

SPRING 2023

barcud

NEWS



Message from Steve Jones Group Chief Executive

Welcome to Spring's issue of Barcud News. Thank you to all the team who have put this together and to the Barcud Monitoring Group for their support and input.

You will get more information on the Renting Homes Wales contracts in the next few months. Be sure to read through them as some changes will affect you as a contract holder (the new name for a tenant in the documentation) and Barcud as a Landlord.

As the cost of living crisis continues, homes for rent are in great demand. We're continuing our development programme and working hard to get empty properties back for rental as quickly as possible. If you know anyone looking for a home, encourage them to register on the Ceredigion or Powys County Council Housing Registers (see page 5 for the links).

The Barcud Monitoring Group recently supported a leaflet we produced on Damp, Mould and Condensation. This leaflet should have arrived on your doormat within the last few weeks.

We've also included some information on page 7 with 10 top tips on reducing the effects Damp, Mould and Condensation could have on your home. Everyone needs to take responsibility and if you have any issues with your property, get in touch with our customer services team as soon as possible.

Spring is well and truly on the way and it's great to see Alisa organising another Garden Competition for tenants. Gardening is great for our health and well-being and taking pride in our homes, gardens and communities always gives a welcome boost – especially in Springtime.

Take care, and enjoy the good weather, Steve



To Contact Barcud

By Phone

Call 0300 111 3030

Press 1 (previous TC tenants)

Press 2 (previous MWAH 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

Facebook: Barcud

Twitter: @taibarcud

post@barcud.cymru
(general enquiries)

consent@barcud.cymru
(any questions requiring consent)



Barcud colleagues supported a campaign to donate to all our local food banks over Christmas. It was great to support the super volunteers that helped us throughout the year.

Cover: Maes Dulais, Llanidloes Road, Newtown

Message from the Barcud Monitoring Group

2023 is already a busy year for the Group. We look forward to meeting some of you this year at our various in-person events in Powys and Ceredigion. Our first event will be held in Newtown in March (Tenant Liaison Forum), at which Steve Jones (Barcud Group CEO) will provide an update on Barcud. You can hear about Barcud's new Damp & Mould strategy, how the rent increases for 2023/24 have been calculated and an update from the BMG. There will also be stands from Housing, Maintenance and the Cynnal team which can help you with any matters you may have. Everyone is welcome, so please come along if you can.

As ever, we are looking for new members to help us with our activities. These include:

- Property Inspections before a new tenant moves in.
- Estate Management Inspections to ensure our estates are well-maintained and free of hazards.
- Telephone Surveys.
- Review tenant-related policies.
- Working with Barcud on new strategies and policies, e.g., the Damp & Mould Strategy.
- Monitoring the services we receive from Barcud to ensure they meet our (tenants) needs
- Meeting with tenants across Wales at Networking and Training events.

- Hosting and choosing presenters for our Tenant Liaison Forum and Tenants Conference events.

This is not a complete list of our activities; nearly every month, there is something new for us to be involved with.

If you have some free time each month and you are looking for something to do which could help all our tenants and Barcud, please consider joining us. The BMG has received National Awards and recognition over the past two years. We are the only independent tenants' Group in Wales. Join us and help us to build on our successes and current activities whilst making new friends.

If you would like to learn more or attend one of our scheduled monthly meetings, please get in touch with Sue or Alisa on 0300 111 3030 or via post@barcud.cymru

Take care and we hope to see you at some of our events this year.

Paul Clasby
Chairperson,
Barcud Monitoring Group.



VOTER ID

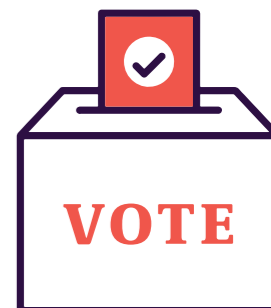
From 4 May 2023 you'll need to show photo ID when voting in person in some elections and referendums. You'll need it to vote in:

- UK Parliament by-elections
- Local elections in England (including councils, mayors, the Greater London Authority and parishes)
- Recall of MP petitions in England, Scotland and Wales
- Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales
- Neighbourhood planning referendums and Business Improvement District referendums in England
- Local authority referendums in England (including Council Tax increase referendums)

You can find the list of accepted photo IDs here:
www.gov.uk/how-to-vote/photo-id-youll-need

If you don't have an accepted photo ID, you can apply for a free 'Voter Authority Certificate' here:

www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate



Keep Your Drains Clear!

