



Grŵp Cynefin

Mwy na thai • More than housing



Grŵp Cynefin Annual Report

2021-2022



A word from the Chief Executive

It was another challenging year in 2021-2022 as a result of the pandemic. However, with a new Leadership Team and Management Team in place, I would like to report that the year has been remarkably successful, with this Annual Report providing a snapshot of what has been achieved. The pandemic was not the only challenge for us as a business during the year, which saw the rise of further economic uncertainty with increases in the cost and limited availability of building materials, rising inflation rates affecting the cost of living and the ongoing housing crisis in our rural communities.

We have continued our work to support our tenants and customers, tackling issues such as debt, fuel and food poverty, social isolation and mental health, homelessness prevention, domestic abuse and access to work.

Over the year we have strengthened our commitment to the voice of our tenants and customers in our decisions as a business. There are now seven tenants on the Customer and Communities Committee plus two Board Members. Also continuing is the work of the Tenants Working Group, which meets weekly, and central to key business policy development and decision making.

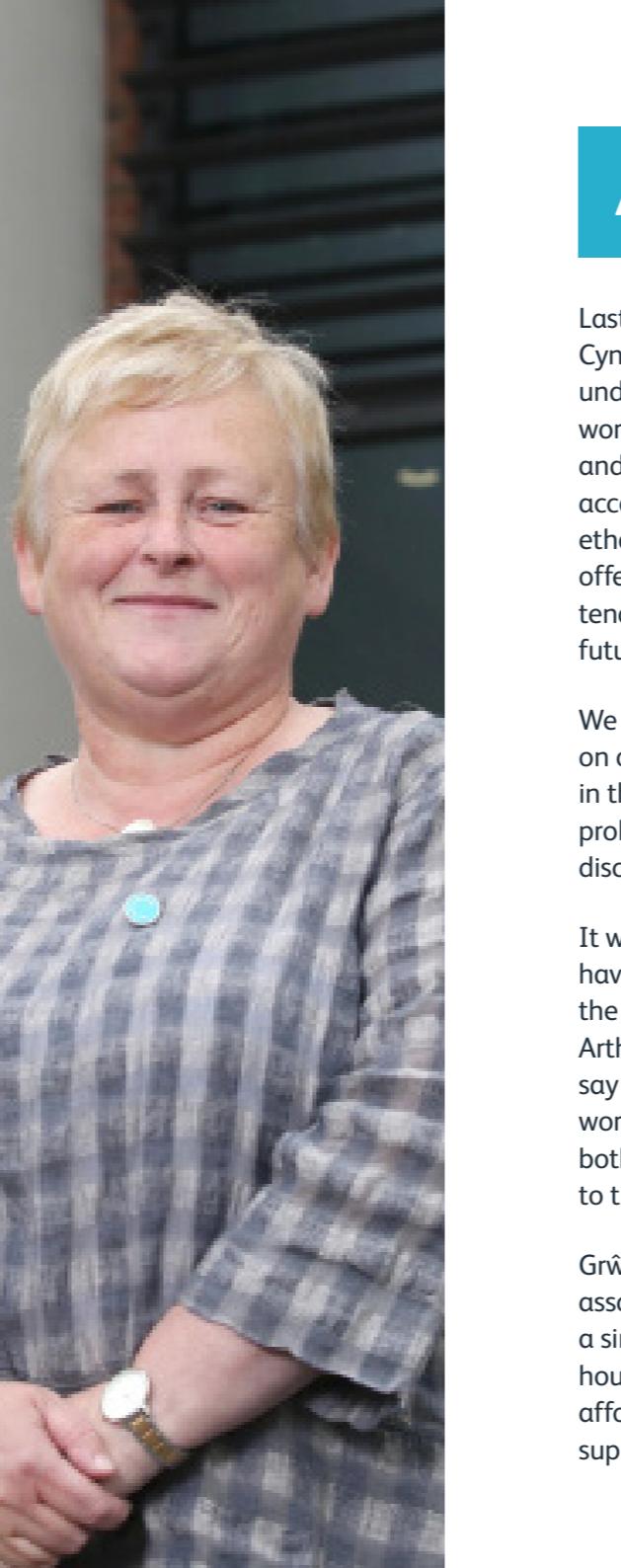
Continuous improvement is important to us. Thank you to everyone who has responded to our customer satisfaction questionnaires and participated in interviews during the year. We take the results and comments seriously when looking at how we can further improve our services. The fact that 88% of our tenants said that they trust Grŵp Cynefin as their landlord means a lot to us.

Shan Lloyd Williams

We have continued to invest in our current homes, new homes and work towards improving the energy efficiency of all our homes, lowering fuel bills. This work is done under our new sustainability strategy, a document which maps out our journey to zero carbon. It's great to hear that so many Management Board Members and colleagues are already carbon literacy champions.

Throughout and following the lockdowns, our colleagues' response has been fantastic. I would like to thank them all for going above and beyond expectations, showing their commitment not only to us as a housing association but also to protect our tenants, customers and our communities. Some great examples have been acknowledged through local recognition, national and UK-wide awards, cementing our position as a housing association with sound social values that we live by, and a progressive attitude.

My thanks also to our tenants, customers, partners in the local authorities, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, the Police Commissioner's office, our lenders, contractors, other housing associations and the Welsh Government for their co-operation and support. Thanks also to our Management Board Members, the Management Boards of our subsidiaries, and our Committees for their support and for showing clear strategic leadership. We have ambitious plans for the future and are committed to continuing to invest in our housing stock, in our communities and our commitment to provide 'More than housing'.



A word from the Chair

Last year was another busy year for Grŵp Cynefin's Board of Management, as we undertook our work thoroughly. That work includes challenging, questioning and making sure that every decision is in accordance with Grŵp Cynefin's strong ethos of continuously driving improvement, offering quality housing and services to our tenants and ensuring a strong and thriving future for the group.

We are lucky to have exceptional members on our Board – experts who are experienced in their field. This means healthy debate, probing and research and detailed discussions always.

It was an end of an era as two members who have made such a valuable contribution to the work of the board stood down – John Arthur Jones and Chris Schoen. I would like to say a huge thank you to them two for their work – always questioning and debating and both bringing expertise and a lively presence to the table.

