



Cartref newydd i chi
Cartref newydd i'ch gyrfa

Dyma'r sector **Tai**

This is **Housing**



barcud

NEWSLETTER
September 2022



PRIFYSGOL
ABERYSTWYTH
UNIVERSITY

Message from Steve Jones Group Chief Executive

Dear all

I hope you've had a chance to enjoy the summer and the fabulous weather during the school holidays.

It's been a hectic few months for Barcud with our attendance at the Eisteddfod, a Staff Conference and the Group AGMs. Each event allowed us to connect with tenants, stakeholders, partner agencies and colleagues in large-scale activities for the first time in over 2 years. It was a pleasure to meet people, discuss issues and hear some heart-warming stories about our work and the difference we make. We don't always get everything right, but having conversations about our work and the support on offer gives us solid foundations for our work going forward. We welcomed MPs, Senedd Members and Councillors from Ceredigion and Powys to strengthen our partnerships and to discuss Barcud's developments and vision for the future. It's also great to see Estate Inspections starting again.

The cost of living crisis is on everyone's mind. I'm delighted that our Cynnal Team have put together some great advice and support.

You'll find this on page 4. Please contact our team if you are having difficulties and are worried about your financial situation. They have already helped hundreds of people and are here for all Barcud tenants throughout Ceredigion and Powys. We are here to support our tenants and colleagues.

This newsletter also has a Barcud Monitoring Group update, the latest on the Renting Homes Wales Act, sheltered schemes news, results from this year's Garden Competition and much more.

If you have any questions about Barcud, please send them to post@barcud.cymru. Our Customer Services team will do their very best to help out.

Take Care

Steve Jones



To Contact Barcud

By Phone

Call 0300 111 3030

Press 1 (previous TC tenants)

Press 2 (previous MWA tenants)

New Tenants of Barcud?

Want local information on our work?

Press 1: If you live in Ceredigion

Press 2: If you live in Powys

By Post

Barcud, Unit 4, Pont Steffan Business Park,
Lampeter, Ceredigion SA48 7HH

Online

barcud.cymru

Fill in the 'contact us' form from our website

Email: post@barcud.cymru

Facebook: Barcud

Twitter: @taibarcud

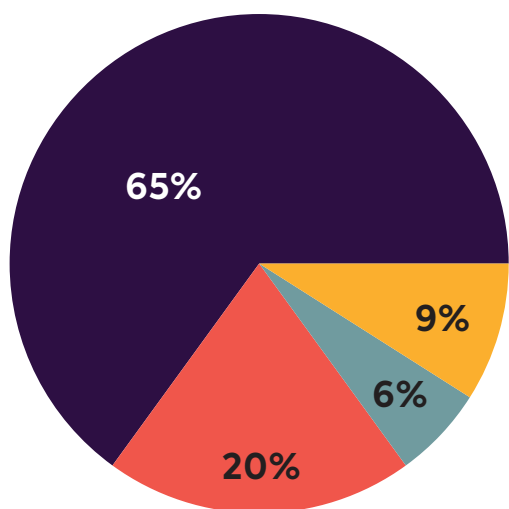
Medra Appointments

Following tenant consultation, we now offer Medra appointments for repairs up until 5pm. Call 0300 111 3030 with your repair details and a member of the Medra team will call you back to arrange an appointment for a time that's convenient for you.

Energy Saving Tips when Cooking

*Turn down the hob once the
saucepan has come to the boil*

Welsh Housing Quality Standard Compliance March 2022



Fully Compliant

Residents' Choice

The tenant has specifically requested that the Association does not change, improve or replace an element which is failing WHQS. It is only where there is a health and safety risk that we would insist that the component is changed.

Physical Constraint

A component fails because of the size of the dwelling or landscape of the adjoining land, e.g. a small kitchen which doesn't adhere to the space or storage requirements.

Timing of Remedy

A component fails to meet the standard but is programmed for replacement within the next five years.



Annual Report

Barcud's Annual Report for 2021/2022 is now available on our website: www.barcud.cymru/corporate-documents/

The Annual Report gives a complete overview of the association's performance against the seven strategic objectives and what this means to our tenants and staff. It also has a yearly summary provided by Barcud's subsidiary companies; Care and Repair Powys, The Care Society and EOM. It is essential to reflect on the positive contribution made by all involved with the Group.

Barcud AGM

The Barcud AGM was held in Creuddyn, Lampeter, on Thursday, 22nd September. This year's event was held in person, with an opportunity to dial in for the live feed.