Plugholes and toilets are for used water, not rubbish.

Do not dispose of any of the following in sinks or loos;



Rent Update 23/24

You will have received your rent letters for the 2023/24 financial year in the post. The Welsh Government requires housing associations to set rents per its guidelines, emphasising affordability and ensuring homes and services are good value for money. Barcud has signed up for the Community Housing Cymru sector-wide affordability principles:

Affordable We will consider the total costs of renting homes and incomes to understand what is affordable for our tenants and ensure that tenants have the greatest opportunity to sustain their tenancies and thrive.

Sustainable We will set rents that allow us to continue to provide high-quality, safe, warm homes for the people who need them in the communities we serve.

Engage We will involve tenants to develop and review our approach to rent setting and inform our decisions on rents.

Fair We will work to ensure that rents and other charges are set fairly and our homes and services represent value for money.

Accountable We will be open, transparent and accountable when we make decisions on rent.

Even with considering the above, we realise that any rent increase can be hard to manage now. If you are struggling to pay your rent or need assistance in budgeting or benefit claims, please get in touch with our Cynnal team, who can offer advice or support.

Broteifi Cheque Presentation

Tenants at Broteifi Sheltered Scheme in Cardigan recently presented two cheques of £225 each to representatives from two local charities; Cardigan Cancer Care & Cardigan Cake and Clonc. They raised the money by holding a table sale.



Barcud's Property Capital Investment Programme - Our Tenant Influenced Priorities

Over the next three years as part of our Decarbonisation Strategy, Barcud will be focusing its capital investment programme on a fabric first approach. A fabric first approach means prioritising roofs, doors & windows and improving levels of insulation to increase the buildings overall thermal performance. All too often heat is lost through poorly insulated properties and this approach will reduce the heat loss and reduce energy bills.

Our Decarbonisation Strategy recognises the importance of a fabric first approach before the installation of new energy efficient heating systems. In short, we need to ensure the heat you pay for stays within your home rather than escaping due to poor insulation. Our aim is to reduce energy bills for our tenants and to tackle fuel poverty.

The Fabric First approach is the first stage of our Decarbonisation Strategy. Following this we will install new energy efficient heating systems when a heating system is due for replacement. Some of our tenants are currently helping us with trials of new heating systems such as air source heat pumps with solar Photo Voltaic (PV) panels or High Heat Retention Storage heaters which will help us greatly as we move forward. We are also keeping an eye on new advances in heating systems to ensure we adopt the most efficient system for you, our tenants. We also recognise that "ease of use," setting up the systems in line

with tenants' lifestyles and showing tenants how to use the new systems is of the utmost priority for you.

We are still committed to the replacement of kitchens and bathrooms when they reach the end of their life span and ensuring that your homes are structurally sound, damp free and safe to live in, as required under the Welsh Government Welsh Housing Quality Standards (WHQS) and the Renting Homes Act Wales 2016. However, our priority is fabric first ensuring that the buildings envelope has a high thermal performance. We will of course ensure that our responsive maintenance delivery is not affected by this approach and that all components are operating as intended.

We have consulted with our tenants and tenant representatives from the Barcud Monitoring Group on 'affordable warmth' concerns and we are in the process of developing an Affordable Warmth Policy to support our Decarbonisation Strategy as we recognise the importance of minimising energy costs for our tenants whilst trying to reduce our overall carbon footprint in line with the Welsh Government's Net Zero approach.

Our Decarbonisation Strategy & Action Plan has been developed in partnership with tenant representatives from the Barcud Monitoring Group. If you would like a copy of the Strategy, you can request a copy by ringing Barcud on 0300 111 3030 or by emailing post@barcud.cymru.

Finding a New Home

Do you know someone who needs to get on the housing register?

Barcud properties are let through the Ceredigion and Powys County Council Housing Registers. Here are the links to register.

www.homesinpowys.org.uk/

www.ceredigionhousingoptions.cymru/

Consent and Approval

If you need to ask for our permission to make any changes to your home or garden or anything to do with your new contract, please remember to use the consent@barcud.cymru mailbox.

Garden Photo Competition 2023

Enter your garden to win a £50 garden centre voucher.

We know that keeping your garden looking lovely takes a lot of hard work and dedication, and we want to see your beautiful gardens. We are giving you a heads-up so you can start planning your prize-winning flower beds, pots, hanging baskets and veg patches. The closing date isn't until 11th August, so there's no panic.

