



Enillwyr  
Cwbrcau Arfer Da  
2021  
Good Practice Awards  
Winners  
TPAS  
Cymdeithas Trefnwrdd  
Cymru



barcud

NEWSLETTER  
February 2022

# Message from Steve Jones Group Chief Executive



## Happy New Year

Since the last newsletter, we've celebrated Barcud's first birthday. It's been a hectic year and I'm very proud of all my colleagues and would like to thank everyone within Barcud Group, including its subsidiary companies, for all of their hard work during what has been another challenging year.

## Creuddyn

The end of 2021 saw the official opening of Creuddyn in Lampeter. The Business Centre has already found its feet and is an excellent asset for the community. The individual business units are already fully let with daily inquiries for the meeting spaces and hot desks. Barcud will use the conference facility to hold all future board meetings. Meeting rooms and hot desks are available for hire per hour. If you want any further information, don't hesitate to contact [post@creuddyn.cymru](mailto:post@creuddyn.cymru).

## Housing Summit Breaks New Ground

The newly opened Canolfan Creuddyn in Lampeter hosted the first-ever west Wales Housing Summit on Friday, 5th November. The hybrid conference, organised by Keith Henson, Rural Housing Enabler for Ceredigion and the boarders, brought together political parties, housing and finance experts, youth and community groups to discuss and debate the housing crisis facing rural communities in mid and west Wales.

We need to be at the heart of this conversation to support local people and our local communities. Quality, affordable housing to help our communities in mid and west Wales must be our priority. With Welsh Government investing even more in affordable homes, we need to ensure that we can offer secure homes for local people and look at new innovative ways of providing homes in our rural areas.

## COVID

We are now all too familiar with the restraints of the Covid virus has put upon us. It's been a challenging year for all but especially difficult for those who have lost loved ones. It was sad to see so many Christmas events having to be put on hold because of new restrictions, but I'm sure that is a small price to pay to ensure everyone's safety.

Our housing and maintenance teams are still working hard to support our tenants and continue carrying out visits as required.

Please be patient; our colleagues and their families are also coping with covid outbreaks.

## Cover Story

Congratulations to the members of Barcud Monitoring Group for winning the Judges Special Recognition Award in the TPAS Good Practice Awards 2021. This award recognises all the tenants' hard work in conjunction with the tenant participation team at Barcud. A superb achievement. It's great to get recognition for all the hard work achieved as we adapt to changes that came with the merger and Covid during our first year as Barcud.

## Christmas Donation

Barcud's Christmas donation this year was shared between the foodbanks and community fridges throughout Ceredigion and Powys. Each of the 13 projects received a cheque for £100 to help with the added strains of the Christmas period.

Here is Rhodri Beaumont, one of our Cynnal Team, presenting a cheque to Nicola King, Aberporth Community Fridge Coordinator. For more details on the project, please visit: [barcud.cymru/news](http://barcud.cymru/news)



# Barcud Monitoring Group Update

Hello everyone,

We hope you are well and finding time to smile at the small things in life, which give us pleasure despite all that is going on in the outside world.

Since our last update, the members have been really busy, and I wish to take this opportunity to thank them for their time and dedication. In October, the group hosted the first Barcud online Tenants Conference in which tenants had a chance to meet and speak with the Chief Executive and Directors.

The group also presented its first annual report, which you can read on the Barcud website: <https://www.barcud.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Barcud-Monitoring-Group-Annual-Report-2020-21-final.pdf>.

The group also held its first AGM. Vic Brown, Peter Deakin and I were re-elected as officers and a new member, Kelli DiCapri, was elected as the group's Secretary.

The members have fully participated in wide-ranging meetings with the Barcud Teams in which the tenants' views are not simply sought but are valued and used to shape current and future services. We were also involved in the first review of Barcud's Business Plan Objectives with the Barcud Board, Chief Executive, Leadership Team and Operational Management Team. This event also included a session with the Carbon Trust following their analysis of the carbon footprint of Barcud. Climate change and the need for decarbonisation are of utmost importance to Barcud. The group will be fully involved as this programme moves forward.

