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Cardiff Student Community Partnership

2015 – 2018 Action Plan

*Working together to improve quality of life for students,
residents and the wider community*

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Introduction and Background

Cardiff's large student population is drawn from 3 expanding universities, namely Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales, each with an international reputation for teaching and learning excellence. This is reflected in the City's growing student population which comprises over 16% of the local population (2011 Census), an increase of 5% over the past 10 years (2001 Census). Students form an integral part of the community in Cardiff and bring many benefits to the City. They raise Cardiff's profile by creating a vibrant and culturally dynamic city, contribute over £140 million in annual expenditure stimulating retail, social and leisure sectors and participate in a wide range of voluntary and community activities. Despite this positive contribution however, the high concentration of students residing within small geographical areas of the City can result in housing and lifestyle pressures that lead to a negative impact on communities. Issues such as waste, noise, anti-social behaviour, poor housing and feelings of 'loss of community' are all concerns that have all been widely recognised as needing attention for the benefit of students and residents alike.

In recognition of the need to address these issues, the City of Cardiff Council, and the University Quartet made up of the Universities three Vice chancellors, Deputy Leader and Corporate Director of the City of Cardiff Council developed Cardiff's Student Community Action Plan 2007-2011. Whilst acknowledging the benefits that students brought to the wider community the Plan provided a platform upon which collaborative working has been developed to address those issues with a view to improving a sustainable community for permanent and transient residents alike.

The plan set out a number of key actions to address a range of issues, including improving the quality and quantity of student accommodation across the city, promoting a clean, attractive and sustainable environment, reducing crime against students and encouraging neighbourliness and respect.

The partners also fund a Student Liaison post, to assist in the implementation of the Plan with a view to strengthening partnerships between the Council and Universities and creating a single point of contact on student housing and lifestyle issues.

The plan has been in place for several years now, and has secured a great deal. The partnership remains committed to continuing this good work by building on successes and identifying further opportunities for the future. This new and revised Student Community Action Plan has been prepared to reflect on the many achievements since the original Plan's implementation and building upon these, set out plans for the future. In doing so, the plan looks ahead to the next 3 years identifying appropriate actions and improvements.

Statements by partners: City of Cardiff Council, Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and University of South Wales

“The City of Cardiff Council, Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales have been working together since 2007 to recognise and address the impact of students in the city. The partnership has achieved a great deal and having made significant progress so far, we are delighted to refocus our strategic aim of working together to improve the quality of life for students, residents and the wider community through this new and revised Cardiff Student Community Action Plan. The City of Cardiff Council remains committed to working together to deliver positive improvements to the community that will not only enhance the student and resident experience but benefit Cardiff as a whole.”

Councillor Daniel De’Ath, Cabinet Member for Safety, Engagement and Democracy, the City of Cardiff Council

“Cardiff Metropolitan University is committed to working with our partners on this collective strategy for delivering improvements that address such important student housing and lifestyle issues across the city. The partnership has achieved a great deal since the founding of the action plan in 2007 – helping students to feel a bigger part of the wider Cardiff community; and importantly, that they a living and studying within a safe and welcoming environment. The agreed action plan recognises that only through joint working and collaboration can any improvements be progressed and as a university, we are committed to continued participation and support for the actions outlined within it. The latest review will ensure we are all focused on the core issues facing both students and the community for the next five years and, in supporting Cardiff Council’s ‘What Matters’ strategy for the city as a whole, can only serve to improve the overall experience for all.”

Cardiff Metropolitan University

“The University of South Wales is delighted to be part of this initiative as we want to enhance the student experience of those living in the private sector.”

Rob Matthews, Director of Campus Services, University of South Wales

“We are very pleased with what has been achieved so far via the Cardiff Student Community Plan since it's creations in 2007. Many successful joint initiatives have been introduced and developed. However there are further student and community concerns to be addressed, and we remain committed to working together as strategic partners in order to further enhance the student experience in Cardiff, and to assist in supporting a cohesive, dynamic and respectful community.”