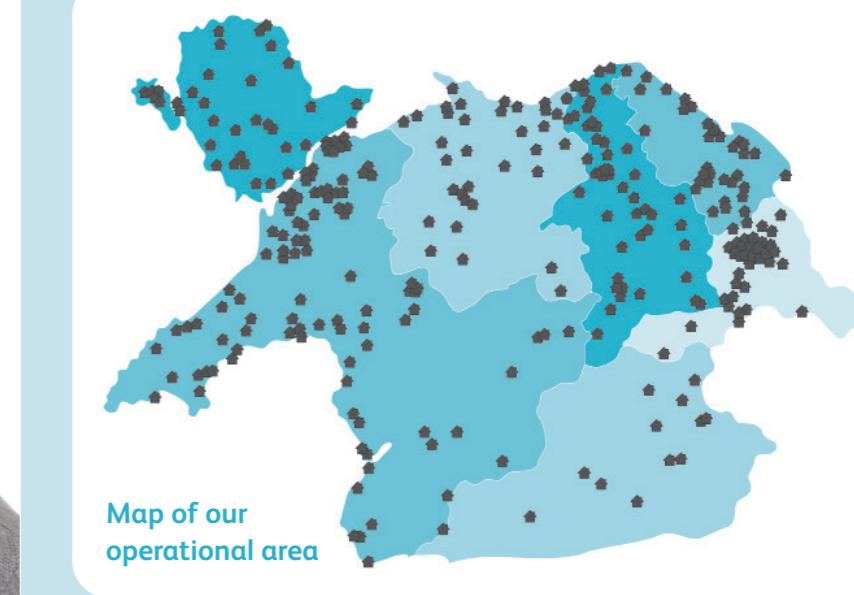
Grŵp Cynefin is not an ordinary housing association – no other association offers a similar range of services, from extra care housing to social housing developments, affordable homes, genuine care and practical support for tenants and customers and is a



Carys Edwards,

Chair,

Grŵp Cynefin Board of Management



Grŵp Cynefin operates in the six counties in north Wales and in north Powys. The map demonstrates the expanse of our operational area, which now includes the town of Machynlleth.

Each house icon on the map denotes a housing estate, individual houses, offices or centres owned by Grŵp Cynefin.

More than Housing

Tenants Meetings

44 Meetings were held during the year. On average 5 Tenants attend each week to discuss and give opinions on various subjects.

Roadshow



Traveled around **6** counties

Training and Employment

We assisted **51** tenants or customers to return to employment or training in the year 2021/22

18 'Steps to employment' applications worth £5,650.

“ It would have been very difficult for me to return to the workplace without the help of the grant. The financial contribution I had in order to attend interviews to start with and then to start in a completely new post, were essential. The ideas for preparing for the interview process were valuable and an eye-opener as well.



Visited
41
estates



Visited
785
properties



Spoke to
299
tenants

Community Grants

39 grant applications

Rewarding £ **12,269.03** to **34** groups

This year's projects included sports clubs, gardening projects, improvements to community facilities such as centres and gardens, and fun days.



To view the Community Initiatives Team's Annual Report, click [here](#)



y shed

- 77,000 Y Shed visitors
- Four new businesses
- One top tourism award
- 15 new retailers, Y Shed shop
- 93 per cent increase in sales overall
- 100 per cent increase in events

Digital Support

35 one to one sessions were held to boost their confidence in using digital equipment.

Cooking Project

10 people attend the courses regularly to learn basic home cookery skills, to build up confidence and help people get out again after the lockdown period.

Welfare Support

HWB Dinbych has been able to support a total of **20** individuals to get access to welfare support provided by Denbighshire Citizens Advice.

Employment Support

An Employment and Housing Officer from 'Denbighshire Works' is now based at HWB Dinbych two days a week to provide employment support and housing advice. Job clubs have been re-established following Covid with Communities for Work, Careers Wales, and Job Sense. **45** individuals were supported.

Congl Meinciau

92 Enquires for business support, of those **27** were new businesses and **65** were existing.



6 Grwp Cynefin

Tenants received business support

4 New jobs created



3 New tenants to the Enterprise Centre:

Therapi | Gill Bleasle Marketing | Ynni Llyn

32

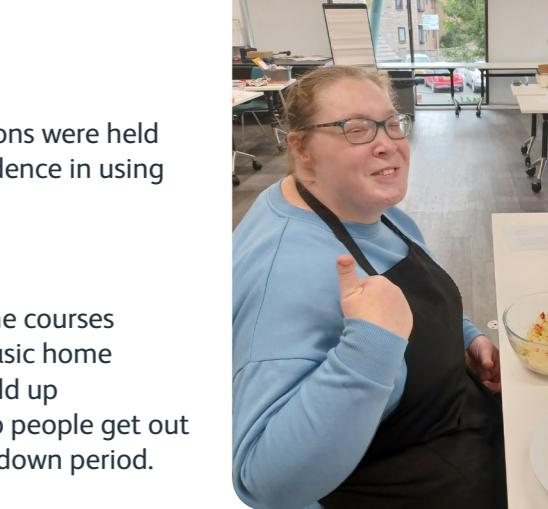
Total uses of the meeting room

73

Total uses of hot desking

£30,633.33

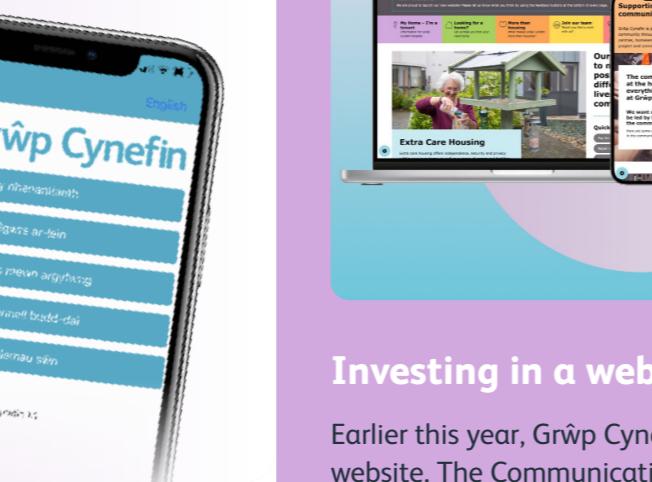
Financial Support received to local businesses



Communications

ApCynefin

To date, nearly 500 Grŵp Cynefin tenants have downloaded the ApCynefin tenants' app. It enables our tenants to manage their tenancy, request repairs and even report unsociable behaviour.



We will continue to promote this useful app that allows tenants direct access and control of their accounts. Tenants can also access the app to help budget and see if they should be receiving tax benefit or credits. The app will be used increasingly to communicate and share information with tenants.