Kate Curran (Group Director of Corporate Services) presented our financial position as an association. The first full regulatory assessment by Welsh Government in April 2021 resulted in a pass/pass award. This is the highest possible award that can be achieved and reflects all the hard work and commitment of every department within Barcud. Kate also reflected on developments within the Strategic Objectives.

Steve Jones, Group Chief Executive Officer, spoke about the challenges facing Barcud as a business and for tenants and staff this coming winter.



Cost of Living Grants

You may be eligible to get a payment to help you with the cost of living if you get certain Benefits or Tax Credits. There are certain qualifying conditions for all cost of living grants. Payments will be paid to you automatically by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) or Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC), your local Council and your Energy Supplier. All payments shown below are not taxable and will not affect the benefits or tax credits you are getting.

Grants You Do Not Have To Apply For

Low Income Benefit

Universal Credit, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit

You should have already received your initial payment of £326 in July 2022

The next payment of £324 is due to be paid by 31 October 2022

Low Income Benefit

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

People receiving Tax Credits have to wait longer for their HMRC payment, the first payment of £326 will be in the autumn and the second payment of £324 during the winter

Disability Benefits

DWP Grant payment of £150 paid to anyone receiving Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment or Attendance Allowance after 20 September 2022

Pensioner Cost of Living Payment & Winter Fuel Payments

Households that receive the Winter Fuel Payment - which is worth £200-£300 and is paid to nearly all homes with at least one person of pension age - will receive an additional £300 in November or December

Energy Bill Support Scheme

All households will get a £400 grant that will reduce energy bills in 6 monthly instalments, a reduction of £66 in October & November then £67 a month from December to March 2023

Direct Debit - automatic credit to account

Standard Credit/Payment Card - automatic credit to account

Smart Payment Meter – automatic top up on account

Traditional Payment Meter – Voucher to be cashed in

Grants You Have To Apply For

Wales Winter Fuel Support Scheme

Available from September 2022

Your Local Authority will send you a letter to apply for this after 26 September 2022

This is a One-Off £200 cash payment

If any tenant(s) need assistance to apply for the Wales Winter Fuel Support Scheme please contact the Cynnal Team on 0300 111 3030

Council Tax Cost of Living Grant

Powys Council area

The Council Tax Cost of Living grant is for £150 for tenants in properties with Council Tax Bands A, B, C & D

The deadline date for applying for this grant is 30 September 2022

If any tenant(s) need assistance to apply for Council Tax Cost of Living Grant please contact the Cynnal Team on 0300 111 3030

Warm Home Discount

The new 2022/2023 scheme opens up in November 2022

This is a Credit payment of £150 to your Electricity Account in Feb/Mar 2023

To apply for this Discount you need to check your Energy Suppliers website

If any tenant(s) need assistance to apply for Warm Home Discount please contact the Cynnal Team on 0300 111 3030

Welsh Water Help You Scheme

Hafren Dyfrdwy Here2Help Scheme

If you are struggling with payments for your water charges you may be eligible for a reduction in the weekly/monthly payments.

If any tenant(s) need assistance to apply to Welsh Water / Hafren Dyfrdwy for help with water charges please contact the Cynnal Team on 0300 111 3030

Cost of Living Help and Advice

Food Banks Ceredigion Area

Jubilee Storehouse Food Bank, Aberystwyth

Lampeter Food Bank

Llandysul/Newcastle Emlyn Food Bank

Aberaeron Food Bank

Cardigan Food Bank

Food Banks Powys Area

Welshpool & District Food Bank

Newtown Salvation Army – Food Bank

Llani Pantri – Llanidloes Food Bank

Llandrindod Wells Food Bank

Brecon Food Bank

Cultivate – Pen Dinas, Newtown

Help with Landline/Internet & Mobile Phone Charges

There are several schemes with Landline/Internet & Mobile Phones charges that are available to people in receipt of certain Benefit payments. Refer to:

bit.ly/3Kn460V

Example: VOXI uses the Vodafone Network, they will give you unlimited data, call and texts for £10.00 a month

Energy Saving

If you are caught in a contract or unable to meet your monthly agreed amount, why not give the provider a call to explain your situation and that you are unable to meet the costs and try to negotiate a more affordable contract:

bit.ly/3cfJT0F

bit.ly/3dTy7cz

Grants may be available to help you pay your energy bills – check what your energy supplier is offering. Use the weblink below to get a table and check your energy supplier:

bit.ly/3dKdShI

Conduct a benefit check you may be eligible to some benefits link below:

bit.ly/3ALZ8Yo

Heating Oil Syndicates/Clubs

If you live in a rural area and use oil, consider joining a Fuel Club, where you can buy oil in bulk with your neighbours, and share the savings. Fuel clubs are oil syndicates where the community purchase their oil together in order to save as much money as they can. You can save as much as 8p per litre if you join a fuel club:

bit.ly/3wurbsT

bit.ly/3KkmDLc

bit.ly/3QX1v0o

Pre-Payment Meter User

Are you struggling to manage your pre-payment meter, is the cost of energy causing you and your family to feel that you are in crisis?

