

Adra

2024

# Summer Newsletter



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## Counting the Pennies

Do you want to maximise your income?  
Are you claiming what you are entitled to?



Ask us about it on:  
**0300 123 8084**  
[enquiries@adra.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@adra.co.uk)



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### Useful phone numbers:

Adra 0300 123 8084

No electric? 105 or 0800 001 5400

Dŵr Cymru 0800 052 0130

Shelter Cymru 0845 075 5005

Citizens Advice Bureau  
08444 772020 or 08454 503064

Samaritans 116 123

Gas Emergency 0800 111 999

Natural Resources Wales  
0300 065 3000

Galw Gwynedd 01766 771 000

# Reflecting on My First Year as Chief Executive

I am filled with immense gratitude for the unwavering support I have received from our staff, local communities, and our tenants. This support has been crucial in enabling me to move forward in my role as Chief Executive. Making sure that we continue to provide the best possible service to our tenants has been my guiding principle throughout the past year.

## Facing Challenges:

This year has presented a number of challenges, particularly in adapting to new demands from the Welsh Government, such as the Renting Homes Act. Additionally, we have faced higher interest rates, rising material costs, and an increase in repair requests. These factors mean that all housing associations, including ours, are encountering significant challenges. However, through company-wide collaboration, we have been able to respond to the growing needs and continue to offer the best value and achieve value for money for our tenants.

## A Source of Pride:

I take great pride in the service we provide to our community and tenants. I make it a point to visit every team, especially those on the front line, and I see the pride everyone takes in their work and their dedication to working for Adra. As we continue to grow, it is crucial to keep this spirit at the forefront of our agenda. I am also proud that we continue to engage with you, our tenants, to gather your feedback throughout the year with a project called 'Your Voice'. We have an update on how this is going on page 6.

## Corporate Plan:

Our corporate plan has given us the opportunity to step back and ensure we are heading in the right direction. It outlines how we plan to invest in our

current stock, comply with new and current regulations, and collaborate with tenants to achieve success. Working with our partners is essential to ensuring that the quality of our work meets the highest standards.

One of our priorities is to create opportunities for engagement, allowing you to share your opinions and ideas. Over the remainder of the year, we will be developing our next corporate plan to take us from April 2025 to March 2030. During the coming months, we will be actively seeking your feedback on the future direction of Adra and our key priorities. Please stay tuned for these engagement opportunities—we are eager to hear your perspectives.

## A Broad Range of Services:

We provide a wide range of services to you, including investing in your homes, safety measures, competitive rent, and value for money. We have several plans in place to transform lives, such as Tŷ Gwyrddfai, apprenticeships, and Academi Adra. Providing homes is just one aspect; we are investing more in our communities and our people to ensure they receive the right support and have the opportunity to reach their potential. A significant focus is on promoting the well-being of our residents.

Thank you all for a remarkable first year.

Warm regards,  
**Iwan**





# Welsh Housing Quality Standards Update

In our last newsletter, we informed you about the revised Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS 2023), which have been developed by the Welsh Government to enhance housing standards across Wales.



To meet these standards, your home must:

- Be in good condition
- Be safe and secure
- Be energy efficient and environmentally friendly
- Have modern kitchen and utility areas
- Have up-to-date bathrooms
- Be comfortable and suitable for the occupants
- Ideally, have a garden
- Ideally, have pleasant outdoor spaces

We plan to host information sessions later this year to explain the Standards in detail and discuss their implications for you.

## Knitting Kindness

Join the Talented Cysgod y Coleg Club in Y Bala!

A special thanks to members of the knitting club at Cysgod y Coleg who gather every fortnight to create beautiful items for premature babies and blankets for residential homes.

That is a very talented community over in Y Bala.

There is a warm welcome to everyone to join the club—tenants and non-tenants.



# Exciting New Developments at Tŷ Gwyrddfai

## Launch of Skills and Training Hub



We are thrilled to share some exciting news about the latest developments at Tŷ Gwyrddfai, our decarbonisation hub in Penygroes. Our facility hosted an open day on June 14th, marking the official launch of our partnership with Saint-Gobain, offering new construction and retrofit training within the hub. This innovative project is a collaborative effort between Adra, Saint-Gobain UK, Bangor University, and CiST, Busnes@LlandrilloMenai, aiming to address the crucial need for sustainable construction and housing retrofit skills. Other companies sponsoring the hub will launch their training soon.