Speaking our tenants' language

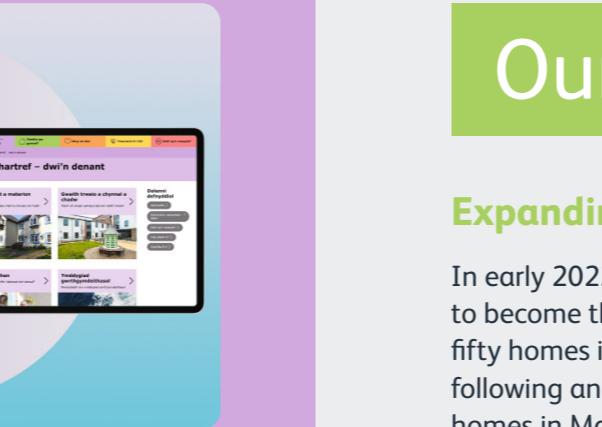
Grŵp Cynefin collaborated with Voicescape, a software business that helps improve ways to engage with tenants. This is the first time Voicescape, who have won awards for their work in the field, have provided such a service in Welsh.

Using a unique combination of automated technology, behaviour analysis and data science, Voicescape creates bespoke communications solutions to improve services. This will help Grŵp Cynefin to manage tenants' rent arrears, ensure they can pay their rent on time and reduce arrears, in Welsh, the first language of many of the tenants. The service also allows Grŵp Cynefin to automate engagement with tenants who prefer contact via voicemail and SMS text. The automated voice messages in Welsh are tailored, with the voicemails

recorded in a north Wales accent.

Claire Shiland, Group Director of Operations, Grŵp Cynefin said:
"As part of our commitment to making a positive difference to the lives of tenants and the development of sustainable communities, we wanted to engage with a partner who understood the pressures facing our team and tenants when it comes to finance and rental collections. It was a great team effort to get it up and running before the Christmas period and the initial impact has been impressive, which is also testament to the hard work of our team.

"Communicating in our tenants' chosen language is important to us and we are very proud that we together with Voicescape have managed to create this bilingual service."



Investing in a website

Earlier this year, Grŵp Cynefin launched its new website. The Communications Unit worked closely with Connect Internet Solutions to create a dedicated website that brings together a number of elements in an engaging, colourful and easy to navigate site.

The website is divided into sections clearly labelled with colourful tabs, from a dedicated tenants section offering information and advice, to information on our extra care and the latest on available housing. It also contains corporate information about us as a company, and our social media feed.

The website is fully accessible and continuously assessed to ensure that the information is accurate and accessible to all.

Our Homes

Expanding our operational area

In early 2022, Grŵp Cynefin succeeded in their bid to become the new landlord of more than fifty homes in the Machynlleth area. This was following an offer to bid for the transfer of 53 homes in Machynlleth and Llanbrynmair from Wales & West Housing. The transfer has now been completed which means Grŵp Cynefin has now ownership of the stock, a combination of social and sheltered housing. This means that Grŵp Cynefin's area is now bigger than ever.

"We're really pleased with this acquisition and thank Wales & West Housing. We pride



ourselves on the work we do in supporting our tenants and providing an effective service for them," says Mel Evans, Group Director of Innovation and Growth, Grŵp Cynefin, says:

"We are continuously striving to provide the best support and services and have already started working with our new Machynlleth tenants and the local community."

Carys Edwards, Chair of Grŵp Cynefin Management Board says: "This is a positive move for Grŵp Cynefin and it feels like a good 'fit' for both Grŵp Cynefin and Machynlleth. We put great emphasis on tenants' voices, with representation on the Board and a dedicated Customer and Community Committee. Tenants have a strong voice when developing strategies and developments within the group and I'm looking forward to hearing the Dyfi accent amongst those voices!"

Rent Collecting Success

As a partial result of the Pandemic, Grŵp Cynefin identified that our rent arrears were increasing, with December 2020 figures showing our highest arrears ever.

It was decided that action must be taken, ensuring that the matter was given priority and focus. As a result of discussions with staff, a specialist team was created with the responsibility of concentrating on income collection. The team was put into operation in March 2021.

It was a great success, ensuring that there was a focus on assisting tenants to reduce arrears – through a special internal collaboration of Income Collection Officers, the Welfare Team and Housing Officers. As a result, arrears reduced significantly.

Net arrears in terms of amount and percentage were at the lowest they have ever been at the end of March 2022, and a significant reduction was seen when comparing a whole year and more. There is a reduction of over £150,000 in the gross arrears for one year (i.e. from March 2021 to 2022)

Our gross percentage this year is 2.42 % less than the net percentage at 2.99 % at the end of March last year, as indicated in the following graph.

We anticipate that maintaining this successful performance will be a challenge over the next few months due to the increase in the cost of living, but we will ensure support for our tenants to try to avoid arrears.

Developments

Llety'r Adar, Bethesda

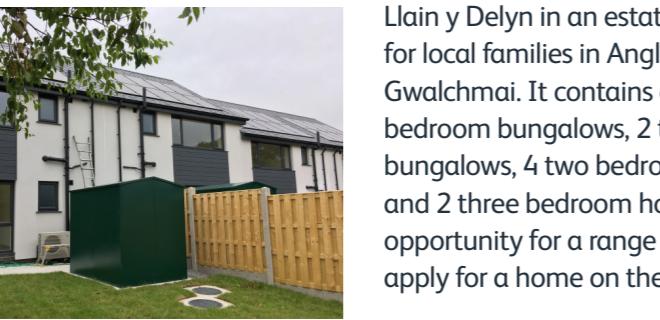
Llety'r Adar is a partnership between Grŵp Cynefin, Gwynedd Council and Welsh Government, and offers 17 new homes in the town in a £2.5m development.

The social rent homes, close to convenient public transport links, recreational space and Lôn Las Ogwen cycle route, includes 8 two bedroom homes, 5 two bedroom bungalows, 3 three bedroom homes and one four bedroom home. The building company is Gareth Morris Construction,

The homes are let as social housing, and the partnership development between Grŵp Cynefin and Gwynedd Council was partly funded by a Social Housing Grant from Welsh Government. The homes, built to Welsh Government low carbon standards, mean that all the properties in the scheme were built using modern construction methods to ensure sustainability.



Gerddi Bach, Waunfawr



Llain y Delyn, Gwalmchai

Llain y Delyn is an estate of 10 homes for local families in Anglesey, located in Gwalmchai. It contains a mix of 2 one bedroom bungalows, 2 two bedroom bungalows, 4 two bedroom houses and 2 three bedroom houses, giving an opportunity for a range of people to apply for a home on the estate.



