



at the heart of your community



Annual Report 2011/12



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The Chair and Chief Executive's Messages

Chair's Message

It has been another busy and exciting year for us and we have achieved a great deal. This report tells you about some of the things we have been up to.

As you know our tenants are at the heart of everything we do and they play an active role in our business.

There is the Membership Scrutiny Committee which examines and scrutinises decisions made by the board.

The Quality Design Forum selects the contractors who work alongside our own workforce.

The Forum, together with the Theme Group and Tenant Compact Group, choose the kitchens and bathrooms which are to be installed in your homes.

The Theme Group and Tenant Compact Group also help formulate our policies and procedures.

We encourage all our tenants to become involved in Tai Calon by becoming one of our shareholders. During the past year membership has grown from just over 3% to almost 8%. If you would like to become a member please get in touch for further details. As a member of Tai Calon you can choose how much or little you do.



I would like to express my thanks and gratitude for the tenants who have worked so hard on our behalf. Also, I would like to pay tribute to the hard work of the voluntary Board members and staff whose enthusiasm, commitment and skills have given us the foundations to drive forward the organisation in the years to come.

Chief Executive's Message

Well, where does the time go?

Another year has flown by and we have achieved so much, in partnership with tenants. We have a great deal still to do to deliver the promises made to tenants on our behalf by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council before the transfer of homes, but we are on course to do so by our target date of 2015.

Satisfaction with our services is up, complaints are down, but we are not complacent.

We want to achieve our mission of delivering our promises, improving homes and lives, and we want to do it in style!



I want to take the opportunity to thank the Chair and Board for their continued support and hard work. I also want to say "thank you" to staff and tenants for all they do. Together we are making a difference.

Who we are...

About us

- Tai Calon is a “not for profit” social landlord
- It is the largest social landlord in Blaenau Gwent
- We have more than 6,180 properties
- We have 272 staff, including 7 apprentices
- Our annual rental income is in excess of £19 million
- We have spent more than £17million during the first 20 months to bring our homes up to WHQS standard. We want to make a real difference to the lives of tenants and the communities in which they live.
- We achieved the highest rating a “Pass” in our First Financial Viability report from the Welsh Government. It involves a detailed review of our business plan and financial performance for which we can be graded as a Fail, Pass with further monitoring or a Pass.



Our Mission

To deliver our promises, improving homes and lives

Our Vision

We will deliver excellent homes and services to make our communities proud

Our Values

We will:

- Be tenant focused
- Listen and learn
- Be excellent
- Show respect
- Be open



Managing our homes

Tai Calon manages a number of different types of homes.