I am also pleased to report that the group's relet and estate management standards have been reviewed and adopted by Barcud. Members are once again checking empty properties before being let to ensure they are high quality and inspecting estates to ensure Barcud meets the defined service standards. As tenants, we receive the same services and forms of communication as you. This helps us quickly identify areas requiring improvement and bring them to Barcud's attention.



In mid-December, Barcud and the Barcud Monitoring Group received a Special Recognition Award for "Working as One" from TPAS Cymru. This was the first time TPAS Cymru had given this award. Both Barcud and the Monitoring group gratefully received it.

2022 is set to be another busy year for the group and Barcud, as the Welsh Government introduces its own Housing Regulations, its decarbonisation programme, including WHQS 2 and Barcud continues with its plans to improve our homes. No one within the Monitoring group or Barcud believes everything is perfect, and we know there is more to be done. We will continue to work together as things progress.

If you would like to know more about the group and our activities, you are welcome to attend one of our monthly meetings.

We are still looking to recruit members from the Machynlleth and Llandrindod Wells area, but all are welcomed.

If you would like to pop along, don't hesitate to get in touch with Sue Thomas, Senior Tenant Involvement Officer on 0300 111 3030 or e-mail: [post@barcud.cymru](mailto:post@barcud.cymru).

Please take the time to read the group's annual report on the Barcud website. Paper copies can be provided on request by contacting Customer Services or Sue.

Be safe, be well and please don't be afraid to contact Barcud if you require help or advice about your tenancy.

All the best  
Paul Clasby, Chairperson.



## 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](http://barcud.cymru)

Fill in the 'contact us' form from our website

Email: [post@barcud.cymru](mailto:post@barcud.cymru)

Facebook: Barcud

Twitter: [@taibarcud](https://twitter.com/taibarcud)

## Light up Christmas Event at Churchstoke



Tenants & Residents were invited to decorate the outside of their homes in a festive way.

With Christmas lights, window displays or anything that showed the Christmas spirit of Orchard Close & Ridgeway View estates in Churchstoke.

Residents worked hard to add a little sparkle to Churchstoke and made it a December to remember!

The Co-op Midcounties store in Churchstoke kindly donated some Christmas goodies, which were given to all households that took part.

It was lovely to speak to residents and the children on the estates and get into the Christmas spirit. The Christmas elves deliberated long and hard to choose the best one. A lovely hamper, again donated by Co-op Midcounties for the "Best Christmas Light Display", was given to one of the residents.

Thank you to Co-op Midcounties in Churchstoke for the donations and to all the residents who took part.



*Clive Bosel – Midcounties Co-op Churchstoke store*

## Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

The Welsh Government is introducing some significant changes to the way properties will be rented in 2022.

The Renting Homes Act 2016 is set to be introduced in July 2022 and will change how all Wales' landlords rent their properties.

The act aims to improve how properties are rented, managed and lived in. This will seek to make the renting process 'simpler and more transparent.'

Our team at Barcud are currently working hard behind the scenes to get everything updated on your behalf. There is currently no need for you to do anything and we will contact you in due course with any updates.

# Development Update

## News Bulletin for January

Happy New Year from the Development team.

Handover of 18 properties at Maes Corton, Presteigne took place on the 10th December, including 12 open market, four rent to own and two social housing properties. We expect the remaining 18 properties to be handed over to Barcud by March.

SJ Roberts have been the contractor at Maes Corton, Presteigne, with very positive initial feedback from purchasers and tenants. All the 12 open market properties have been reserved, with one completed. All the 14 rental houses have been allocated, with two already in occupation. Six of the ten Rent to Own properties have been assigned, with two 2 bed houses and two 2 bed bungalows still available.

Ridgeway View in Churchstoke work has been completed, with 6 of the ten properties occupied. So, four 2 bed bungalows as shown below are being marketed now.