The hot water and heating system in each property is powered by an air source heat pump. The £1.85 million development is a partnership

Maes Dulyn Penygroes

Maes Dulyn is an estate of 21 new homes built by Williams Homes, Bala.

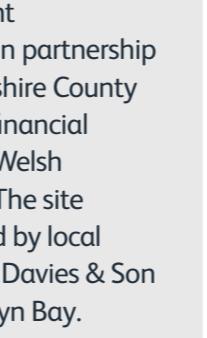
Our Maes Dulyn development in Penygroes is an example of how we will be building homes in the future.

- Electric vehicle charging points
- Air source heat pumps to heat the properties
- Insulation of the highest standard
- Solar panels



Awel y Dyffryn

Awel y Dyffryn extra care housing scheme in Denbigh opened its doors to the first residents in January 2022 following completion of the £12 million scheme.



This was a joint development in partnership with Denbighshire County Council, with financial support from Welsh Government. The site was developed by local contractor R L Davies & Son Ltd from Colwyn Bay.

It contains 42 two bedroom apartments and 24 one bedroom apartments for older people who wish to live independently in their own homes.

Care and support is available, if required. Also, there is a supported housing scheme on the site which provides 24 hour care and support to eight individuals.

Furthermore, 88% of the subcontracted work during development of Awel y Dyffryn was awarded to firms from Wales, with 50%

of the subcontractors located within 30 miles of the site. A total of 136 weeks was spent training workers during the development, ensuring that the next generation of workers had plenty of opportunities to learn and develop skills.

Vision for an innovative centre

In March this year Grŵp Cynefin published a vision document giving details of a £38 million scheme for Penygroes, Gwynedd.

Grŵp Cynefin is leading the ambitious project, provisionally named 'Canolfan Lleu,' with partners Gwynedd Council, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Theatr Bara Caws playing a central role in the plans.

The document details the vision for an innovative community centre in the heart of Penygroes, to serve the village and the communities of Nantlle Vale and beyond. The aim of Canolfan Lleu is to strengthen

communities across the vale, supporting people's health and wellbeing through a variety of traditional and preventative services. It will provide a place for meeting people and socialising, a single location for access to health, housing, community services and local authority services, which will strengthen the local economy.

The whole site will contain green spaces and will aim to be net carbon zero, using sustainable materials from local sources and implementing circular economy principles.



Giving evidence to Senedd Cymru Committee

In March the Chief Executive of Grŵp Cynefin was invited to submit evidence to Senedd Cymru's Local Government and Housing Committee. Shan Lloyd Williams was responding to the report by Dr Simon Brooks, **Second homes: developing new policies in Wales** at the Senedd's **Inquiry into second homes: landlords and community groups evidence session**.

Shan Lloyd Williams welcomed the recommendations in Dr Brooks' report, stating that Grŵp Cynefin had taken a key role in responding to consultations since the release of the report. She conveyed the need for urgency in response to the housing crisis.

"There is a need for a faster pace with regards to how we are going to respond to the recommendations, or the risk is that we will lose the goodwill within communities," she warned.

She also noted the other factors that mean that special consideration is needed when discussing building homes to respond to the crisis, including the price and availability of land, and the challenge of attracting suitable contractors to undertake the work.

"The construction companies of the needed size to develop housing are not interested in coming to rural areas," she said. "The costs are going to be higher and their profit is going to be lower. Therefore we need to collaborate with small local contractors and give them the confidence to tender and to improve their ability to work together."

Gorwel is a business unit that provides quality services to support victims of domestic violence, people losing their home and homelessness prevention. Osian Elis is their recently appointed Chief Officer.

With a 35% percent increase in the number of those referred from Gwynedd and Anglesey during the pandemic, Gorwel received £150,000 from North Wales Police Commissioner and Andy Dunbobbin. As a result, three Independent Domestic Violence Advisors including the first male member of the team and a dedicated male children and young people officer.

During the year Gorwel founded Health CCDA pilot, in conjunction with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to provide direct support and advice based on trauma for domestic abuse victims who are patients at Ysbyty Gwynedd. The CCDA is located at Ysbyty Gwynedd, and sits within the

safeguarding team, working closely alongside hospital staff, providing expert advice, training and raising awareness to support disclosure of domestic abuse.

During the year, four new shelters in Gwynedd were established as well additional units to meet the growing demand. The Older People Scheme, Anglesey, aims to provide housing related support for people aged 55 and over to enable people to live as independently as possible and to prevent homelessness.

During the year an independent report was commissioned, XXXXENW SWYDDODOL (GCSB). GCSB is a method of measuring the value of an event, project or service in a community by taking into account things that are not usually measured in financial terms e.g. opportunities, improving the standard of living or opening doors to socialising. The exercise reported that £6.14 of social value was created for every £1.00 invested in the service.

[Click here to visit Gorwel's website](#)

Bill's Story

(Homelessness Prevention,
Older People Service)



How did you first come into contact with Gorwel?

Things went wrong when I got into a bad marriage that was abusive.

I came in contact with Gorwel back in 2017 – I was in my late 60s. I had problems with my mental health and I have disabilities but I like gardening and I got involved in a gardening project.

What did Gorwel do that was helpful?

The gardening really helped with my mental health. I came out of my shell and met people and it really helped.

They've done lots with me around my housing as well. I've got a support worker and he's really helped with lots of different issues.

What are your hopes for the future?

I'd like to get back into the allotment. I won't be able to do much of the work but I can supervise!

I'm involved with the "I can" project. I talk to someone who lives in Cardiff every week on the phone. We have similar interests and talk for about an hour.

What would you say to anyone else who is going through a difficult time and was wondering about whether to get in contact?

I would tell them to get in touch with Gorwel - I did and they helped me.



Megan's
story

Snapshot 1: “Gwrando ar Gorwel” Staff Survey 2021

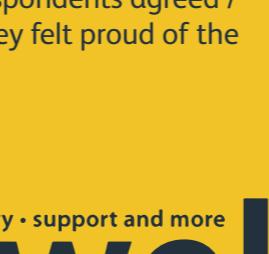


81% of colleagues took time to have their say and complete the survey. Thank you to all 55 of you that gave us your feedback, and attended focus group sessions. We really appreciate your time and views.



High levels of employee engagement – “a fantastic place to work”

46 of you told us what makes Gorwel a great place to work. There's always things to improve and lots of you had suggestions about what would make it a better place to work, showing high levels of engagement in how Gorwel is run and its success.



