

Tai Ceredigion Monitoring Group Annual Report February 2019 – February 2020

Introduction.

The Tai Ceredigion Monitoring Group (TCMG) was established on 4th January 2010 following the transfer of our homes from Ceredigion County Council to Tai Ceredigion on the 30th November 2009. It was at the request of Tai Ceredigion that this group be established to ensure tenants were fully involved in monitoring the associations delivery of its 174 promises to our tenants. Our founding members were tenants who were previously involved with Ceredigion County Council's "Stock Transfer Steering Group" which set out the promises for Tai Ceredigion and many of these members went on to become Tenant Board members of Tai Ceredigion.

During the past decade, the group has been written into Tai Ceredigion's governance documents to ensure it is recognised as an independent tenant body and to protect it from any changes within the association. So, what does this mean? It means the group can only be dissolved following a vote of Tai Ceredigion's shareholders and of equal importance, unlike most other tenant groups across Wales, the group is not governed or controlled by the housing provider. This also enables the group to participate in both local and national consultations in its own right as an independent tenant body.

The group has its own bank account, manages its own annual budget and the annual accounts are audited by Tai Ceredigion. We have our own Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Agreement and General Data Protection Regulation registration with the Information Commissioner's Office; we organise and manage our meetings, identify our training requirements and attend tenant related events across Wales. To our knowledge, the model of TCMG is unique across Wales and credit must be afforded to Tai Ceredigion for their commitment to tenants being involved at the heart of its operations since its creation.

What Do We DO?

A full list of our activities for the past year can be found further on in this report. In short, we review Tai Ceredigion policies, set and continually monitor services and their delivery, attend Tai Ceredigion Business Planning events with Tai Ceredigion Board members and monitor Tai Ceredigion performance against its Business Plan Objectives. Members meet monthly with Tai Ceredigion Executive Team officers and Senior Managers, conduct various inspections, engage with the Housing Regulator on Tai Ceredigion annual appraisal and monitor Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) compliance. The Group host and set the themes for the Tenant Liaison Forums and Tenants Conference and for the past year, we have been heavily involved in the Tai Ceredigion and Mid-Wales Housing Association merger discussions.

Members also attend the Ceredigion Disability Forum and Ceredigion Carers Forum and where applicable, highlight concerns, which may affect our fellow tenants and Leaseholders.

The Group.

The group currently consists of 15 tenant members, 1 Leaseholder and an Independent Advisor who was a previous tenant and long-standing member of the group. Members of the group possess a diverse wealth of experience both professionally and as social housing tenants. Every member donates their time freely and our treated no more favourably than the rest of our tenants or Leaseholders.

In the past year, we have welcomed 5 new tenant members, a Leaseholder and an Independent Advisor into the group. New members have been very keen to participate in training opportunities, tenant networking events across Wales as well as participating in the groups activities. Sadly, as with most voluntary groups across Wales we have found it difficult to recruit younger members and we welcome suggestions to address this issue.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all the members, past and present for their personal commitment and dedication to Tai Ceredigion's tenants, Leaseholders and Tai Ceredigion. It should also be noted that for the past decade, the TCMG has been very grateful for the continuous support provided by Sue Thomas, Tai Ceredigion Tenant Participation Advisor. Throughout, Sue has respected the groups autonomy, provided outstanding support in an advisory capacity, organised our public events and external training sessions and so much more. Sue is highly respected by the group and rightly deserves recognition from the group for her hard work over the years. It should also be noted that we are grateful to both Tai Ceredigion's Executive Team and Board members for their continued recognition of the importance of tenant involvement throughout the associations operations along with the value they place on tenant views and tenant designed services. Thank you.

2019 – 2020 & The Year Ahead.

As ever, it has been a very busy year for the group, and we are grateful to our new members for helping us with our increasing activities. I am sure the long list below will clearly demonstrate how much time our members have committed to you, our fellow tenants and Leaseholders as well as Tai Ceredigion. If I were to provide you with a full detailed description for each of our activities, I would more than likely still be writing this report next year.