The progress at Dol Dalis in Lampeter is also good: this consists of four 2 bed and four 3 bed houses. Morgan and Davies had marketed these properties just before Christmas with good interest received. The development is due to be complete in the early part of this year.

The development team can also report good progress on site at Maes Y Cledrau, Llansantffraid; Heol Dinas, Aberystwyth; Maes Llanio Blaenplwyf; and William Ainge, Welshpool, with exciting new sites in the pipeline for the coming year.



# Getting to Grips with Rubbish

Helen James (Senior Maintenance Officer) and Jo Hughes (Housing Officer) attended William Ainge Court on 18th November with Powys County Council's Waste Management operatives. Following concerns raised by tenants, a morning was spent addressing waste disposal issues, arranging additional bag provision for medical waste items and arranging assisted collections for tenants that required a bit of extra help.



# Thank You for the Thank You!

We're always grateful to receive praise, but when a tenant goes out of their way to contact us to thank one of our colleagues personally, it really does boost spirits. Thank you to Mr & Mrs G Edwards of Maes Arthur for their words of praise for one of the Medra team, Justin Quinn, after completing a carpentry job at their flat. The maintenance staff have worked through Covid and continue to support our tenants.

# Defibrillator

A defibrillator has now been installed at Rheidol Place Sheltered Scheme, Aberystwyth. This is the latest to be funded by the Barcud Community Fund.

Thanks to Rheidol Place tenant, Jean Davies, for getting the ball rolling and putting in a request.



# STEP Project Update

The Step Project has been up and running for six months and we have settled well into our office in Lampeter's Canolfan Creuddyn.



## What Has Been Happening

We have had 40 people registered with us in the last six months, taking the next step to get the skills, knowledge, and training they need to secure their dream job. We have helped Ceredigion businesses, small and large, find employees and pay salaries to help the businesses get back on their feet after the pandemic and get our participants back into employment. We deliver training in the fantastic training room in Canolfan Creuddyn, which has state of the art facilities that our trainers and participants enjoy. The free lunch we provide from the Town Hall Deli in Lampeter is also gratefully received. The courses we have delivered so far are Emergency First Aid and a six-week Digital Literacy Course.

The training courses have been a real success, with people gaining accredited training and certificates at no cost.

We have people from all over Ceredigion attending as we can pay for the travel to and from Canolfan Creuddyn in Lampeter and provide lunch.

## Good Luck in Your New Home!

On Monday, 17th January 2022, we completed our first rent to own property at our new development, Maes Corton, Presteigne, Powys. Congratulations to Mr Zinedine Griffiths-Haigh & Mrs Bethany Griffiths-Haigh, who have moved into one of the ten rent to own properties.

There are still 2 x two bedroom semi-detached bungalows available under the rent to own scheme within the new development. Applications for these properties are being managed by Morris Marshall & Poole. For more information, visit <https://www.morrismarshall.co.uk/property-for-sale/powys/ld8-2ld/2319682> or contact Morris Marshall & Poole directly to apply.



## Great News for 2022

We have had the go-ahead to pay for Driving Lessons for eligible participants. This means we can break down more of the barriers to work for the people of Ceredigion.



## Job Vacancies

We currently have vacancies for the following positions with local companies

**Finance Admin** - 16 hrs per week in Lampeter

**Receptionist** - 16 hrs per week in Aberaeron

**Groundworks and Joinery** - 16 hrs per week in Aberystwyth

**Property Assistants** - 16 hrs per week in Cardigan

**Admin Assistants** - 16 hrs per week in Aberystwyth

If you are interested in any of these vacancies, please get in touch. As this is an Active Inclusion Project part-funded by the European Social Fund, applicants must be 25 or over and long term unemployed or economically inactive.

Do not miss out! Call, e-mail or visit our Facebook page and speak to our team today to find out how we can help you get to where you want to be.



