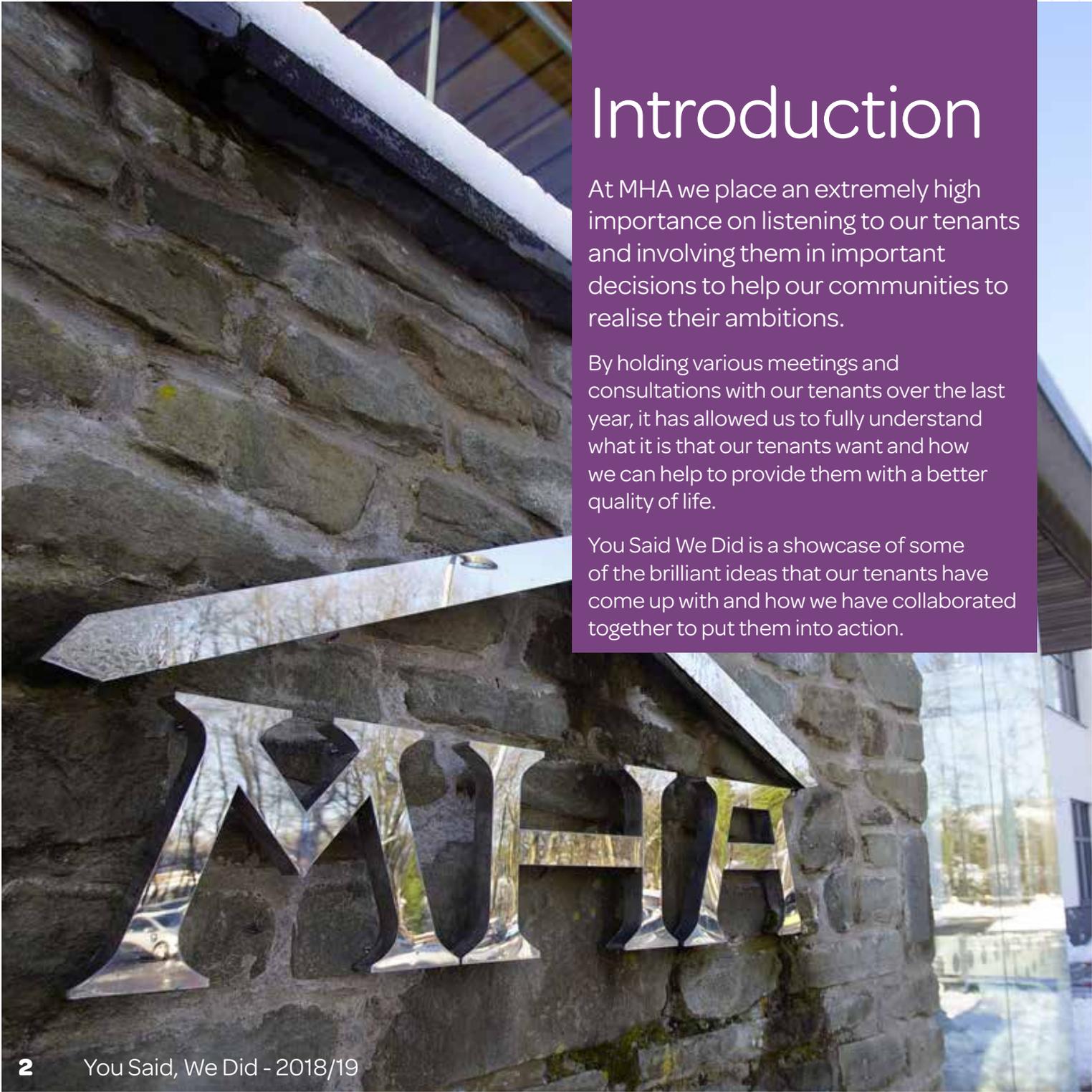


YOU
SAID



WE
DID



Introduction

At MHA we place an extremely high importance on listening to our tenants and involving them in important decisions to help our communities to realise their ambitions.

By holding various meetings and consultations with our tenants over the last year, it has allowed us to fully understand what it is that our tenants want and how we can help to provide them with a better quality of life.

You Said We Did is a showcase of some of the brilliant ideas that our tenants have come up with and how we have collaborated together to put them into action.

Welcome

Welcome to our latest edition of 'You Said, We Did'. We are now 11 years old or to put it another way, we are in the 12th year of our journey. Our ethos remains very much rooted in creating homes and communities where people aspire to live and work and also playing our part in transforming people's lives.

MHA continue to do much more than rent, repair and build new homes. Our activities are driven by suggestions from you and also our aspirations to meet an ongoing housing need in our area of operation. The following pages go into more detail of our activities and a plea from us – please continue to give us your feedback on our activities.

In delivering much needed new homes, we are contributing to Welsh Government agenda for new home provision. Indeed MHA have a vision of growing our housing stock from the current 3,700 homes to 5,000 over the next 10 years but just to reassure you, we will continue to look after our existing customers to the very best of our ability.

Regeneration of some of our sheltered stock has been a top priority over the past few years and we have recently completed a scheme at Brookside in Caldicot and will complete Oakley Way in 2019 / 2020.

As a non-profit making company, MHA reinvests all of the income we receive back into our homes and communities. The main source of this income is the rent we collect and this publication details how we spend those funds. We continually strive for value for money – by managing this well, MHA will continue to be a good landlord and this will allow us to deliver new homes.



Andy Jones
Chair of the MHA Board

Vision & Objectives

Here's our vision for our tenants, our business and our communities:

By 2023 MHA will be the top performing social enterprise in Wales providing quality homes and services, transforming people's lives and giving them the confidence and support to realise their ambitions. We will create an environment where people can have a brilliant quality of life, in areas where they aspire to live and work.

Here are the objectives we've been working towards...