We are asking you to send in your photos again this year. All you have to do is take your camera for a walk in your garden and share your photos with us. They can be emailed to us or printed out and sent by post.

Gardening is great for your health and wellbeing. A colourful and interesting garden not only makes a difference to your property but can also benefit the community you live in and the environment.

Each category winner will receive a £50 garden centre voucher. The winners will be announced in the next edition of Barcud News. Best of luck, everybody.

The categories are:

1. Best Floral Display (private garden)

2. Best Hanging Basket, Container or Window Box

3. Best Vegetable Garden

4. Best Floral Display in an Unusual Container

5. Best Insect-Friendly or Eco/Wildlife Garden Feature (under 16s)

6. Best Sheltered Scheme Garden

7. Best Community Garden (not in a scheme)

Please send the photo of your entry, clearly stating the number of the category you are entering, along with your full name and address. For verification purposes, you must be in the photo with your entry. Photos must be submitted without any digital editing beyond cropping, adjustments to exposure, sharpness and minor colour correction.

You can find terms and conditions on our website: barcud.cymru

Please send your entries to the following:

Gardening Competition 2023

FAO: Alisa Cakebread, Barcud, Tŷ Canol House, Ffordd Croesawdy, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1AL or email Alisa.Cakebread@barcud.cymru

The closing date for entries is Friday, 11th August 2023



"Flowers always make people better, happier, and more helpful; they are sunshine, food and medicine for the soul."
– Luther Burbank

10 Top Tips for Reducing Damp and Moisture in Your Home

Make sure you extract as much of the moisture you create as quickly as possible. This means using your extractor fans in the kitchen and bathroom. But make sure your fan is actually working. Just because it is making noise doesn't mean it is working. Hold a piece of toilet tissue against the grill and see if it holds the tissue. If it doesn't, it's just a "noise maker." Contact Barcud if you have any issues with your extractor fan.

Keep your property warm. Heated air can hold more moisture than cool air. The warmer the air is, the more moisture it can hold. Try to keep your air temperature at a low background heat of 18°C+.

Don't use the boost button on your boiler. Using the boost for an hour is very inefficient and expensive, plus more than one hour is needed to substantially heat the air. Keeping the air temperature consistent is a lot cheaper and more comfortable; plus, as mentioned earlier, warm air holds more moisture.

Use trickle vents at the top of the windows, NOT wide open ones. We are constantly told to ventilate our houses, but this doesn't mean unregulated ventilation. Most radiators are sited below windows and we know warm air can hold more moisture than cold. So how do we get the best of both worlds? We open that little slit at the top of the window. This allows a certain amount of air into the property whilst allowing the radiator to heat the air up.

When showering, close the bathroom door, dry yourself in the bathroom, exit, close the door and let your extractor fans run for another 10 mins after you leave. Most extractor fans are connected to the light fitting and have a setting that allows it to run after the light is knocked off.

With our weather, it is not always possible to dry our clothes outside. Using a tumble dryer is extremely expensive. So if you must, dry them in a room with an extractor fan and keep the fan running. Remember to keep the door closed and turn the heat on to a low constant setting of 18°C.

Try drying your clothes at the warmest time of the day, when the natural air temperature is warmer than in the evening.

When cooking, use the extractor fan and keep a lid on the boiling pots. This will lower the amount of moisture going into the atmosphere.

When running a bath, run a little cold water first, just enough to line the bottom of the tub and then run the hot water. This will stop steam.

Boil your kettle under the extractor fan that is running.

Children's Page

Wordsearch

Find these words:

BUTTER - SUGAR - EGGS - FLOUR

SALT - MILK - LEMON JUICE

BAKING POWDER - CREAM - ICING

Name: Age: ...

Address:

.....

.....

R R E G S S R M M W Q L
 A E V H G A A N K E E F
 G D T G Z E L F E M G U
 U W E T R L N T O P C T
 S O V C U D W N I I R E
 S P T U U B J M C L A F
 M G P Y K U I C I N G Q
 C N K O I J W O P J X Q
 M I B C H S M L Y N L Z
 I K E N I B B B B M Z N
 L A P Z Q P K U V R H S
 K B B W G P A F L O U R

Complete the wordsearch, fill in your name, age and address and return it to:

Children's Page, Barcud, Unit 4, Pont Steffan Business Park, Lampeter, Ceredigion SA48 7HH

This competition is open to children who live in Barcud properties. A winner will be drawn from all correct entries on Friday 28 April 2023.