Tracey Austin, Deputy Director (Residences), Cardiff University

1 Cardiff Student Community Action Plan

1.1 Purpose and Aims

The Plan provides a collective strategy for delivering improvements that address the housing and lifestyle issues associated with high levels of students living in small geographical areas of the City. The Plan recognises that only through joint working and collaboration can any improvements be progressed. They have therefore developed the following joint mission:-

Working together to improve the quality of life for students, residents and the wider community

To do this, the Partnership has adopted the following 5 outcomes that concisely describe what the Plan and the Partnership set out to deliver, namely:-

Improve community relations by working with partners to:-

- ***Secure better accommodation in student areas;***
- ***Encourage neighbourliness and community respect;***
- ***Improve community health and safety;***
- ***Promote environmental sustainability;***
- ***Develop communications to create better informed communities***

1.2 Partnership details

The Cardiff Student Community Plan 2015 - 2018 is a partnership document developed by the City of Cardiff Council and the three Universities, namely Cardiff, Cardiff Metropolitan and the University of South Wales. The Student Liaison Management Group strategically addresses the challenges of the Student Community Action Plan and makes recommendations for the direction and priority of the plan by reviewing, monitoring and developing the action plan. The group is made up of the three University Accommodation Managers, the City of Cardiff Council's Housing Enforcement Service Manager and the Operational Manager for Public Protection & Private Sector Housing.

Whilst key partners consist of the City of Cardiff Council and the three universities, much progress has been made to integrate a wide range of key partners from public, private and charity enterprises. The plans success relies on partnership working. New partnerships and introducing new stakeholders to the plan is integral to success. This wider joint working is secured by the Student Liaison Officer who liaises with a range of stakeholders, including:

- The student body
- Local residents
- Local community groups
- Landlords and Letting Agencies
- Universities
- Student Unions
- Public Health Services (Police, Fire, NHS)
- A cross section of charities
- Advisory services
- NUS
- Councillors
- Keep Cardiff Tidy partners
- Private stakeholders including private hall providers
- Council services
 - Including Housing Enforcement, Waste Management, Trading Standards, Health and Public Protection, Noise Pollution, Planning
- Landlord Accreditation Wales
- Neighbourhood Management Partners
- Health Task Groups
- Additional Licensing
- Sustainability groups
- Partnership and Communities Together Liaison

1.3 Strategic context of the Cardiff Student Community Action Plan

Over recent years partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors in Cardiff have worked together to transform the city and improve quality of life for the people who live here. Cardiff's "What Matters" Strategy brings together the components of the Proud Capital Community Strategy; the Health, Social Care and Well being Strategy; the Children and Young People's Plan; and the Community Safety Action Plan and includes economic and environmental elements. In pooling collective effort, partners are able to work across organisational boundaries to work in a smarter, more efficient way to deliver better outcomes for Cardiff and better value for money.

The collective vision of the 'What Matters' Strategy is that by "2020, Cardiff will be a world class European capital city with an exceptional quality of life at the heart of a thriving city region". To achieve this partners have agreed 7 outcomes (see diagram).

The Cardiff Student Community Action Plan contributes directly to a number of these key outcomes by aiming to ensure that Cardiff has a **clean, attractive and sustainable environment**, **is a great place to live, work and play** and **has a fair, just and inclusive society where people are safe and feel safe, are healthy** and **achieve their full potential**.



1.4 Review and monitoring

Since its inception, the action plan has been a living and working document continually updated. Desktop reviews have enabled stakeholders and partners to amend the plan and annual Action Plan Events have provided opportunities to revise the Plan where necessary.

In facilitating the effective review of the Plan, the Student Liaison Officer will :-