Contact the Cynnal Team on: 0300 111 3030 and we can refer you to your local Citizens Advice Bureau for consideration for Fuel Bank Vouchers.

Debts & Advice

Contact the National Debt Line on:

[0808 808 4000](tel:08088084000)

Contact Step Change on:

[0800 138 1111](tel:08001381111)



The Cynnal Team at Barcud

[0300 111 3030](tel:03001113030)



Are you struggling with finances?
Are you finding it difficult to manage your home?
Do you need extra help with managing your tenancy?

The Cynnal Team is here for you.

They can offer advice and support and signpost you to help. They can also share the burden with filling forms and guiding you through the system.

Please don't get into further debt. Call customer services and ask for the Cynnal Team.

Estate Inspections Presteigne

Members of the Barcud Monitoring Group carried out three estate inspections in Presteigne, Powys, in July 2022. Staff from Barcud accompanied the group of tenants to carry out the inspections. It was a lovely sunny day and the three estates were a mix of style and different build dates, from the early nineties to this year.



During the estate inspections, tenants identified a vehicle that was possibly abandoned, some signage required and some overgrown areas that needed attention. They were also interested in a “Smart Street Light” installed on the newest development powered by solar and wind. It currently monitors rainfall and the bio-retention areas on the estate and will send maintenance alerts back to Barcud.

The estate inspections are just one of the many ways tenants help to monitor services throughout Barcud, and we really appreciate their input. If you are interested in becoming involved with Barcud and helping to improve the services we provide to you, please get in touch. Either phone 0300 111 3030 or e-mail post@barcud.com

Grand Piano

Many residents at Bodlondeb Sheltered Scheme in Llanidloes gather in the communal lounge, not just for meal times or meetings, but to socialise with each other and visitors.

There has been a piano in the lounge for some time. Recently, one of the residents has been playing it regularly for the enjoyment of the other residents.

Unfortunately, the piano hadn't been tuned for a very long time. A request was made by the residents to see if we could organise for the piano to be tuned as part of our Community Benefits funding. Thankfully, this was done in July by Stuart Jones Piano Sales, Newtown. The residents can get the best sound and enjoy the piano even more now that it is in tune!



*Energy Saving Tips
when Cooking*

Batch cook once, eat twice (or more)



barcud

Tenant Conference

Thursday 20th October 2022
10:30am – 2:00pm

“Barcud – Here to Help”

Come and hear about Barcud Monitoring Group and find out more about:

- LoRaWAN - Long Range Wide Area Networks – how they work
- Benefits and support – how Barcud can help
- Energy price cap explained and what help is available
- Barcud’s priorities

FREE lunch & refreshments!

FREE prize draw!

FREE transport!

Help with childcare costs!

Aberystwyth Town Football Club

**Park Avenue, Aberystwyth,
Ceredigion SY23 1PG**

If you are attending have any special dietary requirements,
and/or need FREE transport please contact

0300 111 3030 by Friday 14th October

Please note the next Tenant Liaison Forum
will be held in Newtown.

BROSTA Lottery Funding

Broteifi Tenants and Residents Association (BROSTA) has been awarded £10,000 National Lottery money, which will help fund activities and events for those living in the sheltered scheme in Cardigan.

Sonia Lawrence, Chair of BROSTA, said; “This funding will help with the cost of events and ensure that all tenants in our association have the opportunity to get involved and enjoy the many activities we have planned”.



TPAS Tenant of the Year!



Huge congratulations to the Chair of Barcud’s Monitoring Group – Paul Clasby – on winning the TPAS Cymru ‘Tenant of the Year Award’ for 2022.

The award was presented at TPAS annual ceremony in Cardiff on 6th July. After the constraints of Covid, it was great that Paul could attend in person and enjoy the well-deserved praise.

This is terrific news and an acknowledgement of Paul’s hard work with the Monitoring Group supporting Barcud tenants and colleagues.

Sue Thomas, Barcud’s Senior Tenant Involvement Officer, attended the event with Paul and his wife, Anita.

