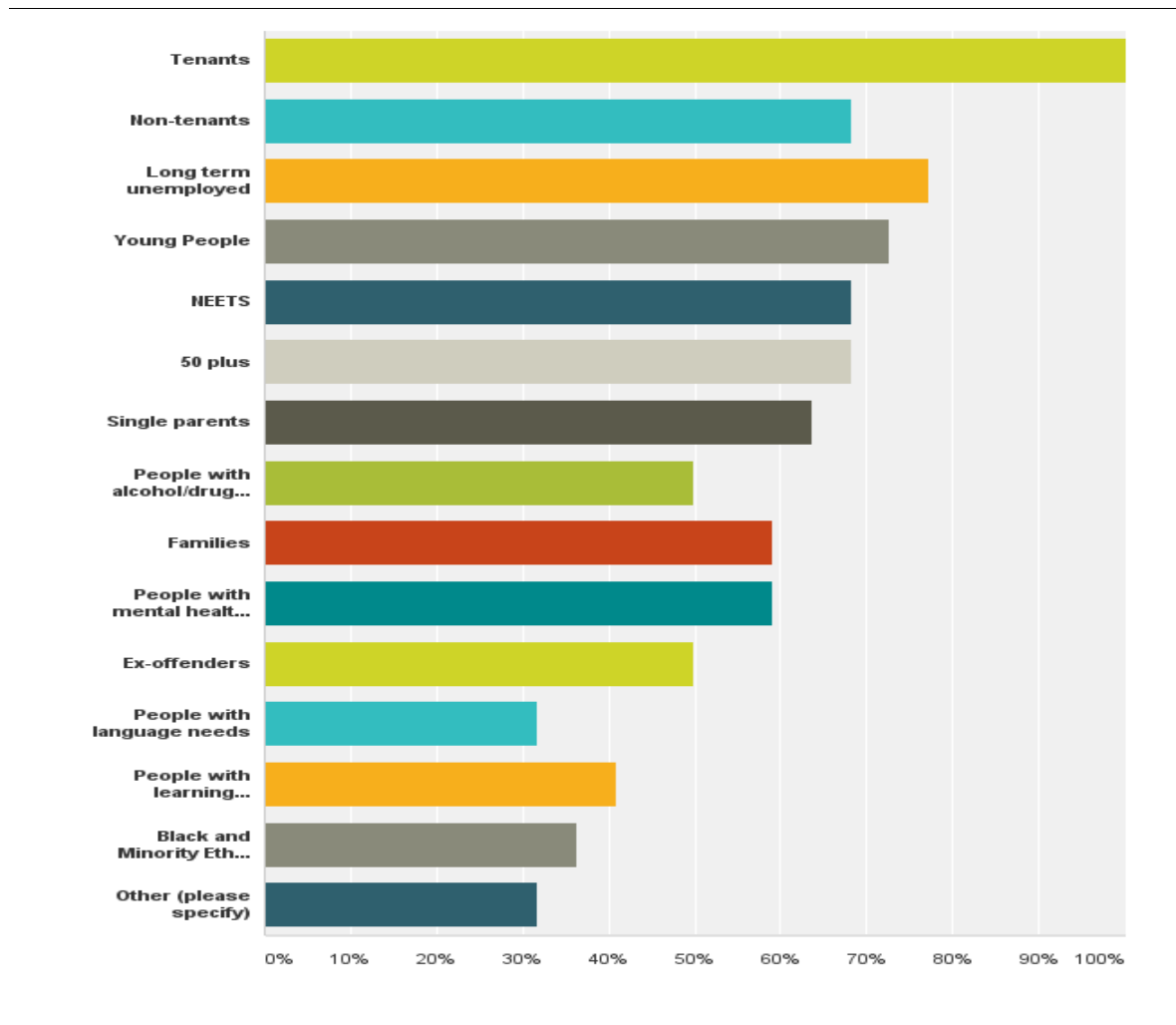
Projects or support is available to any tenant, irrespective of which category they might fall into. Most support is targeted at tenants that are long term unemployed. Some HAs identified those under 35 as a particular group that they are targeting. This is in response to the proposed changes to Housing Benefit whereby young





people under 35 will only be able to access the shared rate of accommodation from 2018. This is expected to lead to an average shortfall of £21 per week<sup>4</sup>