Landlord

- Develop 100 properties per annum until 2022, then average to increase by 120 per annum, and to 150 by 2024
- Continue with deployment of new enhancements to CX and implement Contractor/Repairs IT
- Develop Tenant Portal into an efficient business enhancement/service delivery tool
- Develop Apps for tenant use
- Increase intermediate and market rent offer by 15 properties - turnover to increase to £500k in 2020-21 and by an additional £100k per annum thereafter

- Review void standard
- Complete fire risk assessments and implement enhancements
- Maintain satisfaction levels at 90%+
- Increase rented social stock to 4,000 by 2024
- Have market and intermediate rented stock of 300 by 2024

Economic

- Seek out new opportunities once Local Development Plan has been approved
- By 2024 have an annual turnover in excess of £30m
- Seek to increase forward development programme up to 700 units by 2022 and 1,000 units by 2024
- Start production at off site factory, producing 100 properties in year 1, 300 by year 2 and 600 by 2024
- Deploy new rent policy
- Get 30 more tenants into work each year
- Keep Universal Credit arrears to 5%
- Develop two tenant cooperatives to develop Foundation economy within Monmouthshire
- Expand factory staff to 20 by 2021 and 50 by 2024
- Make all strands of Capsel profitable



- Start sales in Govilon and Bronllys by 2021
- Start on new Innovative Housing Programme site, with planning for 20 properties – 2021
- Develop new ways of working delivering on 10% in business efficiencies and making sure MHA is set for future both in technology and working practices and culture
- Capsel to be a well-established and trusted local company employing 25 people with a regular turnover of £5m per annum and increasing by 2024
- To have developed our ability to work in joint venture's with developers to expand delivery of new properties
- To be a firmly established development partner and local landlord in Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen and Powys by 2024

Environmental

- Reduce incoming calls by 50% by 2021 and 75% by 2024
- Reduce CO2 footprint by a further 10% by 2024
- Produce units from factory with SAP rating of 95
- Review existing stock to appraise feasibility of additional CO2 reduction interventions
- Start installation of new hybrid or alternative heating systems
- Expand pool car fleet

People

- Develop five future leaders per annum
- Recruit five more apprentices per annum

- Retrain staff for new digital environment
- Implement new Contractor/Repairs system with full training and develop system further over subsequent years to 2024 and to have a sector leading system delivering to MHA to service the information it needs to be best in class
- Become a three star Times Best 100 Company
- Develop our own staff to bid for and construct 20 properties per year
- Develop more staff to work in hard to recruit posts
- Continue to develop succession plans for all posts
- Develop the best older person offer in Wales by 2021 with a forward programme of developing micro/pocket communities of 20 properties per annum
- Develop the digital offer for tenants reducing the need for care and support workers
- Have tenant satisfaction with quality of life as highest in Wales
- Develop communities where people know each other and we can measure it
- Spend £1m transforming lives and ambitions through training and personal development on both staff and tenants, increasing productivity by 10%
- Focus our resources on ensuring that MHA can become a more flexible organisation adapting to a constantly changing environment

'Growing Space', Abergavenny



Friends of MHA, Caldicot



Bug hotel at Oakley Way, Caldicot



Neighbour Power

When we looked at how best to work with you and your communities on the things that matter most to you, you told us how important it was that you could have a say and do more in your local neighbourhoods. We put together some ideas of how this could work and introduced these ideas in Abergavenny and Caldicot.

In order to effectively carry this out, we met with some people who were interested in the challenge and talked to them about what they were good at, what they were interested in and what was important to them in their neighbourhoods. We were also able to identify some ways to discover what the wider community were interested in so that their voice could be heard as well. Following the consultations, the groups and MHA drew up some plans based on what people felt could make a difference to areas where they lived.

Here are some examples of what was said in those consultations and then completed - by neighbours on behalf of neighbours:

Neighbours Working Together - Gardening

Neighbours Working Together said they wanted to organise garden workshops in order to learn new gardening skills, which included planting and growing various plants and vegetables. We were able to organise and set up a meeting with Growing Space who are a charity that provide

real work skills for adults with ill mental health. This resulted in regular garden workshops being organised which now help to deliver the project every second Wednesday within the Mardy Resource Centre.

Friends of MHA Caldicot

Friends of MHA Caldicot said that they wanted to bring wildlife back to their community by carrying out more nature-based activities. In order to do this, we began organising weekly workshops over a six week period, which resulted in various family activities that would help to contribute to the wildlife. An example of this is where families were able to take part in the building of bug hotels at Oakley Way, Caldicot.

We would like to say a big thank you to both groups for all their support, volunteering and helping MHA to take these projects forward.

Abergavenny Pride 2019



Homemakers Community Recycling received £1,000



The successful projects from 2019



Velha Batarra Samba Band received £935



Pitch For Your Project

Pitch for your Project is an MHA grant scheme of between £1,000 – £12,000 per round (there are two rounds per year).

This funding aims to support community groups that run projects that will benefit their local community within Monmouthshire. All that needs to be done is to complete an application form, send it to MHA and if successful, you will have the opportunity to “pitch” your project to our judging panel. MHA are committed to providing support to the groups, whether they were successful in gaining funding or not, to support their projects.