Just over **96%** of respondents agreed / strongly agreed that they felt proud of the work of Gorwel

Gorwel
cefnogaeth a mwy • support and more



Our Values

87% of respondents agreed / strongly agreed that colleagues in Gorwel truly live the values of the organisation.

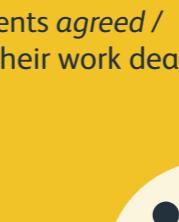


96% agreed / strongly agreed that their colleagues respected their opinions and differences.



My Wellbeing

92% of frontline colleagues agreed / strongly agreed that clinical supervision sessions were good for their wellbeing.



17% of all respondents agreed / strongly agreed that their work deadlines were unrealistic.



My Team

93% agreed / strongly agreed that they regularly help others out at work even if it's not their normal job and that they can rely on their team to help or give them support when they need it.



My Manager

89% agreed/ strongly agreed that their manager was an excellent role model and that their manager regularly expresses appreciation when they do a good job.



Personal Growth

Just over **88%** of respondents agreed / strongly agreed that working for Gorwel was good for their career development.



100% of respondents agreed / strongly agreed they had the skills they needed to do their job well.

Supporting our People

Grŵp Cynefin's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group is dedicated to the task of driving this agenda forward. The group, chaired by the Chief Executive, is made up of representatives from across the group, our subsidiaries, Board of Management and tenants. It is in the process of creating a statement of intent and is collaborating with Tai Pawb and the National Centre for Diversity. Grŵp Cynefin has also pledged to Tai Pawb's 'Deeds not Words,' aiming to tackle racism within the communities where we live and provide homes.

The objective is to ensure that fairness for all is at the heart of all we do, from recruiting new staff, to providing services and within our corporate culture.

Grŵp Cynefin reports a Gender Pay Gap Of 12.9 % this year, which means that the men within Grŵp Cynefin earn a wages that's 12.9 % higher than the women within the group, with a high number of women working in the lowest wage quartile.



Byd o Les

Cyflwyn Ilesiant staff Grŵp Cynefin

We are pleased to report that from our staff:

- 83 % completed Equality training
- 80 % have completed Unconscious Bias training
- 50 staff members have completed the PIE* framework training

*Psychological Informed Environment

Training and Opportunities

Grŵp Cynefin is proud of the work it does to offers additional employment support to tenants and residents. Some of the 2021/2022 results are:

1. Seven kickstart opportunities across the group including four within Conwy and Denbighshire Care & Repair. One of the posts, in Congl Meinciau, has been extended by six months.
2. One apprenticeship role is in place since March 2022 based at Grŵp Cynefin's Llangefni office. The 'Rent and Income Apprentice', Elfyn Owen, 17, will sit within Grŵp Cynefin's housing department for a period of two years.

Risk Awareness and Insurance Training, Service Charges, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Customer Service, Housing Management and Preventing Homelessness, The Future of the Workplace, Racial Inclusion Event and Diversity in the Workplace, Community Regeneration Seminar; Housing Conference, Creating Digital Stories and Problem Solving in a Flexible Working World.

Staff Wellbeing

The well-being of our colleagues continues to be a priority within Grŵp Cynefin. Byd o Les, our staff wellbeing programme, offered various sessions, from dealing with stress to a workshop on financial wellbeing and advice. We also hosted a series of virtual yoga classes with Ceri Lloyd's.

Honest and open conversation about mental health and wellbeing is encouraged through the support and honesty of directors, managers and colleagues. Mental health and wellbeing is promoted in a positive way, encouraging people to be proactive and to add exercise, rest and any activity they feel is beneficial to their routine. Agile working methods allow for this. HR also offers an external counselling service free of charge if needed.

165 members of staff took advantage of training courses during the year, varying in subjects and formats, from virtual to face-to-face. Among the courses were:

In 2021- 2022, 2956 people received help from Canllaw to adapt their homes.

[Click here to view Canllaw's website](#)

Our subsidies

Canllaw and Conwy and Denbighshire Care and Repair helps older homeowners and private tenants repair, modify and maintain their homes to enable them to live independently, comfortably, warmly and safely. The can provide advice about:

- welfare benefits
- maintenance and repairs
- heat
- adaptations

Canllaw

Care and Repair Gwynedd and Anglesey

Canllaw (Eryri) Ltd is a subsidiary of Grŵp Cynefin which manages Gwynedd and Anglesey Care and Repair agency.

In 2021- 2022, 2956 people received help from Canllaw to adapt their homes.

[Click here to view Canllaw's website](#)

Conwy and Denbighshire Care and Repair

In 2021- 2022, 4,273 people received help from Care and Repair to adapt their homes.

[Click here to view Care and Repair's website](#)



2021/22 figures for Denbighshire HIA Services and Rapid Response Adaptations Programme (RRAP)

Better Homes, better health

Helping older people stay safe, warm and independent in their own homes

72%

of clients told us they felt more confident and independent as a result of Care & Repair's service

14 days

1,830

Average age of people we've helped

Number of people we've helped

96%

of clients were very satisfied with services provided by Conwy & Denbighshire Care & Repair

99% of people would recommend the Care & Repair service to others

60% of RRAP clients who had work carried out to assist in reduction of falls

£7.50

For every £1 spent on RRAP, £7.50 is saved in Health & Social Care budgets

£1

Call us on 0300 111 2120

£431,053

We helped 122 people to increase their income by £431,053 per annum

£302,586

Our Home Improvement Services facilitated private works worth £302,586

1394

Number of people with a RRAP grant to adapt their home to allow them to living there independently.