**Chart 4 Targeted Groups**



Source: **CHC RSLs employment and skills support initiatives survey June 2016**

## Partnership Working

In order to deliver programmes, HAs identified a number of partners that they engage with in their schemes. A lot of the activities are provided through partnership working, and third sector partners represent the largest cohort of

<sup>4</sup> Feasibility study of the prospect of developing a viable housing model for those entitled only to access the shared accommodation rate For Community Housing Cymru and the Welsh Local Government Association May 2016

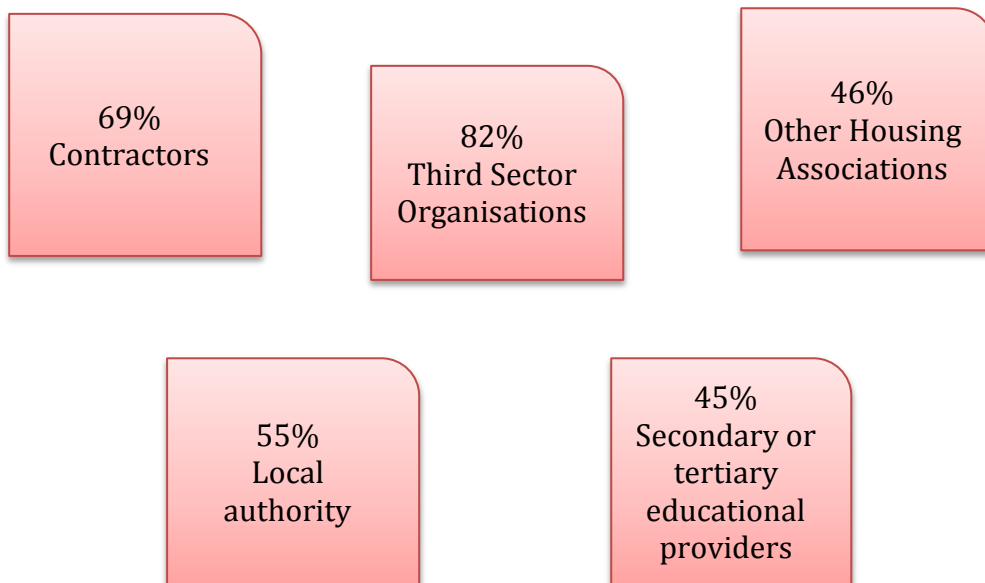


collaborative working for HAs at 82%. Contractors also provide substantial support for the work that HAs carry out around employment and skills provision.

The survey results also show that HAs also work collaboratively with each other to develop regional schemes.

Other partners that were identified include NHS, prison services, Princes Trust, Pupil Referral Unit, Communities First, DWP, Careers Wales and local community organisations.

**Diagram 1: Partner organisations**



**Measuring success**

Although measuring success of programmes can be challenging for HAs as tenant engagement can be a real issue, our members still look to measure success of interventions and identify employment for those engaged in their programmes as a measure of success. Over 82% of respondents have helped tenant's access employment contracts over 16 hours. HAs have also supported tenants into volunteering and accessing job specific qualifications.



Again a range of outcomes have been achieved through the support with improved confidence and aspiration of participants ranking high among the achievements for HAs.

**Chart 5: How do you measure the success of your programme?**

Employment over 16 hours	81.82%
Employment up to 16 hours	63.64%
Further training	68.18%
Apprenticeship	63.64%
Work experience/internship	68.18%
Volunteering role	72.73%
Qualification (job specific)	72.73%
Qualification (vocational)	63.64%
Qualification (academic)	54.55%
Business start up	45.45%
Improved confidence and aspiration	77.27%
Other (please specify)	31.82%

Source: CHC RSLs employment and skills support initiatives survey June 2016

**Other Outcomes**

Other outcomes achieved through the programmes include sign posting and referrals to appropriate services for support, taster work sessions, and computer loan schemes to facilitate digital inclusion for job searches, applications and other training.

**What are some of the challenges?**

We were interested to find out what the barriers are for HAs in the provision of employment and skills training, and identify some solutions where possible. The challenges identified in the survey are mainly due to a lack of resources and challenges with tenant participation in training programmes.