### Benefits for the Community:

This new initiative is set to make a significant impact on our community. Retrofitting existing homes to improve energy efficiency will not only reduce heating costs but also enhance the comfort and wellbeing of residents. With over 7000 homes to maintain and retrofit, we will benefit immensely from the upskilled workforce trained at Tŷ Gwyrddfai. This project underpins our commitment to environmental sustainability and improving the quality of life for our residents.

### Conference Facilities:

We are also pleased to announce that our conference room, which can accommodate up to 100 people, is available for various events and meetings, further supporting our community's educational and professional development needs.

**For more information, please contact us on 0300 123 8084 or visit our website.**

**We look forward to seeing you there!**



# Housing Development Update: Achievements and Future Plans

We are excited to share some significant milestones and future plans regarding our housing development projects.

## 2023/2024 Achievements:

We are proud to announce that we successfully completed 250 homes over the past year. This achievement marks a significant step in our commitment to providing quality housing for our community.

## 2024/2025 Targets and Plans:

Looking ahead, we have set an ambitious target to complete 313 homes in the upcoming year. This goal reflects our dedication to expanding and improving our housing supply.

 Developments to be completed in 2024/2025

 New Developments Starting in 2024/2025



## Come and say hello!

Who called in to see Nicola and Richard at the Meirioneth County Show in Harlech last year? We'll be making another appearance this year at the popular agricultural show.

**When? Wednesday 21st August**

**Where? Rhug Estate Farm, Corwen**

We hope to see you there!



# Eich Llais Your Voice

It's over 12 months since we introduced Your Voice, which sets out how we consult and engage with you to hear your views about our services and how you can get involved in our work. We have done this through a number of ways, including a Customer Panel, Area Chats, estate visits, online consultations and tenant satisfaction questionnaires.

Thank you to those who have got involved in our work. 450 of you registered for our Customer Panel and regularly take part in online or postal surveys. 2,456 of you have responded to surveys on a range of topics, including how you want to communicate with us, service charges, damp and mould, the use of the Welsh language, value for money, setting annual rents, annual self-evaluation reports, lifts policy, customer portal and your community as a place to live. Those that take part in our consultations receive feedback.

We also asked for views on the opportunities to get involved in our work. Of those responses 81% were satisfied or very satisfied with the opportunities to get involved.

We have met many of you face to face as part of our estate walkabouts in Buckley, Bala, Barmouth, Pen Llŷn, Bangor, Pwllheli, Caernarfon and Llanllyfni areas, with more estate visits planned around Bangor, Bethesda, Caernarfon, Llanberis, and Abergele in the coming months. We have also held Area Chats in Bethesda and Pwllheli, to give you the chance to come and speak with us about issues that are important to you. More Area Chats are planned for later in the year.

## And your feedback is very important:

- Some of you raised concerns about the cleaning service. As a result, we have a new cleaning company in place.
- Some of you wanted better communication from us following inspections at your home. We have made changes and you will now be getting direct feedback after the inspections.
- You also requested more information about where your rent money goes. See article on page 10 for details.

We want to make sure that your voice is heard, listened to, and acted upon at all levels. Your Voice has also allowed us to reach different audiences in a different way and has ensured that we get feedback from a greater representation of our communities. Our new approach means there are more opportunities for you to get involved in our work.

**Keep an eye out for further opportunities to get involved.**

# Schemes Update

We have lots of ongoing work to improve your homes. Take a look at these three that we have been working on recently:

## Update on Morfa Garreg homes

The external refurbishment of the 18 houses in Morfa Garreg, Pwllheli, almost complete! Here's a quick summary of what we've been doing:

- Replaced windows with PVCU casement types
- Renewed PVCU downpipes, fascias, soffits, eaves ventilators, gutters, and stacks
- Added 100mm thick insulated render dash to walls
- Installed high-performance exterior doors



## Fresh Look for Llanbeblig Road Flats



The external refurbishment of the four blocks of flats on Llanbeblig Road, Caernarfon, is complete! The work included:

- Removed old stone cladding
- Installed new external wall insulation (EWI)
- Updated flat roofs on buildings and stores
- Improved paths and drainage systems

## Ongoing Upgrades at Lawnt y Plas, Dinas Mawddwy

The refurbishment of the six properties at Lawnt y Plas, Dinas Mawddwy, is currently underway! Here's what's being done:

- Installing solar PV and battery storage
- Re-roofing
- Performing chimney works
- Adding external wall insulation (EWI)





# Meet Abi: Your Energy Saving Expert!

**Q. Hi Abi, when did you start your new role?**

**A.** I've been in this role since January, and it's been such a rewarding 6 months so far!

**Q. Where are you based?**

**A.** I cover the whole of Gwynedd, which is a huge area. I love travelling around the county meeting our lovely tenants.