The winner's name will be published in the next newsletter. Good Luck!

Scandinavian Banana Bread Recipe

Ingredients

2 large eggs
 150g melted butter
 3 large very ripe bananas

Dry ingredients

250g plain flour
 100g nuts
 200g dried fruit
 2 tablespoons caraway seeds
 2 teaspoons baking powder
 1 teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda



Mix wet ingredients. Add to dry. Add to lined 2lb loaf tin. 160°C fan 40 to 50 minutes or until skewer comes out clean. Cool completely in tin.

If no eggs, use 1 extra Banana and 1 teaspoon vinegar.

If no butter, use 150ml flavourless oil.

Drawing Competition

We are inviting children of our tenants (up to age 12) to enter our summer drawing competition.

We are looking for your best A4 size drawings of "My House"

There will be prizes for our favourite entries. Remember to include your name, address and age on the back of your entry. We would love you to bring your entry to one of our summer family fun days held in May and August throughout Powys & Ceredigion this year.

Or if you aren't able to come and enjoy the fun at our events, you can post your entries to the following address - FAO Alisa Cakebread, Barcud, Ty Canol House, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1AL

We always love every single entry we receive, and we can't wait to see just how creative our Barcud tenants are.

Judging will take place in September and the winners will be published in the Winter edition of Barcud News.

Mini Satisfaction Survey

Many thanks to those tenants who helped with our recent phone surveys, telling us what you think about the service Barcud provides.

These were Welsh Governments standard questions and the results have been collated and reviewed and will help us focus on what areas we need to work on in order to improve the service we provide.

Please see below results of the survey, which we have compared with our previous survey which was carried out in 2021.

We will be submitting the results to the Welsh Government as part of an annual return, so that they can be compared with other Housing Associations across Wales. These results, as well as results from other Housing Associations, will be available on the Welsh Government website.

If you would like to be involved in more surveys, reviewing the service we provide, why not join "Pawb", the Home Forum - for more information, contact Sue or Alisa on 0300 111 3030 or email post@barcud.cymru

Question	2021 STAR Survey Results	2022-23 Phone Surveys	Trend
	Overall Satisfaction		
1 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by your housing association?	80%	85.5%	↑
2 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?	76%	83%	↑
3 Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your housing association deals with repairs and maintenance?	72%	80%	↑
4 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?	80%	83%	↑
5 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?	78%	87.5%	↑
6 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your service charges provide value for money?	64%	79.5%	↑
7 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your housing association listens to your views and acts upon them?	58%	70.5%	↑
8 Thinking about your home specifically, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your housing association provides a home that is safe and secure?	85%	91%	↑
9 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your housing association deals with antisocial behaviour?	53%	72%	↑
10 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with opportunities given to you to participate in Barcud's decision making processes?	65%	74.5%	↑
11 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Barcud gives you a say in how services are managed?	55%	72.5%	↑
	Overall		
12 To what extent do you agree with the following statement - "I trust my housing association"	68%	81%	↑

FAMILY FUN DAYS

FREE

COWSHACC, Welshpool SY21 7TE

Tuesday 30th May 11am - 2pm

Penparcau Community Hub, Aberystwyth SY23 1SY

Wednesday 31st May 11am - 2pm

FREE

Staff from Barcud and members of the Barcud Monitoring Group (who are fellow tenants) will be there all day for parents to come and have a chat.

Come & join us and have fun with a range of free activities to keep the children busy.



Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.

**Face Painting - Games
Dressing Up Box - Lego**

Free Refreshments

Plus Lots More!

If you have any questions relating to this event or require free transport, please contact

Barcud on 0300 111 3030

or email: post@barcud.cymru

TENANT LIAISON FORUM MEETING

Wednesday 29th March 2023 10.30am – 1.30pm

Hafan yr Afon, Newtown, Powys SY16 2NZ

Meet staff from:

Barcud Leadership Team
Housing and Support
Cynnal, Tenancy Sustainment Team
Repairs and Maintenance

FREE lunch & refreshments!

Come and hear about:

The Barcud Monitoring Group
Rent affordability and where it goes
Damp, mould and condensation and what to do
Barcud's plans

FREE transport!

Help with childcare costs!

If you are attending, have any special dietary requirements, and/or need FREE transport please contact Customer Services on 0300 111 3030 by Monday 20th March

Please note there is a pay and display car park nearby, you can claim the cost of parking back if you have a receipt

The next Tenant Liaison Forum will be held in Aberystwyth