## Estate Inspections

The Barcud Monitoring Group members carried out two estate inspections in Newtown at the end of September 2021.

Staff from Barcud accompanied the group of five tenants to carry out the inspections.

The eagle-eyed group spotted some issues, including fly tipping, potential trip hazards and estate signage that needed to be updated to include the Barcud logo.

The group also commented that both estates were very well kept, particularly the exceptionally well maintained communal garden areas on one of the estates. One of the residents has lovingly cared for the gardens for many years. The estate inspections are just one of the many ways that tenants help to monitor services throughout Barcud, and we really appreciate their input.

If you are interested in becoming more 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](mailto:post@barcud.com)



## Repairs and Maintenance Update

All requests for repairs and maintenance should go through Barcud's Customer Services Team on 0300 1113030 or [post@barcud.cymru](mailto:post@barcud.cymru). Please note: Repairs and maintenance jobs will not be logged or completed if you call EOM directly to request work.

## Great Partnership for Energy Efficiency Helps Barcud Residents

### Case Study of a Mid Wales Resident

Megan sought advice from Ceredigion Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) due to the difficulty she was facing in heating her home. She lives in an off mains gas rural part of the County and due to the pressure on her income and expenditure during the pandemic, debts to her electricity supplier, as well as other debts she was experiencing as a result. She also had some old and failing kitchen appliances. Megan was facing the heat or eat dilemma.

Megan felt very worried and anxious as a result, so the problems she has facing were adversely affecting her well-being and her physical and mental health.

Through their work with Megan, CAB has been able to assist her in budgeting, stabilising her debts, and accessing food vouchers. Her debt to her electricity company of nearly £900 has been cleared in full by a grant. She has also accessed the £140 warm home discount to assist in paying her electricity this winter and has been added to the priority services register. Additionally, she has been helped with a successful grant application for a new energy-efficient electric cooker and a new energy-efficient washing machine. Megan has confirmed that her sense of well-being and resilience has improved significantly as a result.

Should you need help to assist with similar issues, then please contact;

CAB 01239 621974 – Mon-Thurs 9am-3pm



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# Housing Support Grant – Scheme Surveys

Many thanks to all the tenants in our Sheltered schemes in Ceredigion who took the time to complete these surveys. We received 194 surveys, with the following results.

|   | Yes | No | No Answer |
|---|-----|----|-----------|
| Do you feel the support you receive from your on-site scheme co-coordinator enables you to live independently in your home? | 192 | 2  | 2         |
| Do you think having the same dedicated on-site scheme coordinator helps you to access other services and support?           | 189 | 2  | 3         |
| Did you feel that the support you received from your on-site scheme coordinator helped you during the Covid pandemic?       | 183 | 5  | 6         |
| Would you feel concerned if the on-site scheme coordinator service was reduced?   | 178 | 9  | 7         |
| Are you looking forward to having community events and outside organisations back into your scheme?                         | 166 | 12 | 16        |

These results, along with your comments, have been used as part of the Housing Support Grant tender process to ensure your views are taken into account when shaping the future service. We will ensure that you are kept up to date with any further information as soon as we have it.

## Cold Callers / Scammers

We have recently been made aware of people knocking on doors saying they are Barcud staff or contractors when they are not. To keep safe, please follow the guidance below.

Only let someone in if you're expecting them or they're a trusted friend, family member or professional. Don't feel embarrassed about turning someone away.

Ask to see their identification card. All Barcud contractors and staff will have ID cards; you should always check someone's credentials - a genuine person won't mind. If you are unsure call us on 0300 111 3030.

Some other common scams are:

- **Bogus officials:** People claim to be from your utility company as a way of gaining access to your home. Always check the ID of any official, and if they're genuine, they won't mind waiting while you check.
- **Fake charity collections:** A fraudster may pretend they're from a charity and ask you to donate money, clothes or household goods.

Legitimate charities will all have a charity number that can be checked on the Charity Commission website.

