

# Lessons from our direct payment demonstration project

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# Running order

- Our context
- Why we did it
- Project parameters
- What we learned
- What has changed
- Where to find out more

# DPDP: the Bron Afon context

- 8000 rented homes
- 75% 2+ bedrooms
- £35m rent roll
- £81 weekly rent
- <£1M rent arrears
- 71% on HB
- 3500 age 60+
- 1200 age 30<
- 50% have internet
- 1 in 2 with disability

# DPDP: Why we did it

- DWP's (original) aim:

*'To test the realities of tenants receiving their own Housing Benefit payments: what it takes to make this happen, how tenants will respond and what happens to landlord incomes as a result'*

- Why we got involved:

- To get ahead – 'UC launch October 2013'
- To champion tenants' interests
- To influence Welfare Policy
- Foolish or brave; scary or scope?

# DPDP: Project parameters

- Initial duration - 12 months
- Began June 2012 - 456 tenants
- February 2013 – 6 months extension
- Phase 2 - new tenants & PBS
- Ended November 2013 - 927 tenants
- Structured learning, independent evaluation

# DPDP: What we learned

- 98.65% success: £73K 'arrears'
- £367 vs. £290 average debt (1 week's rent)
- The rule of 3 (struggle/support/switchback)
- Expect the unexpected: 'events' affect 'ability'
- Data sharing vs data overload
- Money closes doors: support opens them

# DPDP: What we learned

- New tenants are 4 x different?
- PBS alone is too narrow
- Mental health & debt
- Systems need attention
- Change is resource hungry
- Known unknowns

# DPDP: What has changed



## At Bron Afon:

- IT systems
- Ways of working
- Focus of services
- Structures & job roles
- Migration strategy



# DPDP: What has changed



## At DWP:

- Exceptions are acceptable
- Local support frameworks are needed
- Decisions about DP will be collaborative
- Data sharing back on the agenda
- Early reviews may trigger safeguards
- ‘Our world’ is better understood

# DPDP: More information



You can find the learning document that the landlords involved in the DPDP have jointly written here:

[http://www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/Direct Payments Demonstration Projects Landlord Learning Document](http://www.cih.org/publication-free/display/vpathDCR/templatedata/cih/publication-free/data/Direct%20Payments%20Demonstration%20Projects%20Landlord%20Learning%20Document)

You can join the direct payments learning network:

<http://www.cih.org/directpaymentslearningnetwork>

And you're very welcome to contact us or our DPDP colleagues at Charter Housing - we'll be delighted to hear from you!



...it's a team effort!