Types of homes



490

Flats



309

Sheltered



3,075

3 Bed Homes



797

Bungalows



1,451

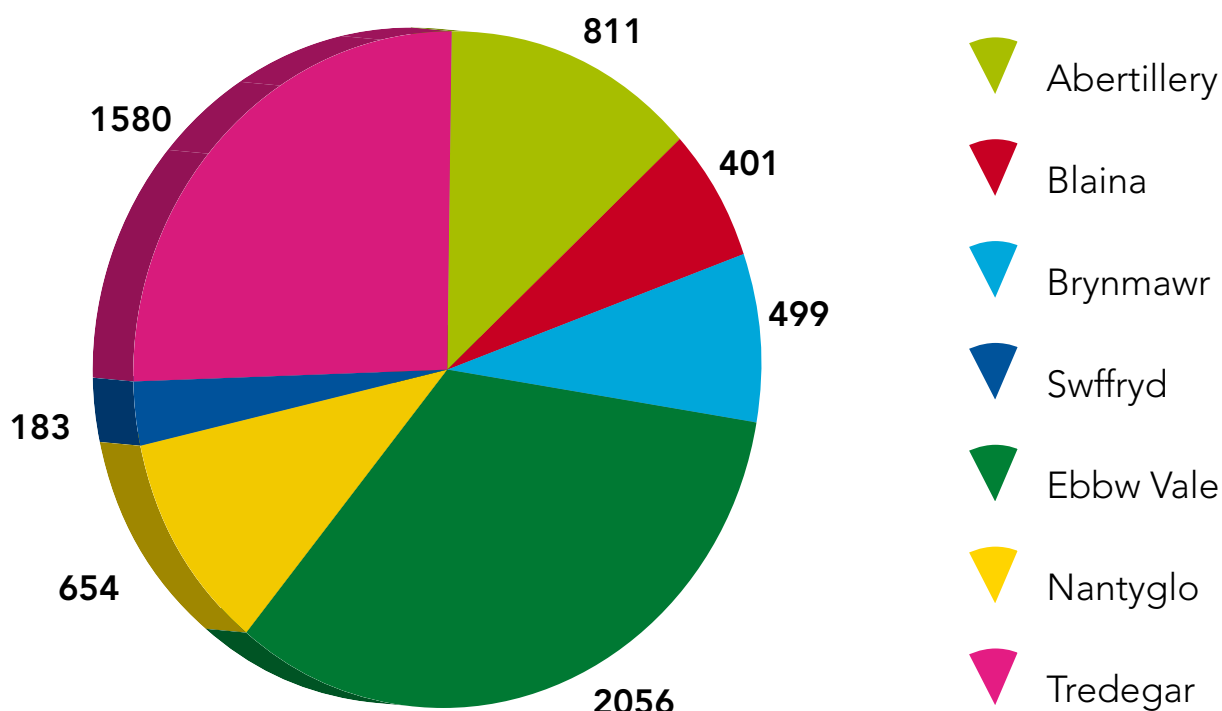
2 Bed Homes



62

4 Bed plus Homes

Homes by area



The number of homes has fallen by 17 during the financial year as a result of tenants taking up their option of "Right to Buy"

During the financial year, 2011/2012, we have let the following homes:



123

Flats



55

Bungalows



19

Sheltered



5

1 Bed Homes



135

2 Bed Homes



139

3 Bed Homes



1

4 Bed Homes

We also have:

Leaseholders

(i.e. people who own flats in our buildings)

= 332

Garages

(which we rent to residents)

= 1,170

Commercial premises (including shops)

= 26

of which 2 remain empty as of 31/3/12

Our average weekly rents during 2011/12

	Sheltered	Non-sheltered
1 Bed Flat/Bungalow	£54.17	£55.52
2 Bed House/Flat/Bungalow	£57.68	£58.14
3 Bed House/Flat/Bungalow		£59.06
4 Bed House		£57.68

Income

- Rent arrears at end of March 2012 were £316,849 which equates to 1.73% of our rental income. Our target was to keep arrears under 2.5%.
- 835 tenants each owed an average of five weeks rent



Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

Tai Calon is spending £111 million by 2015 bringing all its properties up to WHQS.

Nine companies are working with us. Seven are located in Blaenau Gwent or Wales. The other two are English contractors, one of whom has a Welsh base.

To date we have completed:

"I like the colour and the way the kitchen is laid out. The whole room looks bright and I now have loads of storage."

Trudy Edwards, Swffryd

"I only had two cupboards in my old kitchen. My new one is lovely. It is clean and spacious and the layout is just how I wanted it."

Sharon Edwards, Swffryd

WHQS Items Installed	Target 2011/12	Actual 2011/2012	Target since transfer	Actual since transfer
Kitchens	800	867	1039	1103
Bathrooms	640	647	786	805
Rewires	300	432	375	507
Roofs	480	501	680	718
Heating	850	926	1250	1322

We also asked tenants what they thought about the work in their homes during 2011/12

% of Tenants who rated the improvement works programme as good or excellent

Actual
88.4%

Target
95%

% of Tenants who rated the completed work in their home as good or excellent

Actual
97.1%

Target
96%

CESP

The Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) is part of the UK Government's Home Energy Saving Programme.

The energy company, E.on, and Tai Calon are improving the insulation in a number of our homes, helping tenants reduce their heating bills. E.on is financing about 55% of the work which is costing £10 million. The plan is to replace 1,000 heating systems and to insulate and render the exterior of 770 homes of non traditional construction.

"My house looks like it's just been built."

Pamela Snell, Garnlydan

"Our home was so cold before CESP that we would wear our coats and scarves when eating our dinner. Now it's a lot warmer."

