

**Community  
Housing  
Cymru**



**Quarterly progress report:**  
**2016-19 Corporate Plan**

*January - March 2019*

# Welcome.

This is the final progress report for 2018/2019.

As our 2016-2019 Corporate Plan comes to an end we're really keen to show you the progress we've made over the last three months.

A significant area of work has been leading the sector's response to the Affordable Housing Review, and we're looking forward to seeing the panel's recommendations on 1st May.

As always, we've continued to lobby and influence on your behalf, and a full media report showing how we've been influencing the media agenda is also included.

We've also ran two successful conferences, in addition to launching a new Governance training offer to support you to be brilliant.

After consulting you we're really excited to launch our new Corporate Plan which sets out our priorities for the next three years. These areas of work will support the delivery of our Housing Horizons vision – a Wales where good housing is a basic right for all.

We're also pleased to reveal our brand new member offer, showing how you can get the most out of your membership in 2019/2020.

If you have any questions on the information in this report, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

In the meantime we will continue to influence, connect, support and inform – so you can continue to invest in communities and improve lives.

*Stuart Ropke*

Chief Executive



## Our Mission.

- **To positively influence Welsh Government policy.**
- **To support and promote the work of our members.**
- **To speak with one voice.**
- **To put members at the heart of everything we do.**
- **To work as one team to deliver our mission.**

# Our Aim.

By 2019 we will be regarded by members as an invaluable and highly effective umbrella body. We will continue to promote the diversity of our membership and will have helped shape the external environment to enable them to prosper.

We will be the go-to organisation on housing issues in Wales, the partner of choice for stakeholders, and recognised and valued by Welsh Government as a sector that delivers.

Our work over the next two years will fall under four strategic themes.

1. *Supporting members to be resilient businesses.*
2. *Enabling the delivery of more quality and truly affordable homes.*
3. *Supporting members to build sustainable communities where people want to live.*
4. *Running a great member organisation.*

## January to March 2019 at a glance:

- **Our work on the Affordable Housing Review has made good progress and we are due to publish our recommendations on 1st May**
- **We've launched a co-ordinated partnership primary fire authority scheme as part of the new member offer for 2019**
- **We ran two successful conferences with record numbers of delegates**
- **We have launched a brand new Governance training package for the sector**
- **Our exciting new Corporate Plan for 2019-2022 and 2019/2020 Member Offer is now live**
- **In partnership with Charity Job Finder we launched Housing Jobs Wales – Wales' first social housing jobs site**
- **Together with the National Housing Federation, the Scottish Federation of Housing Federations and the Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations, we launched our 'six asks' campaign to lobby for changes to the Universal Credit policy**

Themes:



## Affordable Housing Review

Our work on the Affordable Housing Review has continued apace throughout the first three months of the year. As the panel has considered the Call for Evidence and the proposals of each of the work streams, we have continued to work closely with both the panel and Welsh Government to influence the recommendations along our three themes of certainty, flexibility and collaboration.

We have been engaging with members throughout, and will bring further discussions to our Strategic Delivery Groups throughout April.

The Review panel will publish their recommendations on 1st May.

You can find out more about our response [here](#).



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Themes:



## Planning

We've established a Working Group to meet regularly with representatives of Planning Officers Society Wales (POSW). The group will explore ways to improve working between Housing Associations and Local Planning Authorities, focusing on priority areas identified by members.

CHC members had the opportunity to feed into a study conducted by the Wales Audit Office, reviewing Local Authority planning services. Members were also involved in a discussion around the emerging findings.

A consultation on the draft National Development Framework (NDF) is expected later this year. We await Welsh Government's response following the consultation regarding improvement to the delivery of Local Development Plan (LDP) housing requirements.



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Themes:

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## Universal Credit

February saw the launch of our refreshed four federations campaign on welfare. This brought together all four UK housing association federations to lobby for six key asks, designed alongside the Welfare Strategic Delivery Group. Progress has been made towards three of these asks, with significant advances towards data sharing under managed migration onto UC and announcements from DWP around fixing the direct payments system for housing costs. We are also confident of an end to the benefits freeze in April 2020.

More information on the purpose of this campaign is [here](#).

CHC has represented members at the highest levels during this quarter, including meetings on issues you have raised, with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, and the Director General for Universal Credit.

We continued to support members with operational issues around welfare, including: the 53 week rent year, April rent changes and untidy tenancies.



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## Supported Housing

Welsh Government has taken a co-productive approach in the development of their guidance for the Housing Support Grant. Three engagement events took place across Wales facilitated by CHC, Cymorth Cymru and the WLGA. Members from housing associations were given the opportunity to directly feed into the key areas of the new grant, including the aims and objectives of the grant as well as how collaborative working can be encouraged.