- **Made-up consumer surveys:** Some scammers ask you to complete a survey so they can get hold of your personal details or use it as a cover for persuading you to buy something you don't want or need.
- **Hard luck stories:** Someone may come to your door and ask you to help them out with cash, ask to use your telephone or claim they're feeling unwell. The story is made up and intended to con you out of your money or gain access to your home.





## Affordable Phone & Broadband

If you are on a low income or receive means-tested benefits, you may be eligible for reduced-cost telephone and broadband services.

Various providers offer affordable services for eligible customers, which are outlined below.

BT has recently launched its home essentials package, which provides reduced-cost telephone and broadband for households who receive certain benefits. Various options range from between £10 to £20 per month.

Virgin Media's Essential Broadband package is available to existing Virgin Media customers who receive Universal Credit & provides broadband only for £15 per month on a rolling 30-day contract. Further details are available on BT's website.

As for mobile phone plans, various companies such as Three, Lebara, Smarty and Vodafone offer low-cost deals for between £5 & £6 per month for SIM-only with no special requirements to access them.

It's always worth shopping around & accessing any special tariffs that are available to keep connected.



## Rent to Own Scheme Supported by Welsh Government

Are you looking to buy your first home?

Struggling to save for a deposit?

Rent to Own Wales may be the solution.

Available soon: 8 new properties located in **Dol Dalis** just off the Llanfair Road on the edge of the University town of **Lampeter**. The properties under construction will be completed (Spring 2022) by T R Jones Ltd for Barcud.

The properties all of which enjoy fantastic views over the Teifi Valley include;

- 4 two bedroom semi-detached houses
- 4 three bedroom semi-detached houses

The Rent to Own Scheme provides individuals with the unique opportunity of saving up a deposit whilst paying market rent. The way the scheme works is you rent the property for a minimum of 2 years with the opportunity to purchase the property within 5 years. When purchasing the property you get back 25% of the rent paid over the duration of the tenancy and 50% of any increase in property value.

The semi-detached homes include a good sized kitchen/diner, lounge and WC/shower on the ground floor, first floor bathroom and good sized bedrooms, externally a rear garden with shed and off street parking.

Further guidance about the rent to own scheme is available on request from the sole agent. If you are interested please register your interest with Morgan and Davies who will advise you on the next step and provide full particulars.

To register your interest please contact Morgan and Davies (Lampeter office) on 01570 423623 or Email: [lampeter@morgananddavies.co.uk](mailto:lampeter@morgananddavies.co.uk)





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## TENANT LIAISON FORUM

**Thursday  
10th March 2022  
11.00am – 12.30pm**

This event will be held virtually and you will be able to attend the meeting via the RingCentral (Zoom) online meeting platform. This can be accessed using a computer, tablet or smartphone. If you do not have any of these you can still dial in, using a landline or mobile phone.

Places may be limited, so you must register to attend the Forum by Friday 4th March. You can do this by contacting: [post@barcud.cymru](mailto:post@barcud.cymru) or phoning: 0300 111 3030. Joining details for the Forum will be provided once you have registered.

Staff will be available if you need help and support or a “trial run” beforehand. Barcud will cover any reasonable cost incurred if you have to dial in.

If you have any questions that you would like to be asked at the Forum, or if you need any further information, please contact: [sue.thomas@barcud.cymru](mailto:sue.thomas@barcud.cymru) or phone 01570 424313.

This event will be recorded and may be made available via social media.

### Agenda

11.00 am  
**Welcome and update**

Paul Clasby  
*Chair, Barcud Monitoring Group*

11.20 am  
**STAR survey update  
Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016**

Eleri Jenkins  
*Group Director Housing and Support*

11.50 am  
**Comfort break**

12.00 pm  
**Where your rent goes**  
Kate Curran  
*Group Director of Finance & ICT*

12.20 pm  
**Question and answer session**

Steve Jones  
*Group Chief Executive*

12.30 pm  
**Thanks and close**