Ralph Lewis Boulter, Garnlydan



Property Services

Our 120 tradesmen, including plumbers, carpenters, plasterers and electricians carry out our repairs.



Routine repairs completed on time		2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2011/12 Target
	Emergency (within 24 hours)	96.84%	97.34%	97.5%
	Urgent (within 5 working days)	86.87%	97.69%	96%
	Non urgent (within 20 working days)	80.79%	83.09%	92%
Annual Gas Safety Checks completed on time		99.98%	99.98%	100%



This is what tenants think about our repair service.

	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Actual	2011/12 Target
% of tenants rating the repair service as good or excellent	92%	92%	97%
% of tenants rating the quality of the repair as good or excellent	90%	96%	97%

Community Involvement

We play an active role in arranging and helping to organise a huge number of events for tenants, their families and the communities in which they live.



The Big Green Birthday Bash

More than 300 tenants had fun in the sun on 23rd July 2011 celebrating our first birthday at our office in Blaina. The Big Green Birthday Bash had a "green theme" and involved making bird boxes and hanging baskets, as well as survival skills workshops.



Community Clean Ups

These are a great way for us to work with tenants and community groups to clean up our estates. Volunteers have tackled littering and fly tipping in Waunheulog, Rassau, Coedcae and Brynithel. We also provide skips to encourage people to clear any rubbish out of their gardens

The Design Factor

In February 2012, we worked with an enthusiastic group of volunteers to makeover the Nantylwch and Waundeg Community Flat.

The young women learnt about construction, project management and interior design before using their new skills to transform their community flat. The building has been given a new lease of life and those involved have had the training and experience to go on to further training or into employment.



"I was so impressed with my new skills that I went home and glossed my own stairs."

Ceri Harris, Design Factor volunteer

TPAS Cymru Participation Awards

For the second year running, we won first place in the 'Empowering People to Improve Services' category at the annual TPAS awards. The award was given for the work of our tenant auditor team.

"I really enjoyed the course and carrying out the surveys. They gave me a real insight into the organisation. I was so thrilled when I was offered a job."

Natalie Egan



The tenant auditors carry out telephone surveys with tenants who have had work done at their home and we use the results to improve what we do.

We also developed an Open College Network accredited course so our auditors could study for a qualification, improving their chances of employment. Eleven students achieved their OCN in Customer care and one of them, Natalie Egan, (pictured) has since successfully applied for a year's contract as a Tenant Liaison Officer with Tai Calon.

Working with Young People

Staff and more than 20 young people attended Action Camp, a three day activity weekend in Tenby. The camp offers those taking part the chance to join in lots of activities and learn about team building, healthy eating and budgeting.



Sheltered Housing Schemes

We have eleven sheltered complexes and are now actively marketing empty homes to encourage tenants to consider moving. Peacehaven Court, Llys Cwm, Llwydrhew and Llandafel Court have all had new kitchens and bathrooms fitted to meet WHQS.

We and the charity, RSVP, have set up a 'Welcome Friends – Befriending Scheme' at Llandafel Court and Davey Evans Court. The scheme aims to address loneliness and isolation among people aged 50+.



Older Persons Day at Llanhilleth Institute

On 30th September 2011, we took part in a day dedicated to older people in Blaenau Gwent. The idea was to offer support and information, everything from funding for community groups, to how to report a repair and money advice.

Timebanking

In November 2011 we launched our Timebanking scheme. The credits can be spent on a range of activities and events which can be enjoyed by people of all ages. Our scheme is unique as the rewards on offer are all donated by local organisations, including:

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's Leisure Centres, Supertubing in Ebbw Vale, Coleg Gwent and Ebbw Vale Institute (EVI).

We also fund day trips, like this one to Techniquet, which volunteers and their families can attend in exchange for vouchers.

"It is nice to think that we had a treat because I had done some work for Tai Calon."

Jen Griffiths, Ebbw Vale

"The scheme is well worth it."

Mike Roberts, Ebbw Vale



"The community garden has really lifted all our spirits and given every one their own area to sit and enjoy."