**Q. What does an Energy Warden do exactly?**

**A.** I offer practical advice and support with energy bills, offer energy saving tips and support tenants that are faced with fuel poverty during the cost-of-living crisis. My role is split between Adra and Cyngor Gwynedd so I see a huge variety of needs and issues.

**Q. What are you most proud of since starting in this new role?**

**A.** It's been incredible to provide support to people who didn't realise help was available to them. I love assisting people in saving money.

**Q. Tell us an interesting fact about yourself.**

**A.** I was a competitive dancer for 15 years! I even appeared on the S4C show 'Ysgol Ddawns Anti Karen'.

**Q. How can our tenants reach you if they need the support that you offer?**

**A.** They can contact me by calling Adra on **0300 123 8084** and ask to speak to the Energy Warden or by emailing [cymunedol@adra.co.uk](mailto:cymunedol@adra.co.uk).



## Walking in Memory

### Honoring Dylan Edwin with a Sponsored Walk

Over 30 members of staff took part in a walk from our Parc Menai office to Penygroes, passing through Caernarfon, Dinas, and Groeslon to raise funds for the Kidney Patients Association at Ysbyty Gwynedd in memory of our colleague Dylan Edwin.

We've been supporting this charity for the past year and are excited to continue for another year. We were honoured to have Dylan's family join us on the walk.

Heledd Owens, our Head of Finance, said: "We are thrilled by the participation and support for this cause close to our hearts. We set a target of £1,000 and have raised £3,075 — a phenomenal effort. Thank you to everyone who walked or ran the 15-mile route."





# Providing Opportunities to Locals

We are thrilled to announce that both Daniella and Hanna have successfully completed their 16-week paid placements with Academi Adra. Their journey with us began after finishing a 2-week Admin Course, which included one week of training and one week of practical work experience in our offices. This hands-on experience provided them with a taste of working in a real office environment.

Daniella, who's placement is at Tŷ Gwyrddfai said,

**"My placement at Adra has been incredibly rewarding. The training and practical experience have not only enhanced my skills but also boosted my confidence in a professional setting. I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn and grow with such a supportive team."**



Academi Adra continues to make a substantial impact:

- 125 people have taken part in Academi Adra courses.
- 162 people have received support to find training and employment via the Academi.

We are proud of the success of our programs and look forward to welcoming more participants in the future.





## Strengthening Links Between Cymru and Cornwall **Adra and GISDA Collaborate**



In collaboration with GISDA and supported by the Welsh Government Taith Programme, we are excited to announce a new partnership to foster connections between Gwynedd and Cornwall. This initiative focuses on the impact of tourism on language, culture, and housing affordability for young people in both regions.

During our recent trip to Cornwall, we engaged with various organisations, including St. Petrocs, Harbour Housing, 'The House,' Cornwall Language Office, and Cornwall Council, to strengthen these ties.

**Gemma Owen, our Affordable Housing Assistant Manager, shared:**

"It was a privilege to witness the amazing work being done in Cornwall and the similarities with north Wales, especially in promoting the language and addressing local challenges."

**We are committed to maintaining and growing these connections to benefit both communities.**

## Where your rent money goes

One of the pieces of feedback we have received is that some of you want to know how your rent money is used.

If we look at an average rent of **£111.78** a week, this is how it's used.

- **£22.36** goes on repairs and maintenance of your property.
- **£39.12** goes on the investment programme – things like renovations such as new kitchens, roofs, windows etc.
- **£8.94** on asset management, such as preparing for investment works, drainage management etc.
- **£15.37** on Adra management for services that are used to support tenants.
- **£12.58** on landlord costs – rent collection, letting homes, neighbourhood services and advice services.
- **£13.41** towards the costs of paying loans that we took out as part of our £121 million investment on bringing homes up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standards.

Thank you for the feedback. This information is available in our Annual Report which can be found on our website: [adra.co.uk](http://adra.co.uk)