## **Limited Resources**

For organisations the lack of or limited resources, including staffing, can be a major problem. Organisations are not always able to provide the required staff ratios to allow mentoring of trainees and provide the required one to one intensive support.

## **Funding**

Funding for programmes can be limiting as core funding is not limitless and not all tenants or participants meet the criteria for some funding.

HAs are experiencing the following challenges:

- Short term funding for projects (i.e. Lift & Communities First) and also short term funding from training organisations making it difficult to continue with provision.
- Withdrawal of funding from Tenancy and Employability programmes making it difficult to sustain programmes.
- Difficulty in meeting strict criteria of funding streams such as European funded projects. Some barriers have included the eligibility of participants depending on where they live and the length of time they have been unemployed which may result in a restricted catchment area. There is also a sense that the way structural funding is allocated leads to organisations competing for the same participants.
- Partnerships with other organisations can be challenging although there is a desire to increase working together.
- There is a lack of consistency across employability support programmes.
- The lack of information available on tenants that have moved on from the programme, causing difficulties in measuring success.

## **Challenges for tenants**

Respondents also identified challenges that tenants can face which impact on whole programme delivery, including;

- Lack of confidence for people who have been out of employment for a long period of time.
- Language barriers.
- Generational welfare benefits dependency.



- Issues of anti-social behaviour playing a part in isolating people.
- People not accessing the right benefits to support them which can cause challenges as they end up on programmes not quite suitable for them.
- Multiple deprivation barriers. In some areas the infrastructure makes it difficult for participants as there is poor transport, lack of jobs or sustainable employment which makes it difficult for participants to move on.
- The lack of wrap around services such as child care to assist tenants in participating.
- Challenges with digital inclusion.

When asked if they will continue with programmes in the future, all members currently involved in the provision of employment and skills training projects indicate that they will continue supporting tenants and others into employment, despite some of the challenges that their organisations might be facing. As one respondent stated;

*"We work on a needs led basis - our staff are trained to work in the interest of tenants and take them along a journey -we are in this for the long haul and recognise that results for some people won't come overnight"*

Respondent CHC Survey June 2016

## **Sharing Good Practice**

In order to facilitate the continued provision of employment and skills training programmes the respondents also suggested innovative ways to sustain programmes and assist more tenants.

Respondents suggested that increased availability of small/medium sized pots of money to fund the running of programmes, and better links with the private sector with regards to employment, would support further development of employment and skills initiatives. Another suggestion was the sharing of information through a network for HAs to share/access vital information on funding and share good practice on training and employment.

## **Case Studies**

As a way of sharing good practice we selected a number of projects from our members that show different ways of working in supporting tenants with employment and skills training. Some HAs are engaged in partnership working,



others have created social enterprises, and others are using core-funding to create opportunities for tenants and residents.

### **Melin Homes: Melin Works**

Melin provides employment support to its residents and people who live within the communities of Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Newport and Powys.

Employment activity started back in 2010 when the organisation secured funding to deliver 'Getting Connected', a project which involved distributing computers across the Heads of the Valley area to improve digital inclusion and people's employability prospects. The project was recognised by the CIH at their National Housing Awards triggering the thinking at Melin that supporting people into employment was the right thing to do.

In 2011 Melin achieved approved supplier status from WCVA and Melin Works was born. They secured the first contract to run the Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) project to work with 80 people from the Monmouthshire area and help them find work in the construction sector.

Since then Melin has won contracts to deliver Jobs Growth Wales (JGW) for Newport and Monmouthshire, another two Engagement gateway (EG) projects that focused on driving and the care sector and more recently has also worked with the WCVA on their current operation, Active Inclusion Fund, securing two maximum grant strand 1 for Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent and also for Monmouthshire, where they are the sole delivery agent for AIF. They have also secured a strand 2 for the Blaenau Gwent area where they will support participants by paying them to undertake a paid work placement for a fixed period. Melin have also worked with strategic partners in the local authority and as a result of this are the joint beneficiaries with Monmouthshire to deliver Inspire 2 Work and have also secured two Flexible Support Funds to allow Torfaen Employability Team to work with Lone Parents across Torfaen. The total contract value for the projects since Melin Works started is now over £2.2 million.