Gareth Hughes, Glanffrwyd Court, Ebbw Vale

"The grant has meant we could buy the tools and equipment our volunteers needed."

John Hill, Parc Nant y Waun
– The Friday Project

Environmental Improvement Fund

Community groups can apply to our Tenant Compact Group for a grant to carry out environmental improvements in their area. The Group, with support from our Community Investment and Involvement Team, has awarded almost £25,000 to projects including £3,000 to build an Observation and Information Centre at the Terence Garden in Brynmawr (pictured).



Estate Management

Neighbourhood Walks:

We encourage tenants to join us on our weekly walks around our estates. The aim of the walkabouts is to spot problems like littering and graffiti and to identify areas for improvement. Some of the work we have done, following a walkabout, has included providing "dog waste" bins, installing CCTV and putting up fencing and barriers to stop "off road" bikes accessing areas.



Estate management inspections:

In August 2011 we appointed two additional Neighbourhood Assistants and they carry out regular garden inspections on all our 290 streets.

	August 2011	March 2012
Green Streets (well maintained)	147	209
Amber Streets (Needs some work)	107	67
Red Streets (Poor condition)	36	14

Anti Social Behaviour

We will not tolerate anti social behaviour and take a firm, but fair stand in tackling it and its causes. Between April 2011 – March 2012 we had 269 recorded cases of anti social behaviour of which:

These include:

- 114 were complaints about noise. The highest number of any of the categories.
- 41 were related to substance misuse
- 26 were incidents of domestic abuse and violence.

Compliments and Complaints

We enjoying hearing from you when we get things right, but we also want to know when things didn't go so well, so we can do better next time.

Number of Compliments

2010/11

71

2011/12

63

Number of Complaints		
Service Area	2010/11	2011/12
ASB	8	10
Adaptations	3	5
Allocations	18	4
Communication	1	4
Customer Service	8	2
Improvement Works	17	46
Neighbourhoods	6	11
Other	17	17
Out of Hours	7	2
Relets	19	16
Repairs	180	98
Technical Inspections	14	25
Technical Staff	5	4
TOTAL	303	244

**% of complaints dealt with
in agreed timescale 99.2%
against a target of 100%**



The Board 2011/2012

The Board decides the policies and direction of our business. It also monitors our progress in meeting those objectives and targets.

The Board is made up of 15 members, 5 tenants, 5 independents and 5 council nominated members.



Philip Crozier
Independent Board Member
and Chair



Fred Davies
Independent Board Member,
Vice Chair and Chair of the
Assets Committee



Elaine Townsend
Tenant Board Member and
Chair of the Performance
Audit and Risk Committee



Julia Gregg
Tenant Board Member



Philip White
Tenant Board Member



Roy Jones
Tenant Board Member



Margaret Retallick
Tenant Board Member



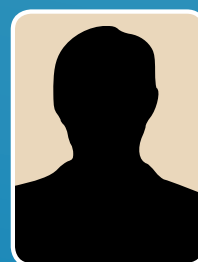
Godfrey Thomas
Council Board Member



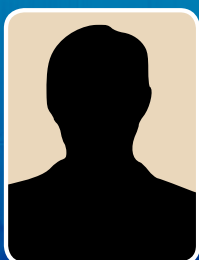
John Williams
Council Board Member



Shirley Ford
Council Board Member



David Rocke
Council Board Member



Peter Abbott
Council Board Member



Nigel Perring
Independent Board
Member



Andrew Bateson
Independent Board
Member



Steve Porter
Independent Board
Member

Staff

Our staff have helped make us the success that we are. In return we are determined to help them develop their skills for the benefit of tenants and our communities.

They are also involved in fundraising activities. Our charity of the year was "In the Pink" and we raised £1,102.60 through a number of events, including "dress down days". We also collected £1,046 for BBC's Children In Need, Comic Relief and Macmillan Cancer Support.



Partners

Tai Calon can only achieve its aims by working together with tenants, staff and partnership organisations.