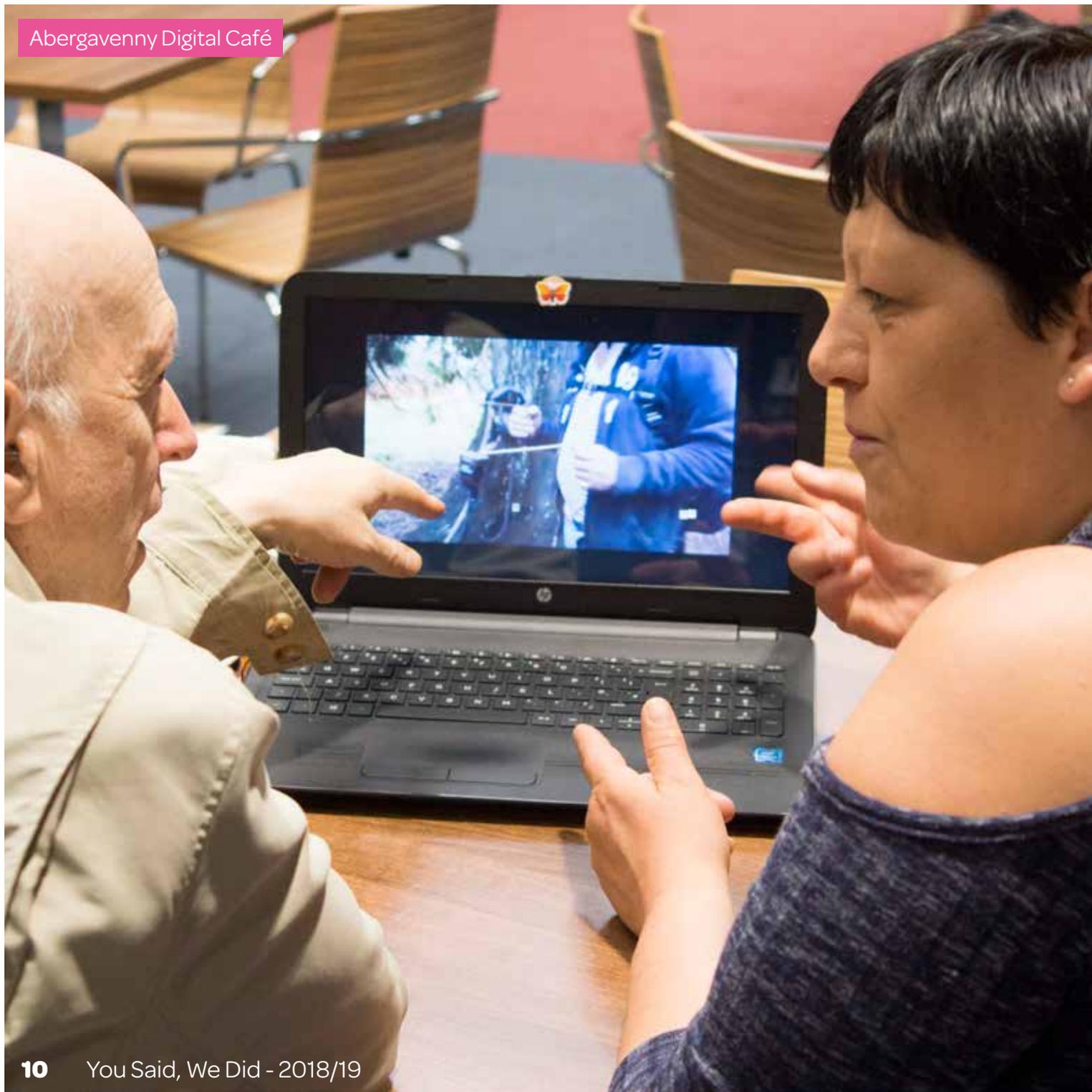
If you need any further information please contact **clare.evans@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk**

During the last round, the following projects were successful:

- Abergavenny Pride - £820
- Alberts Owls and Acorns - £2,150
- St Joseph's Boxing Club - £3,190
- Greenshoots - £500
- Wellbeing Lifeboat - £2,320
- Samba Band - £935
- Growing Space - £885
- Homemakers - £1,000

Abergavenny Pride received £820





Giving Something Back

We've given back to the local community over the last year through our corporate sponsorship scheme. Here's some of the fantastic projects that we've awarded sponsorship to over the past year.

Raglan Festival

We awarded £500 to Raglan Festival to help towards the cost of running the local music and activities festival which is held for the whole community of Raglan. The money was used towards the cost of hiring the bands and acts for the stage.

Abergavenny Digital Café

We sponsored Abergavenny Digital Café for £1,000 to help them to purchase tablets for the group to help to continue its success. The group help people to become more digitally included and helps to tackle social isolation.

Ysgol Gymraeg Y Ffin

The school were holding 'The Big Welsh Bash' to celebrate the school being in the community for 10 years. The school approached us for funding to help out with advertising costs for the event to attract as many people as possible. The aim of the event was to get local families to go along and learn about Welsh medium education and the positive impact it can have. We sponsored the event with a donation of £300.

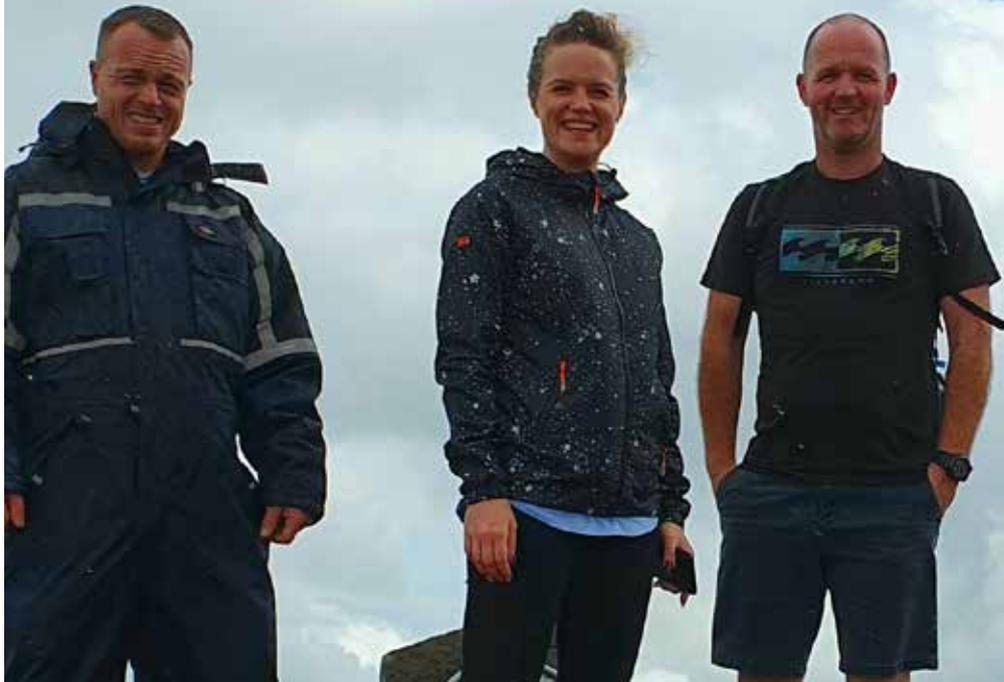
Transition Monmouth

Transition Monmouth approached us to help with the cost of providing free packed lunches for children attending the summer play scheme at Overmonnow School. We helped to provide the lunches with a donation of £700.