The Housing Support Grant will replace the Supporting People Programme and Homelessness Prevention Grant as of April 2020. The **existing guidance** for Supporting People will be valid for the 2019/20 financial year.



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## Renting Homes Wales Act

We produced a frequently Asked Questions (**FAQ**) **document** on the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 to ensure members are kept informed on the provisions and possible impact of the Act. Help us to keep this document live by sharing your questions and queries.

Although the implementation date has not yet been announced, we continue to keep you updated on progress and have created a steering group made up of representatives from our members. We have also formed a Task and Finish Group to develop better means of communicating any developments.

We ran a webinar updating you on progress of the Act and we have created a **work plan** outlining priority areas of focus for the group in the next few months.

If you have any queries please contact **Selina-Moyo@chcymru.org.uk**.



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## Building Safety

Building and tenant safety continues as a priority policy area, with CHC supporting the shaping of future regulation and legislation through the Welsh Government Building Safety Expert Group.

We are delighted to launch a co-ordinated partnership primary fire authority scheme for our members, as part of the new member offer for 2019. This service, the first of its kind in the UK, will improve consistency in fire safety advice received by our members. The scheme will be live in Spring 2019, with members able to register now by filling out a joining form, which I can send you if you haven't received. All information is available in the handbook, which will be available online shortly. Watch this space!

To further our commitment to resident safety, we have begun work on a voluntary safety transparency offer to supplement our Code of Governance. We will be working with members and Welsh Government to develop this offer throughout the year.



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Themes:



## Conference round-up & upcoming conferences

### ***A Big Thank You!***

The Business Development team would like to say a big thank you to every delegate, speaker, sponsor and exhibitor who have made our events a brilliant success.

### **Communications Conference**

The 2018/2019 conference programme finished with both the Communications and Governance Conference recording record delegate numbers.

The Communications Conference took place on the 24th January in the Village Hotel, Swansea. The conference was expertly chaired by Rhian Moore, Head of Internal Communications at Great Western Railway. The day began with a challenging talk by Nigel Temple who inspired delegates to think differently in their creative approaches. Experts ranging from crisis comms pros and podcasters to brand whizzes then took people through practical sessions to help up their game on day to day comms. Delegates spent part of the day creating films for social media, which involved dressing up and making up very creative storylines! The day ended with social media expert Helen Reynolds who advised delegates how to demonstrate their value internally.

### **What did our delegates say?**

- "Fantastic job from the team - great attention to detail, really appreciated. Loads of positives. Thank you."
- "I really enjoyed it and have learnt a lot as well as making an idiot of myself which was fun. Thank you!"
- "I've attended many CHC comms conferences over the years and each one is better than the last. Always great speakers, workshops and opportunities to network with colleagues old and new."

### **What's next?**

It's full steam ahead with the planning for the 2019/2020 calendar of events and we hope to see you at our events including our Finance and Low Carbon conferences in July. Details can be found [here](#).

### **Governance Conference**

We listened to our delegates and moved to the Vale Resort Hotel, home of the Welsh rugby team. We're not sure if it was the exciting programme or the chance to have a selfie with a Welsh rugby player that drew a record number of people to the event!

Delegates spent a significant part of the conference in practical workshops, which aimed to give them the tools to govern well. Main speaker sessions covered digital transformation, trust and transparency and leadership, showing the role the board plays in achieving organisational visions.

Delegates also attended bite size sessions of our newly launched Governance training programme. Full training details and how to book can be found on our website. [Click here](#) to view.

### **What did our delegates say?**

- "I learn from every governance conference with this one being the best in terms of organisation, venue, good selection of workshops and networking opportunities."
- "This year's conference demonstrated the importance of keeping up to date with governance. It is an area of increasing importance and complexity. The conference provides an important opportunity to keep up to date with what is happening both within and outside of the sector. Great conference - thank you."



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## Governance Training

Our brand new governance training package consists of five courses, all targeted at varying levels, skills and experience.

Run by expert trainer, Deborah Walthorne, courses have been tailored to suit different skill sets and experience levels.

'Introduction to Governance' is for prospective board members while the 'New to Board' session gives board members who have been in post for less than 12 months further tools to enhance their skills. Finally for those who have been in post a little longer, 'Governing Well' provides delegates with up to date knowledge and new information to help them get to the next level as board members.

You can see information on all of these courses [here](#).

The remaining two courses, led by HQN, are delivered directly to individual boards and involve a great deal of preparatory work to ensure workshops are tailored to suit organisations.