Our activities continually evolve as and when we identify a need or receive an invitation from Tai Ceredigion to be involved in a new activity such as the "Joint Tenant Panel" for the current merger discussions. We have committed a great deal of time over the past year working with tenants from Mid-Wales Housing Associations "Tenants and Residents Forum". This has included a joint presentation to the Boards in which we

highlighted what we wanted to preserve or improve following a potential merger. Recently, we have been working on the consultation events, which are to take place in both Ceredigion and Powys throughout March. We will also attend these events and will compile feedback and questions, which we will feed into the merger process. If the merger proceeds, there will be a great deal of work required by tenant representatives from both housing associations over the next few years to ensure service delivery is maintained, tenant involvement is not diminished and on the alignment of policies, practices and procedures. If this work sounds of interest to you and you would like to see how you can be involved, please contact Sue Thomas on 0345 606 7654.

Our Activities For The Past Year.

Our members have attended:-

- ✓ 10 Supporting People meetings in the Sheltered Schemes.
- ✓ 2 Tenant Liaison Forums in Aberystwyth and Cardigan (Set themes and Chaired).
- ✓ The Tai Ceredigion Tenant Conference (Set theme and Chaired).
- ✓ The Big Day Out.
- ✓ 11 TCMG monthly meetings. (We have a breakthrough August)
- ✓ 11 Joint Tenant Panel meetings with Mid-Wales Housing tenants and Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) of both associations.
- ✓ 1 external Joint Tenant Panel meeting to create joint presentation to the Boards.
- ✓ 11 Tenant Liaison Panel meetings with Tai Ceredigion Executive Officers and Senior Managers.
- ✓ 11 TCMG Officer meetings
- ✓ 1 TCMG Rent setting review meeting.
- ✓ 6 Telephone Survey Sessions.
- ✓ Estate Management Inspections in the Cardigan area.
- ✓ Pre-relet property and WHQS Compliance inspections.
- ✓ 2 Strategic Board meetings.
- ✓ Joint Business Planning meeting in Llandrindod Wells, attended by Joint Tenant Panel members
- ✓ CEO Designate Interviews to select the prospective CEO of the proposed merged association with Mid -Wales Housing Joint Tenant Panel members
- ✓ The Medra Business Planning day.
- ✓ TPAS Cymru Tenant Networking Events in Newcastle Emlyn and Llanelli.
- ✓ TPAS Cymru Disability Tenants Network meeting in Aberystwyth.
- ✓ TPAS Cymru Building Great Communities Conference in Cardiff.
- ✓ TPAS Cymru training on "Plain language" and "Reviewing Service Standards" in Lampeter.
- ✓ TPAS Cymru "Annual Tenants Conference" in Llandrindod Wells.
- ✓ Equality & Diversity training in Lampeter.
- ✓ Ceredigion Disability Forum meetings.

- ✓ 2 National Assembly for Wales Focus groups on “Blue Badges” and “The effects of Banks closing branches in rural areas.”
- ✓ Policy review meetings with Tai Ceredigion. These are some of the policies:
 - Common Allocation
 - ASB policy
 - Pet policy
 - Rent arrears policy
 - Leaseholder policy
 - Trees policy
 - Development Strategy
 - Asbestos Management Strategy
 - Musculoskeletal Policy
 - Adaptations Policy
 - Legionella Policy
 - WHQS Compliance
 - Medra Business Plan
 - Rent setting review

Conclusion.

I hope this gives you an insight as to the work the group does on your behalf in partnership with Tai Ceredigion. Tenant involvement within Tai Ceredigion is a foundation stone of its operations and we are grateful to the groups founding members for their legacy. With the potential merger with Mid Wales Housing Association on the horizon, there will be an increasing demand on the group to be fully involved and to form a close working relationship with current Mid Wales Housing Association tenant representatives. We are not daunted by the challenges ahead and look forward to ensuring tenants remain at the heart of the merged associations operations.

Paul Clasby,
Chairperson,
Tai Ceredigion Monitoring Group.