12

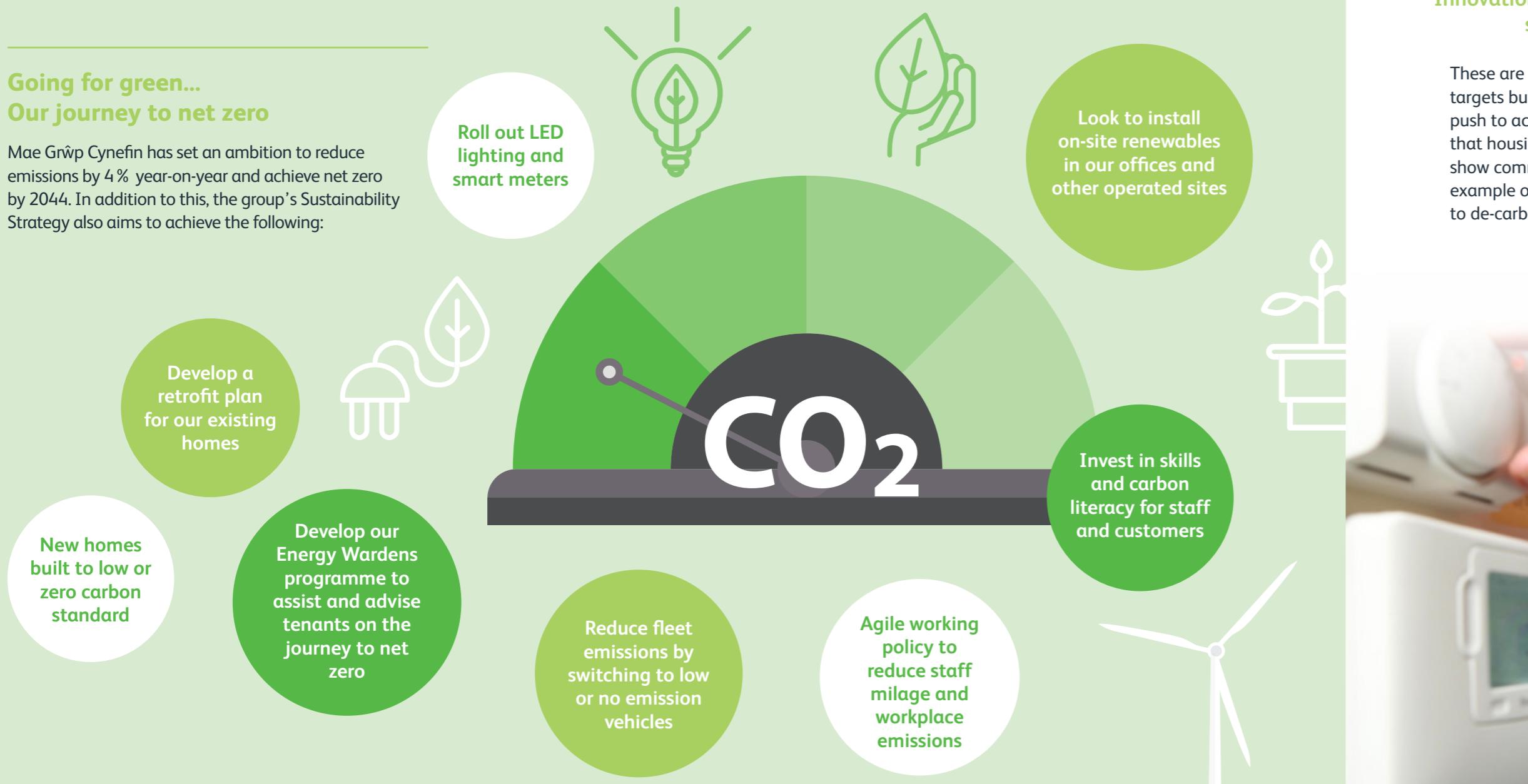
Noddr gan Lywodraeth Cymru Sponsored by Welsh Government

13

Sustainability Strategy

Going for green... Our journey to net zero

Mae Grŵp Cynefin has set an ambition to reduce emissions by 4% year-on-year and achieve net zero by 2044. In addition to this, the group's Sustainability Strategy also aims to achieve the following:



's Optimised Retrofit programme
value of £447,175 to improve energy
including upgrading heating systems.

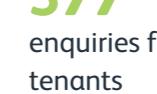
Grŵp Sector of Growth,

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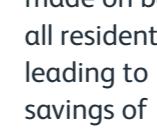


10 applications
were made to
Welsh Water,
leading to savings
of £1,480.



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15 have received help with the process of changing their energy provider, making a saving of £1,560.



 The help from the energy ward was very valuable and I am less worried about using energy in the property.
Fiona



Awards

2021-2022 was a year of recognition of excellent work for Grŵp Cynefin.
Here are some of our successes...



UK Housing Awards

Yr Or saf in Penygroes won first prize for 'Transforming a Community'.



Chartered Institute of Housing

1st Prize 'Communicating in a Crisis' – for communicating with and supporting tenants during the pandemic

1st Prize 'Excellence in Health and Wellbeing' – Social Prescribing Project Denbigh Hub.



Go North Wales Awards

First prize to the Shed for being a Pet Friendly location in the 'Go North Wales' awards.



St David's Awards

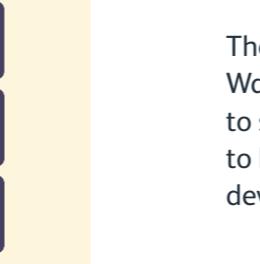
Yr Or saf gained first prize for a 'Community Spirit' project.



Customer Service Excellence

Grŵp Cynefin was awarded a Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard in 2021, the start of a three-year certification journey.

Customer Service Excellence (CSE) is a nationally recognised standard designed to drive a customer-focused transformation, helping organisations gain a better understanding of their customers' needs.



Tai Teg

TAI TEG

CYSLLTU POBL GYDA CHYFLON TAI

CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Grŵp Cynefin administers the Tai Teg affordable homes register on behalf of 13 partners who are a combination of Registered Social Landlords and Local Authorities in north Wales and Powys.

Over the October 21-March 22 period, the team reported that the number of applicants that would like to be considered for intermediate rent and who are on the ready to apply status is 2,778 an increase of 670 in comparison with the report submitted for the period April – September 2021.

There has been an increase in the number of applicants registered and Tai Teg will continue to promote the register via social media to encourage people to register and apply for affordable units. They have also started attending face to face open days with the Rural Housing Enablers.



Time for Action

Grŵp Cynefin has been chosen to lead on the important Dwyfor pilot scheme, which is a partnership between the Welsh Government, Gwynedd County Council and Snowdonia National Park. It is a response to the demand for urgent action to deal with the second homes crisis. With officers in place, the project is now underway.

Our Chief Executive contributed to the discussion with an article in WHQ housing magazine earlier this year.

Rural Housing Enablers

The Rural Housing Enablers team continued to engage with communities, virtually and more recently returned to face-to-face consultation and engagement events after the Covid era.

Their objective is to identify the affordable housing needs in rural areas of north Wales, operating across Conwy, Gwynedd and Môn. The aim is to enable people to stay in their communities, and to identify opportunities to work alongside and to be informed by the wishes of the community when considering any housing development.

