

Our impact: April - September 2022

We are proud of what we have achieved with you and on your behalf over the past 6 months, including:

Policy and influencing

- We worked closely with members and partners to push back against unfunded proposals to decarbonise existing stock by 2033. This has been complemented by targeted public affairs activity to raise the profile of this work. Discussions are now ongoing with Welsh Government to ensure measures are feasible for our sector.
- We expect the rent settlement for 2023/24 to be called in for ministerial decision. In preparation, we have worked with Welsh Government and members to undertake open book modelling on a range of scenarios, and commissioned global modelling to illustrate the impact on business plans. Our rent survey is also being used to demonstrate the focus on affordability by housing associations and we are building a wider evidence pack showcasing tenant engagement and value for money.
- We worked in partnership to secure a six month extension to the Renting Homes (Wales) Act, in response to member concerns. The related CHC implementation group has provided a useful forum to identify implementation issues and seek remedy from Welsh Government, and our training continues to be popular.
- We have influenced Welsh Government action to address barriers to development through additional funding of material cost increases, a review of Sustainable Drainage Systems and the First Minister's summit on phosphates.
- While the pressures on housing associations that provide care services remain acute, we have worked in partnership to successfully advocate for increased budget awards to local authorities, to fund social care so that staff can be paid a real living wage.
- We have held a number of productive conversations with the new Chief Social Care Officer for Wales, focused on commissioning practices and the role housing can play to reduce pressure on NHS Wales. This work continues to benefit from strong national-level partnership working.
- We continue to support members to build strong relationships with health colleagues. This has included the establishment of a forum for housing representatives on Regional Partnership



Boards, locally via speaking opportunities, and a good practice guide.

- We have worked with members to identify priority areas to campaign for changes which would support tenants to respond to increases in their cost of living. We have also developed a support programme for our members.
- We have worked closely with Welsh Government to support the Ukrainian resettlement scheme. This has included providing spaces for Welsh Government to discuss issues with the sector, developing opportunities for housing associations to support staff, and joining up requests for additional support at a local level.
- Our work to press for a multi-agency approach to ending homelessness and supporting successful tenancies is progressing. We are involved in the drafting of a cross-sector homelessness outcomes framework, and work to raise awareness of rapid rehousing.
- We have refreshed our This is Housing campaign and secured partnerships with CITB and Chwarae Teg to promote the sector to a wider range of potential job candidates.

Member Services

- Our insight gathering to inform our new Corporate Plan and commercial strategy began with 45 in-depth conversations with members and stakeholders. Workshops with SDGs took place throughout September and October, when we will also be developing our commercial opportunities. A perceptions audit has also been commissioned to support this work.
- Our SDGs continue to be well attended. From April to July, CHC held 32 events (including 15 SDG meetings) attended by 759 members of staff/the board from 34 housing associations¹. Over 55% of those who engaged in our events attended an SDG. Attendance at our board member cafes is lower than we would like and we are reviewing this.
- We have piloted a pre-recorded training format called Housing on Demand to allow access to our content when it suits you.
- Key research is underway, including the HR benchmarking survey, preparation for the next global accounts publication, and impact modelling on rent and decarbonisation.

¹ This number refers to instances of engagement - i.e. times members attended one of our events. We expect over 90% of membership to attend SDGs across the year.



What's been happening at CHC?

As an organisation, we continue to develop our staff and processes to enable us to deliver what matters to you. This includes:

- We have restructured our member services and business development functions to create a new Member Engagement and Events team. The team is piloting new delivery mechanisms and working with colleagues to develop our return to in person conferences.
- Reviewed our EDI strategy to identify progress made and priorities to further embed it into everything we do.
- We are implementing the findings of an IT health check. The roll out of Google Workspace is now complete and staff feedback is positive. A new HR system has also been rolled out.
- We have moved out of 2 Ocean Way and continue to support colleagues to work remotely across Wales in an effective way. Our regular six weekly CHC Get Togethers have been well received by colleagues. We are also implementing a new internal communications strategy based on staff feedback.

Our focus for the remainder of the year

We continue to be in the places that matter to tell your stories and build relationships with politicians, government officials, the media, and partners. But, of course, big challenges remain for our sector and for our collective effort to respond to them. We know that the pressures of increasing costs and decarbonisation, and concerns over affordability and cost of living for your tenants will continue to dominate our work together in the coming months. We will continue to prioritise these issues to reduce and mitigate the risks you face and create opportunities for the sector to flourish.

Our plan for the next 6 months includes:

- Increased activity to highlight the cumulative impact of a challenging environment and Welsh Government ambitions on the sector and lobbying for a new approach.
- The return to face to face conferences with Annual Conference and Governance Conference due to take place before the end of the financial year.
- A governance health check.
- Secure a one year rent deal for the sector that balances viability and affordability.
- Lobby for a phased approach to WHQS 2023 decarbonisation requirements over a longer time frame accompanied by sufficient funding.



- Support our members to implement the Renting Homes (Wales) Act.
- Continue to lobby to mitigate and remove development barriers.
- Lobby for measures that would reduce the cost of living pressures on social housing tenants and improve the operating environment for housing associations.
- Finalise our new corporate plan, commercial strategy and fee deal with the sector.