Are you involved with a group or event within Monmouthshire which could benefit from MHA's support and sponsorship?

You can apply for a grant up to £1,000.

All you need to do is fill in a sponsorship form; if the request meets all of the requirements you could gain funding. To request an application form, please contact Nathan Cook on **01495 767191** or email **nathan.cook@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk**



Information Clinics

Newport

Bettws

Wednesday 9am-11am

Bettws Civil Service Centre, 9
Shannon Close, Newport, NP20
7LX

Somerton

Thursday 9am-11am

Rascal Hope Centre, 9 Poplar Rd,
Newport, NP19 9AX

Malpas

Friday 9am-11am

Malpas Court Mansion House,
Oliphant Cir, Newport, NP20 6NZ

Liswerry

Friday 10am-12pm

Mooreland Park Community
Centre, Newport, NP19 4NA

Monmouthshire

Abergavenny

Monday 10am-12pm
(Fortnightly)

ACE Centre, 29 Hillcrest Rd,
Abergavenny, NP7 6BN

Dads Groups

Abergavenny

Thursday 2pm-4pm

Wellfield Hall, Wellfield Close,
Abergavenny, NP7 6EH

Dads Can Cymru

Since the relaunch of Dads Can Cymru in February, dads on the project have been suggesting new ways of improving our service. The dads told us that they find large numbered family activities daunting and feel that this can sometimes have a negative impact on their mental health. As a result the team are now organising small or individual family trips.

Mountain Walk Mondays

One of the most recent small trips that Dads Can Cymru organised was a succession of 'Mountain Walk Mondays' which allowed the dads to walk up Pen Y Fan and Sugarloaf over the course of two weeks.

Shaun Robertson was one of the dads who attended the walk and saw it as a great opportunity to socialise; "It was nice to go out somewhere new and meet people. It's definitely a walk I would do again."

Dads Can Cymru's development worker, Shane Hatherall, was delighted with how well the walks were received; "The families have benefitted so much from participating in these walks. We always advocate plenty of fresh air and exercise to help with improving mental health and bonding as a family. We always welcome as many of our dads and their families as possible to get involved and it comes at no cost to them either."

Dads Groups and Information Clinics

Referrals to the project have been at a record high and as a result the team have set up drop in information clinics and dads groups across Monmouthshire and Newport. This is to ensure that all dads referred to the project do not have to wait to receive support. Dads attending these sessions will have access to information sharing, peer support and support plans which they can start to work on before a development worker is assigned to their case.

The logo for Dads Can Cymru features the words 'Dads Can Cymru' in a stylized, handwritten font. 'Dads' and 'Can' are in a dark purple color, while 'Cymru' is in a bright red color. The letters are bold and slightly slanted, giving it a friendly and approachable feel.

MHA's New Website

In May we launched our brand new website. Whilst the website was in development we held a workshop with a group of tenants to find out what they thought of the old MHA website and what they would like to see on the new site. Here's some of the feedback and ideas that we had as part of the workshops and what we've done so far on the new site as a result.

Feedback about the old MHA website

Not clear who you are and what you do on the homepage.

We have included more links on the homepage of our new website which can be clicked to find out more about what we do and the services that we offer.

Paragraphs too long and boring.

We looked at all of the content that was on our old website and we recognised that some of it was quite long. All of the content was freshly written for our new website to make sure that all of it is useful and relevant.

Website should be easier to navigate.

We reviewed all of the areas on the old website before our new website was designed. There are now five headings and we have reduced the number of sections under each heading, this should now make it easier to navigate around the site.

The layout of the website is old.

Our website has been completely redesigned to give it a modern and friendly look.

There's no footer on the website.

We've introduced a footer on the new website with links to all of the different sections on the website. There are also links to our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

Is there anything you would like to change on our website?

More direction from the homepage, site needs to be friendlier with easier links.

We've introduced some new quick links for tenants on the homepage of the new site. Quick links include pay your rent, money advice, report a repair, FAQ's and a link to the tenant handbook. The new links should make it easier to find the main sections that you may need. All of the different pages are also listed on the footer of the site making the pages more accessible.

Every day / simple language, site needs to be short and to the point.

We've made sure the content on our new website is written in plain, simple language and is short and to the point with relevant information.

Be committed to the up-keeping of the website.

We are committed to keeping the new website up to date and we regularly check the content to make sure it is all up to date. These checks will be ongoing in the future.

What would make you spend more time using the website?

A frequently asked question section

We've introduced a new Advice Hub section on the new website which includes a new frequently asked questions page. Questions and answers about moving home, ending a tenancy, rent, anti-social behaviour, Universal

Credit, garages, carports and low cost home ownership are included. We will keep adding additional questions and answers so keep checking the page!

Photo galleries.

When news articles and new pages are added to the site we try to make sure that we use photos along with the text.

Looking at properties.

We've added images of our new developments on to the homepage of our website. These images can be clicked to find out more about new homes.

We will be adding more content in the future so be sure to check out our new website **www.monmouthshirehousing.co.uk**

[Pay your rent](#) [Report repair](#) [Report ASB](#) [Feedback](#)

Find your new home in Monmouthshire

With MHA, you can live in a quality home that suits your needs and access support every step of the way

[Register](#)





Monmouthshire Homesearch

Monmouthshire Homesearch is a partnership between Monmouthshire County Council, MHA and four other housing associations with homes in Monmouthshire. They manage and maintain the housing waiting list for the area. Here's some of the feedback that you've given over the last year and the changes we've made as a result.

We received feedback from you about how to apply for the waiting list and what to expect

- We introduced a Homesearch animation which explains the process.
- We continually update our scheme user guide with your frequently asked questions.

You said that you felt the Rural Allocations Policy was confusing and/or unfair

We were able to relay your views to the Homesearch Partnership and as a result made the policy fairer for people in housing need who have a rural local connection with that area.

I don't understand, what is a Local Lettings Plan?

An 'Applicant's Guide' to a Local Lettings Plan and why we need them has been added to the Homesearch website.