Board of Management - members and statistics



Board of Management

Carys Edwards (Chair)	Tony Jones
Elen Williams (Vice-Chair)	Dafydd Lewis
Mike Corfield	Jane Lewis
Geraint George	Clifton Robinson
Julia Hughes	Sion Fôn (co-opted member)
Llinos Iorwerth	Lesley Singleton (co-opted member)

In August 2021, Grŵp Cynefin adopted new Registered Regulations based on CHC's Regulated Model. These new regulations limit the membership period of any member of the Board of Management to nine years. This is based on good practice in governing.

Following the adoption of these new rules, two experienced members gave up their seat on the Board of Management at the Annual General

Meeting in September 2021. As part of effective succession planning, Grŵp Cynefin immediately started recruiting for new members. It conducted a skills and experience assessment to ensure that the Board of Management has a combination of different skills and experience to ensure effective governance for the future. As a result, two new members were co-elected to the Board of Management in February 2022.

Board and Committee Membership
@ 31.03.22

Audit and Risk Committee

Mike Corfield (Chair)
Geraint George (Vice-Chair)
Julia Hughes
Tony Jones
Tim Jones (Canllaw Board rep.)
Gwenan Carrington (CDCR Board rep.)

Governance Management Committee

Carys Edwards (Chair)
Elen Williams
Mike Corfield
Dafydd Lewis
Clifton Robinson
Tim Jones (Canllaw Board Chair)
Gwynne Jones (CDCR Board Chair)

Gorwel Committee

Carys Edwards (Chair)
Julia Hughes (Vice-Chair)
Dafydd Lewis
Sara Evans (independent member)

Finance and Growth Committee

Dafydd Lewis (Chair)
Jane Lewis (vice-Chair)
Tony Jones
Elen Williams
Paul Quirk (CDCR Board rep.)

Board Member Diversity Stats

(excluding co-opted members) 31.03.22

Age	Grŵp Cynefin
30-44	
45-64	10
65+	

National identity	Grŵp Cynefin
British	4
Welsh	6
English	

Gender	Grŵp Cynefin
Female	5
Male	5

Sexual Orientation	Grŵp Cynefin
Heterosexual	10
Chose note to answer	

Disability	Grŵp Cynefin
Yes	
No	10

Welsh Language (written)	Grŵp Cynefin
No skills	2
Can read some basic words and phrases with understanding	3

Ethnic Origin	Grŵp Cynefin
White	9
Black British	1

" We're lucky to have outstanding members on our board – experienced experts in their field. This means healthy questioning, examining, research and always a thorough discussion

Carys Edwards
Chair of Grŵp Cynefin
Management Board



Finances

Grŵp Cynefin's financial performance in the year ending 31 March 2022 was strong, with a surplus of £1.7m for the year and net assets worth £31.7m. This allowed us to comply with the financial covenants of our lenders and comply with our own 'Golden Rules'. Net current assets stood at £12.2m at 31 March 2022.

The year ending 31 March 2022, was a very busy year in terms of treasury strategy and implementation, due to the major re-financing and new £40m long term Note Purchase Agreement which was signed in August 2021. The initial tranche of £30m being used (with c£4m cash) to re-finance £34m of existing short-term facilities. Also, a new £30m Revolving Credit Facility was agreed in August 2021 which is a 'Sustainability Linked Loan' with the three Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) targets agreed with the lender.

At the year end, Grŵp Cynefin had adequate liquidity in place for approximately 36 months, and the hedging position was circa 90 %. The 2022-23 treasury strategy builds on

this strong footing and provides flexibility to be responsive to unforeseen significant changes in circumstances.

Staff continue to work unremittingly to improve the efficiency of the business and deliver better services to its customers and communities. Good progress was made with the procurement processes with the approval of a new Procurement Policy in 2021, in establishing a new Procurement Framework and by gaining access to many other

Procurement Frameworks. A new Strategic Value for Money Action Plan was also approved in 2021, and many of the work streams within the plan manifested themselves naturally as working practices changed overnight to deal with the pandemic. A new way of working over the past year has enabled Grŵp Cynefin to digitalise many processes, and work remotely with ease. These new processes will undoubtedly form foundations to a more efficient and effective way of working, and savings of this nature will assist us in achieving more in terms of social value for Grŵp Cynefin tenants and the communities it serves.

Further focus will be made on hybrid working practices for the future, and further efficiencies will be sought



through the implementation of the actions outlined in the Digital Transformation Strategy and the Efficiencies and Savings Policy. The new policy outlines Grŵp Cynefin's commitment to streamline our internal processes by appointing and training Lean Practitioners and Lean Champions, and by concentrating on two or three specific areas of work annually.

Bryn Ellis, Group Director of Resources says "Grŵp Cynefin is continually assessing its effectiveness in relation to Value for Money (VFM). As an organisation with social purpose, it is committed to maximising value for its tenants, future tenants and the wider community. An annual VFM Statement was released during the

Further focus will be made on hybrid working practices for the future, and further efficiencies will be sought

year which highlights the added value that Grŵp Cynefin provides to our tenants and customers."

In December 2020 the Welsh Government published its Interim Regulatory Judgement on Grŵp Cynefin, and Grŵp Cynefin received a 'Standard' judgement for both Governance and Services and Financial Viability. As a result, the Regulator is of the opinion that Grŵp Cynefin identifies and manages new emerging risks appropriately as well as meeting its viability requirements, and has the financial capacity to deal with scenarios appropriately.

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Income £'000

- Rents
- Capital grant amortisation
- Gorwel
- Service Charge
- Other Projects
- Conwy and Denbighshire Care and Repair
- Canllaw (Eryri) Cyf
- Property Sales
- Other

Total	31,308	100%	31,378	100%
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Expenditure £'000

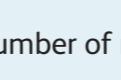
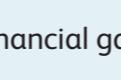
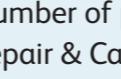
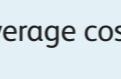
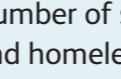
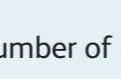
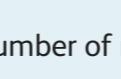
- Upkeep and maintenance of housing stock
- Staffing costs
- Mortgage interest
- Housing stock depreciation and impairment
- Other Projects
- Other
- Conwy and Denbighshire Care and Repair
- Canllaw (Eryri) Cyf
- Property Sales

Total	29,648	100%	28,890	100%
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Our performance