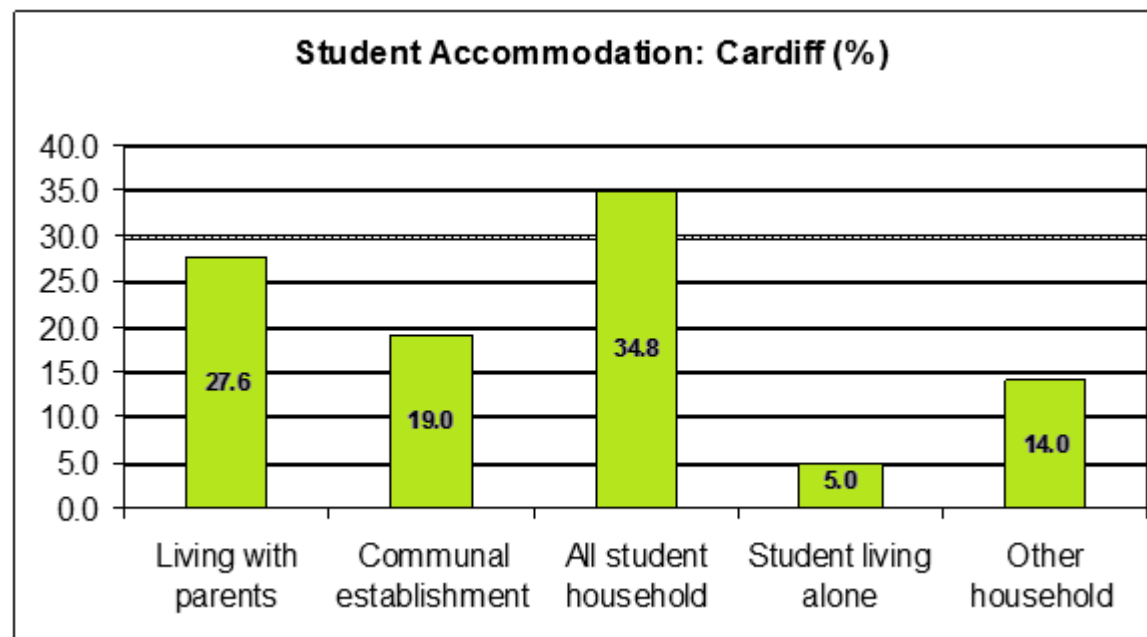
- Monitor progress regularly by seeking feedback on progress on actions from lead partners;
- Review progress of the Action Plan against set timescales;
- Hold update events and workshops to allow stakeholders to contribute to reviewing/revising the plan

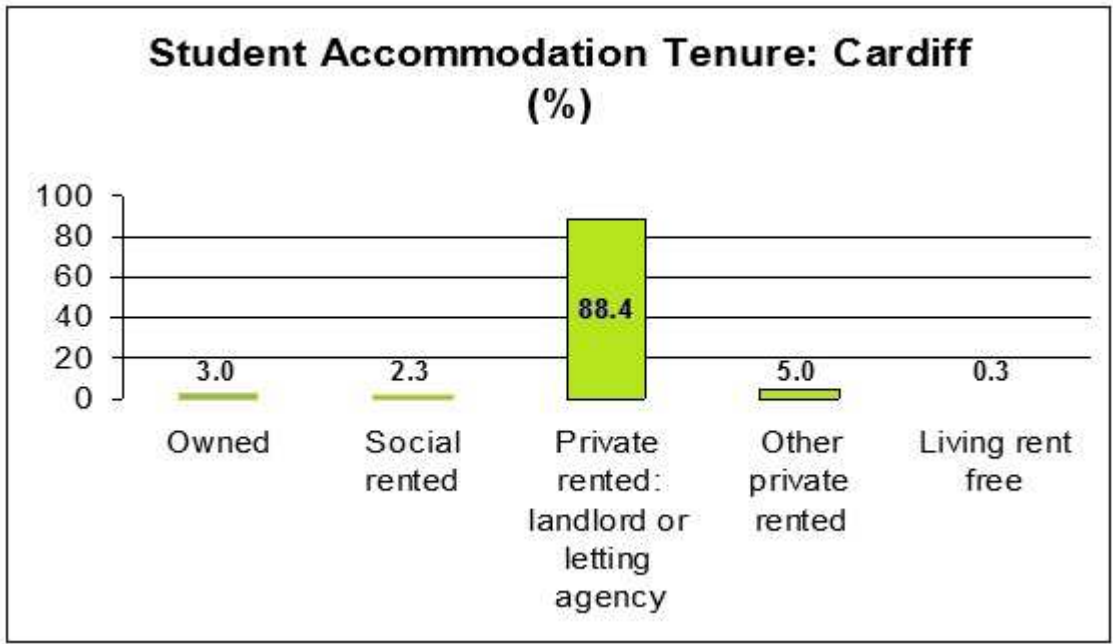
2 Securing better accommodation for students

Student demand for accommodation in the city is significantly diverse and evidence suggests that preferences shift over a student's course of study. Typically the types of accommodation available are University Halls of Residence and Private Halls of Residence, which are favoured at the beginning of study, and private sector rented properties which students tend to choose in their 2nd, 3rd or postgraduate years of study.

2.1 Student demand for accommodation

The 2011 census collected information on the household type and tenure in which students live and the graph to the left shows that 19% of students live in University and Private Halls of Residence and 34.8% live in all student households. Over the past ten years, the number of students living with parents has increased by 11.3% and the number of all student households has decreased by 9.4% (2001 and 2011 census data). This data implies that the rise in tuition fees has had an impact on student accommodation choices in Cardiff.