We can't complete your forms electronically

Medical, welfare and change of circumstances forms are now available to complete electronically on request.

What are the bedroom sizes on advertised properties?

Where possible, we now include bedroom sizes on adverts for MHA properties.

Did you know?

- There are over 3,000 applicants on the housing waiting list in Monmouthshire
- 96% of bids are completed through our website or the app
- In 2018/19, 1,711 new applications were received
- We helped MHA to let 345 properties

What next?

The Homesearch Partnership Group are currently reviewing Monmouthshire's Housing Allocations Policy and have already completed consultation exercises with staff, stakeholders and Homesearch applicants.



New Homes Team

Our New Homes team supports new tenants, helping them to settle in and stay happy in their homes. They provide assistance, help with managing rent accounts and can refer to other services to provide specialist help if needed. Here's some of the feedback that you've given and what they've done as a result over the last year.

Void standard

You liked the fact that we carpeted our void apartments before you move in.

Our Voids team now carpet all houses & bungalows, as well as our apartments, ready for re-letting to new tenants. We are very proud to have the highest letting standard in the Gwent region!

Tenancy agreement access

You wanted the MHA tenancy agreements to be available digitally for your reference.

A blank copy of the MHA starter and assured tenancies are now available on our website for easy access wherever you may be.

Homebuy

MHA's Service Testing Team requested revised Homebuy information, to improve information about Low Cost Home Ownership options with MHA.

We have a new page on our website and a brand new user guide. You can register for your Homebuy home now on our website.

Ending my tenancy

Tenants giving notice to end their tenancy asked for a digital template to be made available on our website to give notice on a tenancy.

We now have a template notice for you to print off and complete available for free on our website.

Tenancy handbook

You would like the tenant handbook to be available on our website so you can access it anytime, anywhere.

The tenant handbook is now available on our website. It is jam-packed with information about the services that we offer and lots more. Search 'Tenant Handbook'.



Debt, Money & Employment

MHA's inclusion services offer proactive help and support to tenants to alleviate short term and long term poverty issues.

The Money Wise service deals with immediate poverty issues such as offering advice in relation to debt, benefits, food and fuel poverty.

During the past year, neighbourhood planning groups were held in Caldicot and Mardy and the feedback suggested that tenants wanted to make their money go further. As a result our Money Wise team have set up fortnightly drop in

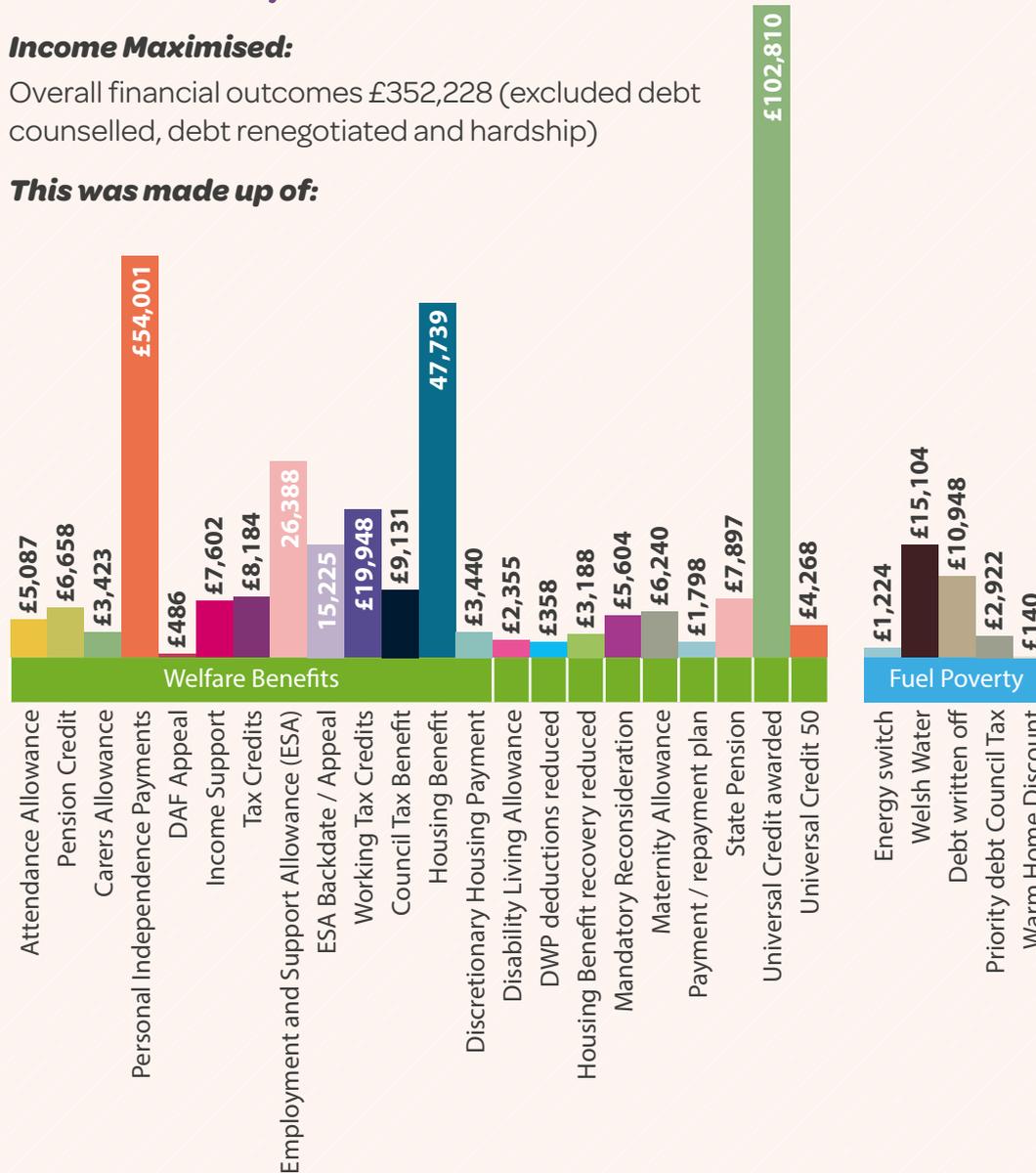
sessions for money, benefit and debt advice in the four main towns. The team have also made links with comprehensive schools in the area to look at recycling and reusing uniforms, this was trialled throughout the summer.