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
 Percentage of tenants satisfied, or very satisfied with the services provided by Grŵp Cynefin	85%	87%	86%
 Number of calls handled by Cyswllt Cynefin, our customer service centre	40,715	36,549	56,195
 Number of staff employed	267	266	257
 Number of full time equivalent staff	203	234	207
 Number employed by Canllaw and Conwy & Denbighshire Care & Repair	43	37	43
 Number of days to let a property	34	55	26
 Number of properties let to tenant	319	285	384
 Percentage of our homes that passed the Welsh Housing Quality Standard subject to acceptable fails	100%	100%	100%
 Number of new bathrooms fitted	44	30	41
 Number of new kitchens fitted	55	27	37

	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20
 Number of new boilers fitted	69	120	87
 Financial gains for our tenants provided by our Welfare Team	£1,001,820	£1,026,671	£938,347
 Percentage of emergency repairs completed within 24 hours	98%	98%	99%
 Number of people helped by Conwy & Denbighshire Care & Repair & Canllaw (adaptation work)	7,229	5,502	7,643
 Average cost of a repair	£150	£155	£135
 Number of service users supported by Gorwel's domestic abuse and homelessness prevention services	2025	1801	1701
 Percentage of tenants who have been with us more than 10 years	43%	44.4%	40%
 Percentage of our properties with gas had received the annual inspection by anniversary date	99.9%	97.4%	99.9%
 Percentage of rent loss due to arrears	2.17%	2.99%	3.01%
 Number of new anti-social behaviour cases	405	506	562
 Number of requests for repair work	14,443	12,321	14,361
 Percentage of repairs completed within target time	84%	84%	92%

Looking Forward

As this Annual Report comes to its conclusion, our priority as we face the autumn and winter is providing advice and support to our tenants, customers and colleagues as we all face the cost of living crisis. Grŵp Cynefin is already doing an excellent job supporting tenants through the Welfare Team, Energy Wardens, Community Centres plus the Grŵp Cynefin hardship fund. We have a policy not to evict tenants from their homes because of rent debt, and since March, our housing officials will visit our tenants at least once a year.

We are in the process of establishing a Cost of Living Crisis Group with representation from across the association, including tenants. The group's focus is to create suitable objectives, and to lobby central and local government where appropriate.

The Renting Homes Wales Act will come into force in December. It is the biggest change to housing law in Wales for decades. It gives tenants more protection, and makes clearer their rights and responsibilities. Work is being done to comply with all aspects of the act when it comes into force and make sure that our tenants understand its implications.

Grŵp Cynefin's Management Board approved a new social rent setting policy in November 2021. The policy uses the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Living Rent Model methodology to ensure that our rents remain affordable to our tenants. The policy has now been in effect since April 1st. Since then the new living rents are being used in re-letting and letting new properties but the policy has also been used to

review the social rent levels that will come into force from 1 October 2022 onwards. The new living rent levels are consistent, for the same type of property, across the operational area.

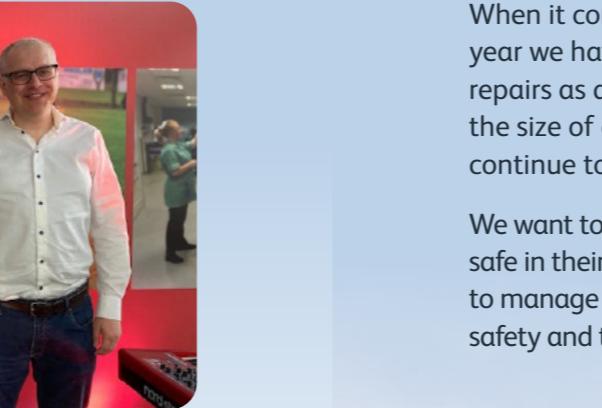
We will continue our work to make adaptations to reduce the impact of our properties on the environment, with our ongoing retrofit programme and the latest low-carbon building methods.

Our support of our tenants and customers is an ongoing priority, and when faced with challenges, such as Covid-19 for example, we are in a strong position to respond in a suitable and effective way.

There is a crisis of a different kind in Wales, the rural housing crisis, and Grŵp Cynefin is playing a central part as a key partner in the Dwyfor Pilot Scheme, now in operation. The scheme, a partnership between the Welsh Government, Gwynedd Council, Snowdonia National Park and Grŵp Cynefin, is breaking new ground and could prove to be a blueprint for a national way forward to greet the rural housing crisis and the problem of second homes in our communities.

In addition, it was announced that the Chief Executive of Grŵp Cynefin has been selected to be a member of the Welsh Government's newly formed Welsh Communities Commission chaired by Dr Simon Brooks. The announcement was made at the National Eisteddfod by the Minister of Education and the Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles AM. This puts Grŵp Cynefin at the heart of the discussion around the linguistic sustainability and use of Welsh in our communities. It is also a recognition of our good name and that of our Chief Executive.

It's an exciting time for our developments with



**Jeremy Miles AS, Shan Lloyd Williams,
Dr Simon Brooks**

the start of a £12.2m expansion project to update and extend our Extra Care Housing Scheme at Llys Awelon, Ruthin.

The project involves redeveloping the site to create a bespoke modern, low carbon scheme to meet the needs of older people in the area. The existing 21 apartment scheme will increase by 35 additional one and two bedroom apartments plus brand new facilities.

The project is a partnership between Denbighshire County Council, Grŵp Cynefin and the Welsh Government and is supported by £7.1million of funding from the Welsh Government's Social Housing Programme.

Earlier this year, a transfer of 53 homes in Machynlleth and Llanbrynmair was completed from the management of Wales & West Housing to Grŵp Cynefin. Taking control of the stock, which is a combination of sheltered and social housing, means that Grŵp Cynefin's operational area is larger than ever.

When it comes to our housing stock, over the last year we have focused on reducing the backlog of repairs as a result of coronavirus. We have increased the size of our internal trades team and plan to continue to grow our internal team in 2022/23.

We want to continue to focus on keeping our tenants safe in their homes and have reviewed our approach to manage health and safety in key areas such as gas safety and this work will continue into 2022/23.



We continue to re-let properties and have improved our re-letting times following the challenging period of coronavirus whilst maintaining our internal 'lettable' standard.

Canolfan Lleu, including the residents of Dyffryn Nantlle at every stage of the journey. A busy year full of challenges that Grŵp Cynefin will face with energy, vision and through collaboration.



Grŵp Cynefin

Mwy na thai • More than housing

We are able to provide information in other formats including print, large print, audio tape and Braille. Please contact Grŵp Cynefin for further assistance.

Grŵp Cynefin is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 under number 21194R and is a charitable housing association registered with the Welsh Government under number LO29.