Energy Saving Tips when Cooking

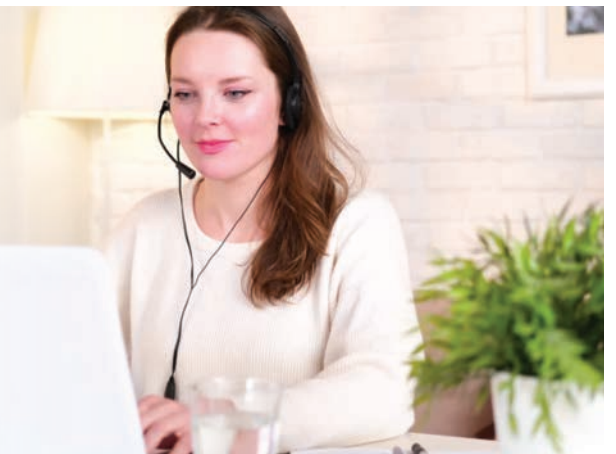
Use the same pan as the size of the hob

Mini Satisfaction Survey

This November, you may receive a phone call from a Barcud staff member who will conduct a mini satisfaction survey to find out what you think of our services.

The questions are Welsh Government standard questions. All associations across Wales are expected to ask their tenants these questions annually. It will only take a few minutes, and the results will be published in our next newsletter. They will also be compared with other housing associations across Wales.

We hope you will help us with these surveys, and thank you in advance for your support.



Message from the Barcud Monitoring Group

Greetings, fellow tenants.

As ever, the Group has been busy over the past few months, and I would like to thank the members for their dedication and eagerness to work in partnership with Barcud to benefit all.

Other than our regular activities, which include monthly meetings with Barcud, relet and estate management inspections, the officers of the Group have met several times with the Barcud Board as well as submitting our views to Welsh Government on their proposed Welsh Housing Quality Standards 2023 of which the main focus is on delivering Net Zero and affordable warmth. In theory, we welcomed the Welsh Government proposals, but the proposed timescales and lack of financial support from Welsh Government is of grave concern as there is a limit to how much our rents can pay for before having to be increased by Welsh Government. We also felt that Welsh Government should not rely on social housing tenants to deliver Net Zero and that all forms of housing in Wales should also be included. We look forward to seeing how Welsh Government will proceed following this initial consultation.

On behalf of the Group, I would like to say a very big thank you to the tenants and staff who attended our first in-person Barcud Tenants Liaison Forum in early July. We held the event in the Aberystwyth Football Club, and it was a pleasure to welcome tenants from both Powys and Ceredigion. It was evident how much tenants and staff had missed meeting in person and the atmosphere was truly wonderful. We would also like to thank John Jenkins, Chair of the Barcud Group Board, for his attendance and continued support of the Group and recognition of our work.

Following on from the success of the Forum, the Group has agreed to hold this year's Barcud Tenants Conference in person on 20th October at the same venue. I will be presenting the Group's Annual Report. We will have a presentation on some of the Smart technologies being adopted by Barcud, how the Barcud Cynnal Team can help, energy advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau and an update from Steve Jones, the

Barcud Group CEO. Information will be available shortly on how to book your place and the assistance available to get you to and from the event, so please keep an eye out. We value your support and hope to see you there. Due to the size of the venue, places may be limited, so don't delay.

The Group is always open to new members, and we are very keen to hear from tenants between the ages of 18 and 45, but all age groups are welcome. If you would like to attend one of our monthly meetings to see what we do and why the Group and its relationship with Barcud is unique within Wales, please contact Sue Thomas or Alisa Cakebread on 0300 111 3030.

Finally, the current cost of living crisis and increasing energy bills are causing us all concern. Barcud and the Barcud Cynnal Team are there to help where they can, so please don't suffer in silence and contact them sooner rather than later.

Take care of yourselves and I hope to meet some of you in person at the forthcoming Barcud Tenants Conference.

Paul Clasby
Chairperson, The Barcud Monitoring Group.



Garden Photo Competition 2022

We want to say a big thank you to everyone who entered the garden photo competition this year. In the words of the judges; "The standard was extremely high, and a real credit to the talent, inventiveness and dedication of all the gardening residents". Keeping everything looking so lovely must be a real challenge. Thank you to Newtown Gardening Club, who kindly agreed to judge the competition for us. All the entries were kept anonymous. The judges said there were some really excellent entries and they had to make some hard decisions to select the winners. We couldn't have run the competition without their expertise.

The winners of each category will receive a certificate in recognition of their hard work in their gardens and £50 National Garden gift vouchers. Happy spending! Well done to all of the winners.