Money Wise Outcomes: 2018/19

Income Maximised:

Overall financial outcomes £352,228 (excluded debt counselled, debt renegotiated and hardship)

This was made up of:



Arrears:

Arrears at the start of Money Wise intervention:

£130,635

Arrears at the end of Money Wise intervention:

£95,915

Difference:

£34,719

Work & Skills Wise Outcomes

Our Work & Skills Wise service offers advice and support to help you in to work, education or training. The below stats show the number of people we've helped over the last year.

Work & Skills Wise Stats



A total of **48** people gained employment



27 tenants were supported into education or training



17 tenants were supported into work placements



35 bursary payments were awarded totalling **£3,106.77**

Journey 2 Work (European Social Fund funded project)



11 people were supported into work (5 of which were non tenants)



15 people were supported into education or training (6 of which were non tenants)



9 people were supported into work placements (4 of which were non tenants)

Case Study

Where it started

Richard was referred to the Work & Skills Wise service by his Income Officer as he had been made redundant from his job due to the company relocating, he was also affected by the Bedroom Tax. Following his redundancy, Richard said that he wanted to look at a career change to something that was physical and more active. After carrying out a consultation with Richard, it was clear to see that he had a real desire to get back into work and that he also saw this as an opportunity for a change.

What we did

We started by helping Richard to access REACT funding through Careers Wales, which supports people who have been made redundant to access funded training. Richard signed up for fork lift training which covered telescopic handling, a counterbalance licence and a reach truck licence of which the course and licence costs were funded by REACT. Richard missed having a work routine, so Work & Skills Wise supported Richard into a volunteer work experience placement with Monmouthshire County Council's Grounds Maintenance team in Caldicot, where he volunteered two days a week. This gave Richard a boost to be back in a work routine and also back into the working environment. Richard was supported with help

to buy boots for his volunteering that he could use for future work. Along with this, Work & Skills Wise supported Richard in creating an effective and tailored CV.

The outcome

Following this support, Richard came along to the 'Monmouthshire Employment & Skills Fair' in Caldicot which is arranged jointly by MHA and Job Centre Plus. Bringing along his CV, Richard approached some of the more industrial, warehouse companies that were recruiting at the event and spoke with them about his experience, talked through his CV and presented his licences. He was asked to sign up on the day, which he did and was offered work immediately. Richard is now enjoying working as a Fork Lift Warehouse Operative.

Richard commented; "it would not have been possible if it wasn't for the jobs fair and all your help and support. So a very big thank you for your help."

Richard was a pleasure to work with, his drive and ambition was clear to see. Work & Skills Wise are continuing to support Richard through our light-touch in work support.

The pool cars at MHA headquarters



Giving back to the Environment

At MHA we believe it's very important to make sure that all the actions we take are carried out with health, safety and the environment in mind. Here's an update on what we've achieved over the last year.

During 2018/19 we maintained:

- The Environmental ISO 14001:2015 Standard
- The Environmental Green Dragon (Welsh Standard) Level 5



We also achieved:

- The ISO 45001 (new health & safety standard)

Pool cars

One of our key environmental objectives was to expand our pool car fleet to reduce fuel usage. During the last year we have expanded the number of pool cars to four, these include two hybrid and two electric cars. The cars are really popular amongst staff and are operating efficiently.

Reducing our CO2 footprint

We've improved the energy efficiency of our homes to help to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. We've installed PV solar panels, external wall insulation and air source heat pumps where possible. We've also replaced roofs and boilers in some of our homes.

Michele Morgan with members of Monmouthshire County Council



Grass cutting



Review of Grounds Maintenance

Following the tendering of a long term maintenance contract in 2018, 600 tenants/ leaseholders took part in workshops and consultations to look at what they wanted the final specification for grounds maintenance to include.

It looked at:

- *Service standards*
- *Grass cutting*
- *Management of trees*
- *Communication*

All of the tenants' comments were then fed into the final specification and this played a key part in Monmouthshire County Council's successful bid.

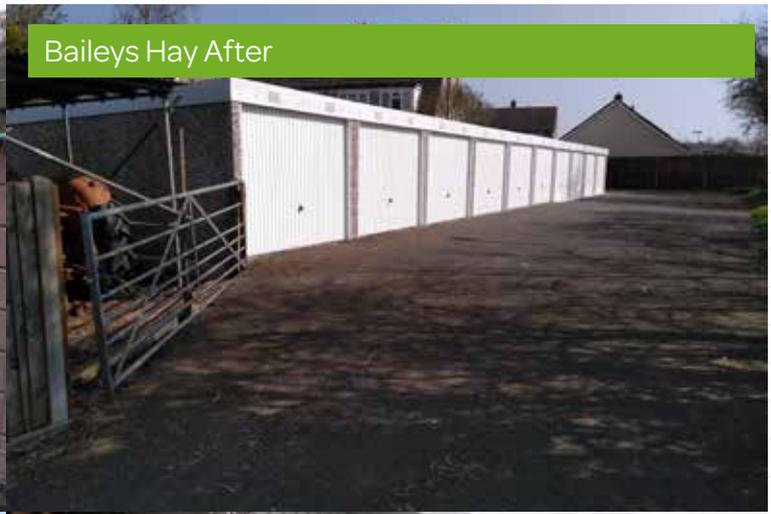
We also had tenants and leaseholders on the panel at the time of tendering the new contract so that they were able to directly input to discussions.

Monmouthshire Council will also be offering support to help tenants with developing community garden schemes and accessing apprenticeships through Monmouthshire's Waste and Street Services. Residents will also be able to receive real time service updates through new digital transformation opportunities.

Baileys Hay Before



Baileys Hay After



Carpenters Row Before



Carpenters Row After



Park Road Before



Park Road After



Garage & Carports

This summer we reviewed how we manage our garages and carports.