2155 people have been supported with accredited qualifications, work placements, training or employment. Just last year alone Melin Works supported 27 of their residents into employment. Melin recognises that supporting participants is only part of the business of helping people to find work and the opportunity to undertake



a work placement is just as important. Melin Works has developed partnerships with 357 local businesses who have agreed to provide work experience and placements for unemployed people. While this supports the individual seeking employment it also acts as a trial period for the employer who may well employ the individual.

### **Y Prentis: Melin Homes and Monmouthshire County Council**

Y Prentis is a partnership between Melin Homes and Monmouthshire County Council (CMC2) and funded by the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and Welsh Government. Y Prentis employs the apprentices, provides the training and works with a selection of contractors to gain work experience on site to give them the opportunity to ensure the full completion of their apprenticeship. Y Prentis employs apprentices on behalf of the industry and rotates them through hosted placements to enable employers to participate without having to commit to a full two year term. Placements are for a minimum of 6 weeks and maximum of 2 years. Y Prentis works with key public sector and housing association clients across the area to help them deliver their targeted recruitment and training targets.

Since 2012 Y Prentis has achieved a considerable amount of success to date. This includes:

- Recruiting over 130 apprentices across 7 different trades, including bricklayers, carpenters, ground-workers, plumbers, electricians, plasterers, painters and decorators.
- Achieving an 81% apprentice qualification attainment rate.
- Ensuring 31 apprentices were employed by their employers after gaining their qualification.
- Supporting over 50 apprentices a year in various trades.
- Creating a comprehensive business framework of 45 contractors, 17 clients and 10 Local Authorities.
- Forming strong links with 21st century schools and other innovative initiatives.
- Expanding into technical apprentices (Quality Surveyors) and exploring the potential markets of care, digital technology and retail.
- Establishing a strong advisory panel of experienced, skilled members.



Mandy Summers, Programme Manager says:

“Our ultimate aim is to provide a service that supports young people into sustainable employment within the construction industry. Allowing apprentices to complete a full apprenticeship programme by working with a number of different employers, to gain the skill sets they require to become qualified. Producing competent, craft skilled people to not only meet the needs and challenges of today’s construction industry but more importantly deliver a sustainable flow of competent craft based operatives for the ever increasing demand for skilled labour in the future.”

#### **Creation of Social Enterprises: Cartrefi Conway, Creating Enterprise**



Cartrefi Conway has brought a range of work streams in house through Creating Enterprise. Creating Enterprise is a wholly owned subsidiary of Cartrefi Conway Limited and was incorporated as a Community Interest Company (C.I.C.) and became fully operational as a Social Enterprise organisation in April 2015. The initiative came from the organisation’s drive to maintaining their properties to a good standard while recognising the need to provide skills, training and employment to unemployed tenants and the wider community. Creating Enterprise





now provides the organisation with a range of services that include gas servicing, fencing, property clearance and cleaning, property maintenance, painting and decorating and grounds and garden maintenance. Cartrefi Conway has created an employment academy which works alongside Creating Enterprise to supply ring fenced jobs for unemployed tenants for up to 12 months paid contract.

While on the paid placement each tenant receives training, support and mentoring. They are then assisted to secure local employment at the end of the 12 months which 'frees up' their job for another tenant to benefit from.

So far Creating Enterprise has created 27 new job opportunities, including six 12 month traineeships for Cartrefi Conway tenants, 155 hours of volunteering, bringing vital employability skills to tenants struggling to get into work and in the process created a more productive team among the skilled labourers who can focus on other work while the apprentices focus on ad-hoc repair services.

### **Partnership Working- Tai Calon Community Housing**

Tai Calon participated in a Work Placement programme for unemployed tenants and members of the community through a commercial contract with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) on behalf of Working Links and A19 Skills.

Tai Calon work with the long term unemployed who face multiple barriers to finding a job and may have been unemployed for a number of years, have little work experience, lack confidence and self-esteem. The project provides 1-2-1 support tackling multiple and complex barriers to seeking employment which include, debt problems, fuel poverty, domestic abuse and issues around addiction and also gives guidance on budgeting and digital inclusion.

6 month placements are identified through contacts with contractors and the community and some clients are placed within Tai Calon. More than half have gained 'real work' experience within Customer Services, Property Services, Finance, Communities and Facilities teams.

Over 100 people have successfully started a placement over the last 2 years and they have seen sustained rates comparable to other areas of Wales.