Our partners include:

Aneurin Bevan Health Board
 Bellevue Practice
 Blaenau Gwent
 County Borough Council
 BRfm Community Radio
 BTCV
 Care & Repair
 Communities 2.0
 Communities First
 Genus Consortium, Contractors
 Go Wales
 Gwent Police
 Haines Watt LLP
 Heads of the Valleys Partnership
 Hugh James
 Insight for Organisations
 Keep Wales Tidy
 Morgan Cole
 Orbit Group Limited
 Smart Money Credit Union
 South Wales Fire
 Trowers & Hamlin
 Valleys Regional Parks
 Welsh Government
 Young Wales



Thank you to all of our partners - without your support we could not have achieved the successes we have.



Financial stuff

Reading the accounts

How to find some of the key figures

The figures quoted in this report are extracted from the Statutory Accounts for Tai Calon Community Housing Limited.

Figures without brackets show money coming into Tai Calon; those within brackets indicate money going out.

The first key figure is that for “income” at the top of the Income and Expenditure Account. This shows that Tai Calon received just over £19million in 2011-2012. More than £18.5m came from rents and service charges.

The “operating costs” figure shows that the services we provided to tenants cost a total of more than £17.9million. This figure includes items such as the cost of running our housing services, our repairs service, our office and the salaries of staff.

Tai Calon also receives £4.2million in grants from the Welsh Government. This was secured as part of the agreement to transfer homes to Tai Calon from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and with additional funding enabled us to bring all our homes up to WHQS. After taking other income and

expenditure into account, this left us with a ‘surplus for the year’ of £1.180 million before taking into account our expenditure on Major Works (WHQS works), i.e. our expenditure was £1.180 million less than our income.

The figure at the top of the Balance Sheet shows the value spent on refurbishment of homes through WHQS. Although much of our housing stock is old, their worth (shown under “tangible assets: Housing properties”) has increased by £7.147m. This increase has been created by the work on tenants homes since transfer.

Summary Financial Statements

Income & Expenditure Account

	For the period ended 31 March 2012 £'000	For the period ended 31 March 2011 £'000
Turnover	19,334	11,900
Operating costs	(17,924)	(10,529)
Operating surplus	1,410	1,371
Surplus on sale of fixed assets	635	305
Interest receivable	3	1
Interest payable and similar charges	(868)	(591)
Exceptional income / (expenditure)	(0)	(112)
Surplus/(deficit) on ordinary activities	1,180	974

Balance Sheet

	For the period ended 31 March 2012 £'000	For the period ended 31 March 2011 £'000
Housing assets	10,939	3,792
Other Fixed assets	1,486	1,599
Current assets	3,202	2,717
Current Liabilities	(13,334)	(7,141)
LGPS Pension Liability	(4,476)	(1,796)
	(2,183)	(829)
Capital and reserves	(2,183)	(829)



Plans for next year

- The next stage of WHQS/CESP – we will deliver 1,540 kitchens, 1,330 bathrooms, 500 heating systems, 570 rewires and 726 roofs. We will also update 1,000 windows and doors and complete external wall insulation on 790 properties.
- Help tenants and communities adjust to changes being introduced by Welfare reform.
- Introduce Neighbourhood Managers, who will manage a specific area and will be responsible for allocating homes, carrying out neighbourhood walks, tackling anti social behaviour and caring for the needs of tenants in their area.
- Carry out a full review of our sheltered housing.
- Begin our Environmental Improvement Strategy to improve communities and the lives of people who live and work in them.
- Continue to reduce the number of empty homes.
- Create even more jobs and training opportunities for tenants.
- Achieve external accreditation for our governance systems by the Governance Forum.
- Introduce an Integrated Repairs Service. A dedicated team will monitor the progress of a repair from when it is reported to it being completed.



If you would like this booklet on audio CD, in Braille, in large print, in an alternative language or in a format you can read on a PC please contact us.

Os hoffech gael y llyfryn hwn ar CD sain, mewn Braille, mewn print bras, mewn iaith arall neu ar fformat y gallwch ei ddarllen ar gyfrifiadur personol, cysylltwch â ni.

Jeśli chcesz broszury na CD audio, w alfabecie Braille'a, dużą czcionką, w innym języku lub w formacie można odczytać na komputerze prosimy o kontakt.



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