As part of this work we held a meeting with six of our tenants to discuss improvements that could be made. We also undertook an email survey with current and former garage/carport tenants. There were 49 respondents to the survey.

Our consultations with tenants played a key part of the review and there were a lot of really good points and ideas raised. Following these discussions, it appeared that there was a lot of focus on the way garages/carports were rented and also used.

Based on the feedback we made several changes:

- We agreed to only allocate a garage or carport to someone whose home is located within one mile.
- Previously once an applicant was offered a garage or carport, they had 48 hours to respond. This has now been increased to 72 hours.
- We've changed our policy to allow household/ domestic items to be stored in garages (that must be non-hazardous/dangerous) without MHA's prior approval being needed. MHA can still remove this approval at any time, for example if parking becomes a big issue in an area.
- A garage tenant may apply to MHA to use a garage for business purposes (not a carport) on a case by case basis. Our Tenancy Agreement states that we allow homes to be used for business with our approval too.
- When a garage/carport tenant moves their home address, we'll consider if the garage/ carport is still of close proximity to the new address. If not and there is a waiting list for the location, we'll end the garage/carport tenancy.



Planned Maintenance

Over the last year, our main focus has changed from improving the inside of our homes to improving the quality and appearance of the outside of our homes.

After extensive consultations with tenants, our Building Services team together with private contractors carried out works to over 800 homes which included:

- External decoration to 662 properties which included the communal areas to 54 flats. This was completed by our trading subsidiary company Capsel.
- Upgrade works to paths, gates, hard-standings, fencing and boundary walls to 228 properties
- Replacement roof covering to 156 homes
- Replacement of 98 external doors
- Replacement windows to 13 properties
- Installation of Photo Voltaic (PV) solar panels on 20 properties

External Upgrades



New roof and painting at Greenfield, Caldicot



Newly painted balconies and garage doors at Cae Pen y Dre, Abergavenny



Before

After

Underhill Crescent, Abergavenny

Garages and Carports

We also carried out a garage programme which included:

- The demolition of 79 dilapidated garages
- Replacement of 61 garages
- The refurbishment of 76 garages
- The addition of 9 car parking spaces



Insulation

Properties at Raglan Way and Middle Way in Bulwark benefited from new roof coverings and over the door canopies. We also installed external wall insulation to improve protection and thermal efficiency.

Refurbishments

We refurbished 60 kitchens, 26 bathrooms and 32 wet rooms, mainly where tenants have opted out of upgrade works and have since changed their minds or vacated the property.

Heating

We replaced over 135 central heating boilers together with associated central heating upgrades.

Tenants were asked to complete a satisfaction form upon completion of the works. Here are some of the comments we've received.

WHQS Environmental Improvements

Environmental improvements were carried out to over 150 properties. The largest project was the first phase at Oakley Close and Oakley Way in Caldicot, where the existing communal rear garden areas have been completely revamped. This included: demolishing the existing sheds, new paving to provide sustainable drainage, new retaining walls, fencing, railings, seating and new sheds for the tenants.

Oakley Way



Before



After

Grove Mansions

Our flats at Grove Mansions in Llanfoist have also had a complete makeover. Following consultation with our tenants, new play areas have been incorporated into the communal gardens to encourage them to be used.

The feedback for all of our environmental projects has been extremely positive.



What our tenants said:

"Absolutely over the moon. Can't praise them enough. Great tradesmen."

"Really great people to deal with. Looks great and we are really happy."

"We love our new kitchen. Absolutely marvellous."

Building Services

Our Building Services team carry out repairs, upgrades and adaptations to our homes. Here's what they've been up to over the past year.

Responsive Repairs

- 10,280 general responsive repairs completed
- 96% of repairs completed right first time
- 4,120 heating repairs completed

Voids (Empty Homes)

The team complete all repairs required within the property and also carry out any planned maintenance upgrade works required such as kitchen and bathroom renewals before handing a property back for let.

- Works were completed at 283 voids during the year
- Average cost £3,358

Heating

The servicing of oil boilers, solid fuel and commercial systems was maintained at 100%.

A total of 135 boiler installations were completed last year including gas, oil and air source fuel types.

Planned Maintenance

2018/19 saw the completion of the internal refurbishment of 15 flats at Oakley Way, Caldicot. The refurbishment work included new kitchens and bathrooms, electrical upgrades, heating upgrades (if necessary), re-plastering, new internal doors, skirting/architraves, full redecoration and new carpets.

Home Adaptations

The team completed:

- 42 level access showers
- 15 stair lifts
- 33 access works/adaptations

New Builds

We were awarded Innovative Housing Programme Funding* this year by the Welsh Government for the construction of four maisonette style flats in Caldicot and four courtyard bungalows in Abergavenny. The grant funding required the works to be carried out by our staff. The project 'Start Up/Slim Down' aims to help people downsize and in turn will help to free up much needed family homes.

Our team managed the construction on both sites. Sub-contractors were employed for the demolition of the garages, the ground works, drainage, building the superstructure, external rendering, internal plastering and the landscaping. Our staff completed the roof structure, including the installation of photo-voltaic panels and installed the aluminium windows and doors. They also completed the internal fit-out including the heating system with underfloor heating, the electrical installation, carpentry works, plumbing works and decoration.

**The Innovative Housing Programme is a fund that was created by the Welsh Government to help deliver homes for the future.*

Inside our Cwrt Y Ffynnon development



Clos Ger y Nant, Caldicot:

25 x 2, 3, 4 bedroom homes



Cwrt Llwyfen, Caldicot:

4 x 1 bed houses



Rented new homes built this year

Anghidi Close, Tintern:

2 and 3 bedroom houses



Cwrt y Ffynnon, Abergavenny:

4 x 1 bed bungalows



Creating New Homes

It's been a very busy year at MHA, working with Monmouthshire County Council and our many partners to increase the much needed provision of affordable homes in the County.

We have invested £2,523,385 of Welsh Assembly Government Social Housing Grant and created 86 new homes across Monmouthshire.

What is 'Homebuy'?