Tai Calon has also developed a best practice guide on how to complete the required contract paperwork. This has now been adopted across the contract by all supply chain partners and is helping others to deliver the program.

### **Personal story**

GJ joined us on the CWP Programme after a number of years of unemployment. GJ had worked previously but became addicted to drugs for a number of years and also struggled with poor health and mental illness. We placed GJ with our Environmental and worked very closely with him whilst he regained his confidence. After four months on placement a permanent position within the team became available. GJ applied and undertook application form interview preparation training – GJ was successful and to this date is a well-respected and valued member of Tai Calon. GJ has openly stated that without the support and opportunity we provided for him he would have very likely returned to his old way of life.

### **Personal Story CWP Clive S**

Clive is a Tai Calon Tenant and was referred to us on the CWP programme. At his initial induction he was very respectful but very disillusioned and stated “ at my age no-one’s willing to take a chance on me, I’ve worked virtually all my life but I’m on the scrapheap and no-one could care less!”

Clive had a work history in Community Development but is a non-driver and struggled to find work locally. We were able to organise a placement maintaining the grounds of a local historic venue which is walking distance from Clive’s house. Clive did extremely well on his placement and in a very short period of time was supervising a group of volunteers. As Clive’s placement was coming to an end, the Management at the venue realised that he had become a key member of their staff and offered him paid employment.

Clive remains in employment to this day and stated that Tai Calon had “given me back my dignity”.



## **Bron Afon**

### **That Works Training' Academy**

Bron Afon tenants and communities indicated that they needed help and support to connect with education; training and employment to create opportunities that improve life chances.

As part of their corporate priority Bron Afon created a framework of action which aims to help tackle poverty, build resilience and create independence among its tenants, especially those furthest from the labour market to ensure sustainable tenancies and minimise challenges of Welfare Reform. Through the framework the organisation aims to support communities to maximise income through connecting and creating employment and support programmes to reduce worklessness. The framework links into a number of the organisation's existing strategies including, Inclusion and *Support Strategy 2015 – 2018*, *Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy 'Don't Walk on by...'* and the *Organisational Development Strategy*. The framework sets out Bron Afon's '*That Works Training' Academy* which brings together all training and employability strands including; apprenticeships, traineeships, volunteering, work placements, bite-size employability programmes and targeted recruitment and training. It provides details of how *That Works Training' Academy* will work in practice, providing a coherent approach to capturing data and outcomes and its impact on individual and business performance. Over a 3 year period Bron Afon has tested various delivery models to shape the now trusted '*That Works*' brand.

Growth and rapid development of the '*That Works*' portfolio has been stimulated by investment of over £400,000 which has come via non-traditional housing funding routes. This has provided opportunity to think outside the box and test new working practices to ultimately create a step change in service provision. The programme provides intensive bespoke wrap around support (both one to one and group based), using a pure community development approach to make sure the individual is building resilience, independence and a belief things can change. They host a continuing development support menu currently showcased at Own2Feet Living '*Ty Cyfle*', which is non-traditional in its recruitment, delivery and progression incorporating both housing solutions for young people through Own2Feet and '*That Works*' employability programmes. Realising that employability programmes do not



work on their own; Bron Afon has implemented a key worker function using Families First principles. It provides a holistic approach to building resilience through removing barriers to upskill, retrain and gain hands on experience, in turn transform aspiration into a chosen career pathway that strengthens the belief that being 'in work pays'. To ensure maximum retention of employment destination, Bron Afon track and support to ensure they capture 'early in work blips' to avoid job loss and set foundations for positive long term employment.

#### **Bron Afon That Works Training Academy -**

128 graduates during April 2016 – June 2016 achieving multiple outcomes...

23 individuals supported with basic skills literacy

14 NEETS 8 into Work

109 engaged in digital/financial support

23 Apprentices active, 1 Apprentice secured Part Time work

95 Accredited qualifications

33 Total Employed Total Further Education/Training

12 Work Placements

60 Volunteers Inducted

12 Work Club complete Princes Trust Business Enterprise programme

23 individuals supported with basic skills literacy

30 tenants supported to access Hardship Fund. Total awarded £7570

109 engaged in digital/financial support

95 Accredited qualifications

#### **Way Forward**

- Targeted support for under 35s.
- Implement a suite of innovative employment, education and training opportunities.
- Harvest the learning from Ty Cyfle and That Works model to provide alternative housing solutions.
- Remove barriers to engagement and access to services to mitigate the impact of welfare reform.
- Provide work based skills for those affected by the requirements of the Youth Obligation (April 2017).



