



## Tai Ceredigion Monitoring Group Annual Report - 2014-15

Tai Ceredigion and the Monitoring Group are now five years old and are both going from strength to strength. The Group met with the Executive Team recently and agreed the signing off of the many offer document promises made to tenants on transfer in 2009.

Over the last 12 months the group's numbers have fluctuated and Mair Benjamin and Jenny Appleby have left the group, we are grateful for their contribution to the group. We have also gained some new members, Irwin Morgan, Llanafan and Melanie Evans, Llanilar have joined us, and we look forward to working with them.

The officers of the group continue to meet monthly with the Executive team, and are currently in consultation on a review of the associations policies and have recently agreed a new rechargeable policy, where the 30% additional charge has been removed, which should make things cheaper for tenants.

The group has been involved in reviewing the old and drafting the new Tenant Participation Strategy and Action plan, which was approved by the Board of management, and will form the basis for tenant participation over the next 3 years.

Members have also made representation to the Welsh Assembly, on bills such as the Housing and renting Bill and were also consulted regarding the bill considering Board Governance and the payment of Board members, where we made clear our views regarding this.

Some members of the group have been involved with disability groups in the county, assisting in their management and looking after tenants interests.

The Group held its fifth annual conference in October at Felinfach which went very well but would have benefitted from more tenants attending.

This year once again members have attended both the Welsh Tenants and Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Conferences in September and November respectively. This gave members the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and experiences as well as meet up with other tenant's members and groups from around Wales.

In September I was asked to give a talk to a group of tenants from Pembrokeshire Housing, who we had met in Broteifi, Cardigan earlier in the year. I explained how our group worked and how it operated in independent manner, managing its own affairs and financial budget and not being officer led, as the Pembrokeshire group was.

Members are continuing to visit void properties prior to them being re-let, and ensuring that the standards agreed with the Executive team and the group are maintained. They are also carrying out regular estate inspections, across the county, with staff from the housing and maintenance department, ensuring that they are well maintained and identifying any areas that may need attention.

The group meet with officers of Tai Ceredigion, Ceredigion County Council and other partner agencies, such as West Wales Credit Union to keep up to date with Welfare Reform changes and the impact they will have on tenants and Tai Ceredigion.

Members attended a Welsh Water collection review meeting during the year, and following a number of presentations recommended that Tai Ceredigion should no longer collect water rates on behalf of Welsh Water, as it was not in the best interests of the company, but that tenants should pay Welsh Water direct. This led to a full consultation with all tenants which resulted in this being agreed, meaning tenants will be paying water rates direct, as of next year.

During the year members have continued to gain additional skills and knowledge. In October they attended the Tenant Inspectors Information Exchange event, meeting with group from across Wales, and learning more about how to inspect estates and properties. Members also attended a 2 day Scrutiny training course, which means they will be taking a more in depth look at how Tai Ceredigion works as an association, looking into all aspects of the company, on behalf of its tenants. This will mean more work for the members with a full report with any recommendation to the company, the Board and, of course, our tenants, who we represent. We will also ensure that any recommendations are carried out.

We were fortunate that in October the Chair of the Board of Management, Derek Lassiter attended our meeting. He expressed surprise at the amount of work carried out by the group and was unaware that all policies came to the group, for comments, prior to going to the Board.

In December members of the Executive team attended our meeting to give their annual update and an insight into Tai Ceredigion's plans for the future; they also joined us for our usual Christmas lunch afterwards.

Finally, the great success of the year was "The Big Day Out". This proved to be a great day out for all the family, and it was good to see so many people come along. Congratulations to all the staff for a magnificent day, well done.

Once again I would like to thank all the members of the group for all their hard work in 2014 and I look forward to working with them again in the next 12 months.

Jim Scanlan, Chair, Tai Ceredigion Monitoring Group  
24th February 2015