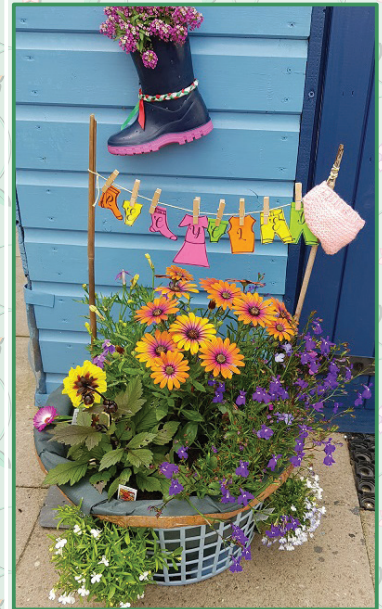
**Best Floral Display
(private garden)**

Mrs Morrow
Llandysul,
Ceredigion



**Best Hanging Basket,
Container or Window
Box**

Mr & Mrs Hodges-Small
Presteigne



**Best Floral Display in
an Unusual Container**

Mrs Parker
Machynlleth



Best Sheltered Scheme Garden

Mrs Middlehurst
Llys Hen Ysgol, Aberystwyth



**Best Community Garden
(not in a scheme)**

Gill Davies
Caersws

Best Insect-Friendly or Eco/Wildlife Garden Feature (under 16s) Joint winners



Skye Evans, Llanbadarn Fawr



Victor Wizezorek, Newtown

Best Vegetable Garden - Sadly, we had no entries for this category

Renting Homes Act 2016

What you need to know.

The Welsh Government is changing the laws around how tenants rent their homes in Wales. This includes private and social letting landlords throughout Wales.

The changes have no effect on your rent and will not cost you any more money.

The changes mean:

- More succession rights to pass on your home
- All properties must be safe and habitable
- Landlords must give tenants 2 months notice of any rent increases
- Landlords will be able to repossess abandoned properties without a court order, providing investigations have taken place

If you have any questions regarding the new Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016, please contact post@barcud.cymru or call

0300 111 3030

Change in Vocabulary

Tenant will become **Contract Holder** (the person renting the home)

Tenancy Agreement will become **Occupation Contract** (the actual document you receive when you move into your new home)

When will this happen?

In December 2022, your Tenancy Agreement will automatically swap over to an Occupation Contract and you will receive a copy of this for your records

Will my rent change?

No

Will I need to do anything?

You must read and familiarise yourself with the new Occupation Contract.

Energy Saving Tips when Cooking

Put a lid on anything that's being heated up

Eisteddfod 2022

Barcud had a fantastic week at the National Eisteddfod in August. It was great to welcome tenants in for a chat and to see all the children making the most of our activities. Many of the Barcud team who are learning Welsh volunteered in Maes D (Welsh Learner's Village) and practised their Welsh vocabulary whilst serving hot drinks in the Caffi during the week. This is important to us so we can offer services in both languages throughout our business.



Free School Meals

The rollout has begun of Welsh Government's policy to provide free school meals for all primary school children in Wales by 2024. September 2022 marks the start of the cooperation agreement between Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru in response to the rising cost-of-living pressures on families and our shared ambitions of tackling child poverty and ensuring no child goes hungry in school.



There are also wider benefits of free school meals, including promoting healthy eating across the school, increasing the variety of food that learners can eat, improving social skills at mealtimes, as well as improving behaviour and attainment.

Most local authorities will be able to deliver free school meals to Reception from the start of the autumn term, September 2022 and extend the offer to years 1 and 2 no later than the start of the summer term, April 2023.

If you've not already received information from your child's school, please contact them to make sure your child/children receive this when it's rolled out for their age group.

Rest assured that other associated benefits will not be affected.

Please note: older children currently in receipt of, or eligible to apply for, free school meals will be unaffected by the implementation of the universal scheme.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Sheltered Forum

The Forum, held on Friday 16th September, was jam-packed with talks and presentations.

Special thanks to Graham and the team from Welsh Blood Bikes for giving us an insight into the work of this fantastic charity. I'm sure that everyone was as surprised as me to hear that they run this outstanding service through charity donations alone. The work these volunteers do is very often life-saving. If you want more information on their fantastic job, please visit www.bloodbikes.wales.

It was also a pleasure to welcome back Annalise Mowbray with a display of her excellent sewing and design skills. Anna has just graduated from university with a degree in fashion design. I think some of the tenants might have taken a fancy to her display of hats!

The next Sheltered Forum will be on 11th November for the last get-together of the year. Bring your Christmas jumpers and Christmas hats and join in with some festive games, a sing-song and a buffet to end the year in style.

We have great fun, some lovely chats and there is always a warm welcome. If you live in a Barcud sheltered scheme and want to join us, please contact your scheme coordinator to arrange transport. Every Forum is held at Penrobyn, Aberaeron.

See you in November.

Stay safe

Tess x