## **Conclusion and recommendations**

This briefing demonstrates that HAs in Wales are at the core of provision of employment and skills training to their tenants and communities. HAs are committed to continue providing these service which many see as part of their core work as evidenced through the high number of core-funded projects.

HAs have also adopted a number of innovative ways in which to support tenants, including utilising a variety of funding streams, working with other organisation to partner on projects, creating social enterprises to sustain programmes, focusing on programmes to target specific disadvantaged groups, and engaging with the private sector to create employment opportunities.

However in the current economic climate, HAs require continued support in terms of sustained funding as this is identified as one of the greatest challenges to the provision of employment and skills programmes. With committed funding HAs can significantly contribute to meeting the Welsh Government's target of providing 100,000 new apprenticeships within this Assembly. To achieve this we recommend that Welsh Government works closely with HAs and utilises them in the delivery of the 100,000 target. This could be supported with access to funding to deliver employment and training programmes which support some of the most vulnerable in the community.

Community Housing Cymru is currently working with Welsh Government and WLGA to develop a 'Housing Pact' for this Assembly term. As part of this Pact, the sector is committing to provide training and employment opportunities, including jobs and apprenticeships and offer skills development and support to tenants. The full details of the Pact will be available in the Autumn.

HAs may also require assistance with engaging with private sector partners and seeking viable routes of employment, especially in areas where the infrastructure is poor and there are fewer opportunities. This would require all sectors and programmes working together and a commitment from Welsh Government to lead on bringing the sector together to spearhead the employment and skills agenda.

**For further information on the content of this briefing, please contact Selina Moyo, Policy Officer, Community Housing Cymru**  
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**Appendix 1- CHC Employment and Skills Questionnaire**

**1. Contact Information**

Name

Company

Address

Address 2

City/Town

ZIP/Postal Code

Email Address

Phone Number

**2. Is your organisation involved in any programmes to support tenants with employment and skills development?**

- Yes
- No

**3. If yes how long have the programmes been running?**

- Under 1 year
- 2-3 years
- Over 3 years
- 3- 5 years
- Over 5 years

**4. How are the programmes funded?**

- European Social fund
- LIFT Programme
- Work Programme
- Local Authority
- DWP
- Contractors
- Job Centre Plus



- Big Lottery
- Communities First
- Core funded
- Other (please specify)

**5. What partners do you work with to deliver the programme, if any?**

- Contractors
- Local Authority
- Other Housing Associations
- Third Sector Organisations
- Secondary or tertiary educational providers
- Other (please specify)

**6. Which groups do you target/support?**

- Tenants
- Non-tenants
- Long term unemployed
- Young People
- NEETS
- 50 plus
- Single parents
- People with alcohol/drug problems
- Families
- People with mental health issues
- Ex-offenders
- People with language needs
- People with learning disabilities
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME)
- Other (please specify)



**7. Which initiatives are you involved in?**

- Apprenticeships-providing placements to tenants within your organisation
- Apprenticeships-supporting tenants into apprenticeships with partners, contractors or in the local community
- Adviser led coaching and support
- Confidence building
- CV writing/help with job search
- Information advice and guidance
- Job brokerage
- Job clubs
- Job specific qualification
- Vocational training
- Non-vocational training
- Pre-employment training
- Self employment
- Volunteering
- Work experience- paid
- Work experience -unpaid
- Other (please specify)

**8. How do you measure success for the programmes?**

- Employment over 16 hours
- Employment up to 16 hours
- Further training
- Apprenticeship
- Work experience/internship
- Volunteering role
- Qualification (job specific)
- Qualification ( vocational)
- Qualification (academic)
- Business start up





Improved confidence and aspiration

Other (please specify)

**9. How many members of staff are involved in the project?**

**10. If working with tenants how many tenants have you supported from April 2015- April 2016?**

**11. Please provide information on any barriers or difficulties that you have experienced that has impacted negatively on the success or potential of your project.**

**12. Do you intend to continue with your projects in the future?**

Yes

No

**13. If not why are you not continuing?**