Iron Grip equips the board to stress test their business plans, while Bouncebackability provides advice to boards on how to prepare for and manage a crisis.

For further information on content of each course and dates please contact [Lesley-Smith@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:Lesley-Smith@chcymru.org.uk).



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## Housing Jobs Wales

**Housing Jobs Wales** launched on March 18th, and is a partnership between Charity Job Finder and Community Housing Cymru. We're very excited as it's the only website in Wales dedicated to advertising social housing jobs to encourage new skills and experience into the sector.

We've had a really successful start to the website, attracting over 4000 users already. Many members have taken up our offer to advertise their jobs for free until 18th May. More information on this can be found [here](#). If you have any questions please email [Edwina-O'Hart@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:Edwina-O'Hart@chcymru.org.uk).



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## Member information updates

With our updated CRM system and integrated marketing package, we are now able to send more relevant information to you. On each mail shot you receive, there will be an option to update your preferences, so if you'd like to receive information only about conferences and training opportunities, then you can tell us, all with a few clicks of button.

We are always trying to keep our database as up-to-date as possible, and to ensure we are getting information to the people who need it. But we need your help - if you have a colleague or member of your team, who you think may be interested in joining our mailing lists for any of the Strategic Delivery Groups or our Weekly Round-up, please contact Julia on [Julia-Sorribes@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:Julia-Sorribes@chcymru.org.uk).



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## Corporate Plan

Our Corporate Plan for 2019-22 is now live and focuses on the priorities you've told us are important to you. We'll be focussing on influencing your environment, telling the sector's story, delivering excellent member services, equipping you to be fit for the future and running a great member organisation.

Why is this important? Watch our film [here](#) - thank you to our members for taking part.

The full document can be viewed [here](#).

We'll keep you updated on the progress we're making on your behalf via these progress reports.



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## Making the most of your membership in 2019/20

Are you making the most of your membership with CHC? Are you aware of all the fantastic benefits on offer?

As well as tools & resources, you get a platform to have your voice heard and a strong and supportive network to help you do your job even better.

Whatever your role – there's something for you [here](#).



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## Who's who at CHC?

We've updated our Who's Who document [here](#). This includes staff's areas of work and contact details.

We're a friendly bunch - get in touch!



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## Future gazing - dates for your diary

Our meeting & events diary is jam packed for 2019/20. Update your diary now so you don't miss out.

Dates include our conference programme, regular strategic group meetings and our leadership networking events for board members and Chief Executives.

The full diary can be viewed [here](#).



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## Communications

It's been a busy quarter for the communications team at CHC. From running a really successful communications conference to launching Housing Jobs Wales - Wales' first social housing jobs site - we have had a really rewarding and exciting three months!

As always, we have continued to influence the news agenda during the last three months, achieving 30 pieces of coverage across target print, broadcast and online media on topics including Universal Credit, the rent settlement and fuel poverty. You can read our latest media report [here](#).

Work continues on our exciting campaign with the HR Strategic Delivery Group to attract more people into our sector. We are in the early stages of development but will be in a position to share information shortly.

We've been sharing our sector story through our [blog](#) and social media channels. We're always looking for new stories to tell so please get in touch with our Media and Comms Officer, Catrin Harries on [catrin-harries@chcymru.org.uk](mailto:catrin-harries@chcymru.org.uk).

We've also interviewed some fantastic people for our Around The Houses podcast, including Cerys Furlong and Serena Jones on 'women in housing' and Grace Blakely on 'Brexit and the economy'. You can listen to all our episodes [here](#).

Don't forget to subscribe!



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## Staffing Update

The last quarter has seen lots of changes within the staff team.

We appointed a Design and Brand Creative – **Joshua Rousen** – to replace **Chris Lamb** and he will be starting with us in May.

**Hugh Russell**, one of our Policy Officers who has been on secondment with Llamau since January 2018 has left CHC to continue his work on the Youth Homelessness project. His role has been filled by **Joe Frampton** who is seconded from Linc which will end in April.

**Bori Martos**, our Executive Support Officer has returned from maternity leave and is working part time Mon – Wed.

Our Public Affairs Assistant, **Georgina Shackell-Green** and Member Services and Business Development Manager, **Adele Harries-Nicholas** will both be leaving this month and we are currently recruiting for Adele's replacement.

**Click here** for a who's who at CHC and what areas staff are leading on.



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## Until next quarter.

**As you can see, it's been a busy three months for the team at CHC.**

**The rest of 2019 will see us carrying out activities set in our new Corporate Plan and Member Offer. We will continue to keep you updated on the progress we are making on your behalf every quarter. You can expect our next report in early July 2019.**

**In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the relevant member of staff at CHC.**

## Get in touch.



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