We are working with our developer partners to create opportunities for people to buy their own home at a discounted price through the Welsh Government's Homebuy scheme. Homes at King's Wood Gate, Monmouth and at our exciting new developments The Alders, Dingestow and Govilon are available under this scheme with lots more in the pipeline. To register your interest and find out more about Homebuy visit www.monmouthshirehousing.co.uk/buyyourhome

Regenerating Communities

Our #LoveCaldicot regeneration programme is the largest ever seen in the town to date. We have refurbished some of the unsightly blocks of flats and demolished others to make way for 37 affordable new houses. With the flats now fully occupied, tenants have now settled into

their new homes and with comments such as "Amazing – mind blowing" our tenants feel as passionate as we do about Oakley Way.

Creating Homes for the Future

Cwrt Llwyfen and Cwrt Ffynnon were funded by the Welsh Assembly's Innovative Housing Fund. Created in partnership with Cardiff University's Welsh School of Architecture and built by our very own Building Services team. The four, one bedroom mews-style houses in Caldicot were built as 'start up' homes for under 35s and the 4 x one bedroom courtyard bungalows in Abergavenny were created for older households looking to downsize. Both built on old garage sites.

Each home has been built to sustainable and energy efficient standards with an impressive SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) energy rating of over 100.

Going forward, MHA have received additional Innovative Housing Funding to create a further 17 innovative homes for people looking to downsize and start up.

The Scrutiny Panel



Scrutiny Panel

MHA's Scrutiny Panel is a group of tenants that meet regularly as critical friends to assess performance and advise on areas for improvement. Below are some of the recommendations that they have made and the action we have taken.

Recommendation: Introduce an option for tenants to report ASB issues through text message and promote this widely.

What we did: We have since improved and updated the information on our ASB service whilst using a range of media to make sure our residents are all aware of the wide range reporting options that we offer.

Recommendation: Raise the profile and availability of the Easy Read Tenancy Agreement.

What we did: Easy Read Tenancy Agreements are now used where it is appropriate to do so, an example being supported housing schemes. We have also extended this and reviewed our written correspondence with tenants to make sure it is easy to access and easy to read.

Recommendation: Develop a standard practice for tree management to reduce turnaround times and reduce potential damage caused through overgrowth.

What we did: We have now incorporated pro-active tree inspections into our ground maintenance contracts which will help us to manage expectations and reduce the cost of reactive work.

Recommendation: Introduce an environmental section in the next edition of You Said We Did.

What we did: An environmental section has been included in this edition and can be seen on page 25.

Recommendation: Fully overhaul the content on the website relating to rent management and Universal Credit.

What we did: MHA now has a brand new and improved website which was developed in partnership with tenants. The content relating to rent management and Universal Credit was changed accordingly.

Recommendation: Introduce a freephone number for the rent line.

What we did: We now have a freephone number that allows tenants to contact MHA free of charge for advice and assistance regarding rent - **0800 085 3557**.



Service Testing Team

MHA's Service Testing Team are dedicated mystery shoppers who provide an invaluable service by influencing and inspiring change to improve the services we provide to customers.

The team get together to:

- Carry out inspections of work undertaken by MHA.
- Take part in surveys and conduct surveys.
- Mystery shop to ensure we are achieving the standards you expect from us.

Here are just a select few examples of recommendations from the STT following checks they have previously carried out:

Voids Check

Looking at the standard of voids from a tenant's perspective as part of a large review of the whole service.

Following a recommendation, tenants are now given the option to keep wallpaper and other decoration. As a result, this has improved decoration standards for properties as well as improving the overall satisfaction of tenants. It has also reduced the offers refused and re-let time due to the decoration and cleanliness of voids.

Cleanliness

Another finding of the STT deemed the overall cleanliness of properties to be poor and in need of improvement.

Examples included:

- Lights and light fittings dirty
- Floors needing to be cleaned
- Dirty kitchen surfaces
- Mould on window sills

As a result of this, the issues were addressed with the cleaning supplier and standards were set for the cleanliness of properties.



Communal Areas

The STT also found that some of the communal areas were generally tatty and in need of a freshen up. Oakley Way was used as an example of what the communal areas should look like due to its inviting and vibrant colours. The decoration of MHA's communal areas has since been addressed.

Cleaning Check

As part of the cleaning contract review before tender and reports of substandard cleaning from customers.

STT were able to identify that tenants were originally unsure of what exactly should be cleaned as part of the contract so a list of what the cleaning should entail was pinned to notice boards in the communal areas. The tenants were also unaware of how often the areas should be cleaned so this information was made readily available.

Communication

Another prominent issue that STT found was that many tenants had issues with communication, this included tenants being unsure of who to contact with cleaning issues and a lack of direct communication between tenants and the cleaners. In order to address these issues, details of exactly who to contact with specific issues were published and the communal notice board is now utilised as a two way point of communication between the cleaners and tenants.

As you can see, there is an abundance of knowledge within the team and they really want to ensure that MHA and its tenants are working together to provide the best, most efficient services possible. Staff welcome the opportunity to improve services from actual feedback from customers who have used the services, rather than from our assumptions. The recommendations above are just a sample of recommendations from the team which have resulted in big changes to processes, but even the most little 'tweaks' can have the biggest impact to other tenants, making services and processes much easier to use.

If you would like to know more or are interested in joining the team, call Marianne Bowen on **01495 745776** or Lorna Selmer on **01495 761142** or email **marianne.bowen@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk / lorna.selmer@monmouthshirehousing.co.uk**



Meet Rob

Rob is one of our many employees that regularly work in your communities. He's a plumber and has worked for MHA for over 11 years.

What's your favourite thing about working for MHA?

"I think the planned maintenance side of MHA is really good, it's a lot more pro-active than what I was used to in the past which means we can fix some problems before they become bigger issues."

Do you have a favourite part of working in the community?

"It has to be the different types of people you meet on the job. You meet people from all walks of life and it means that no day is ever the same."

Here's your comments about Rob:

"Rob attended to a leak at my home and was very pleasant throughout."

"Rob did a wonderful job when repairing my tap, I'm very grateful!"

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Social media accounts are not monitored 24 hours a day. To report a repair please use our hotline number **0800 980 7751**.

www.monmouthshirehousing.co.uk



Scan the QR code to access the MHA website.