The 2011 Census revealed there are 43,071 full time students living in Cardiff, of which 36,304 are aged over 18. There are 3,298 student households in Cardiff that are solely occupied by students. The graph to the left shows that 93.4% of the 3,298 student households are in the private rented sector. As detailed in the table below, 18% of the total housing stock in Cathays, Gabalfa and Plasnewydd is solely occupied by student tenants. It is worth noting that this number does not take into consideration the number of students who live with professionals, their family or in purpose built student accommodation.

In the Cardiff Private Sector House Condition Survey 2005, it was found that a quarter of the unfit properties in Cardiff were in the private rented sector which inevitably brings issues concerning the quality of student accommodation.

Electoral Ward	All households		Privately rented properties		Full time student households		Full time student privately rented households	
	Number	%	Number	% of all households	Number	% of all households	Number	% of all privately rented households
Cathays	6,192	100	4,261	68.8%	1,841	29.7%	1,769	41.5%
Plasnewydd	7,565	100	4,171	55.1%	827	10.9%	785	18.8%
Gabalfa	2,426	100	928	38.3%	252	10.4%	216	23.5%

A survey undertaken by the Royal Bank of Scotland concluded the cost of living for students at Britain's major universities put Cardiff as the 6th most cost effective university town, however the survey also found that a quarter of students underestimate the weekly cost of living while at University. This inevitably impacts on the type and quality of accommodation that students favour.

Utilising Halls of Residences to provide accommodation for students is one method of ensuring student accommodation needs are met and reduces pressures on the private sector to provide accommodation. If students reside in Halls of Residence this reduces the pressure on the housing market by reducing competition for accommodation and benefits the host community by increasing availability and choice of accommodation in the area. However, there are additional costs involved when living in halls of residences compared to living in private rented houses, and many students cannot afford this type of accommodation for three years. Living in the private rented sector can also be seen as living a more independent lifestyle, a lifestyle that many students strive to obtain in their 2nd, 3rd and postgraduate years of study.

Cardiff University guarantees all first year students and overseas returning students a sole occupancy place in residences providing the application procedure is followed. Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of South Wales enter into nomination agreements with private providers of halls of residence when extra accommodation is required which assists greatly in providing the right number of student dwellings. Furthermore many of the additional spaces required will be absorbed by recent new developments, however given the unclear demand in Cardiff from students attending Universities outside Cardiff, and the unknown impact of the Welsh Government's policy on top up fees it is likely that the additional population increase will create additional demand on the existing private rented sector.

The number of students with disabilities in Cardiff that would require adapted housing is unknown, however both Cardiff University and Cardiff Metropolitan University offer accommodation to disabled students within their existing stock, both also offering to adapt accommodation to meet individual needs if provision is not accessible and to provide disabled students with accommodation throughout their course if required. These positive steps are replicated in the private sector as private halls of residence providers are required to supply a proportion of adapted rooms for people with disabilities under Building Regulations.

2.2 What we've achieved so far

Student accommodation raises many issues concerning quantity, quality, access and cost and this Action Plan attempts to address them in a number of ways. Since 2007 many positive steps have been taken and the following list provides a flavour of the work undertaken and our achievements so far.

- **Landlord Accreditation Wales** has trained and supported over 840 landlords with properties in Cardiff, raising standards of knowledge and professionalism in the private rented sector and improving the way landlords deal with their properties and tenants. Those accredited members rent out over 3,000 properties in Cardiff.
- **University Housing Lists** advertise only those properties owned by landlords accredited under the Landlord Accreditation Wales Scheme.
- **Cathays Additional Licensing Scheme** has resulted in an additional 1750 properties being licensed that would otherwise not have been, thereby ensuring improved standards of living for tenants.
- **'You're In. Now What?'** annual campaign informs students of their tenant responsibilities in the private rented sector by distributing and displaying information on issues such as community relations, rubbish and recycling, security and health and safety. Moving In and Out checklists have been produced to support the campaign. These are distributed to over 600 landlords and letting agents in Cardiff for inclusion in their student tenancy welcome packs.
- **Housing weeks** take place annually helping students make informed decisions when looking for a house in the private rented sector and raising awareness of the pitfalls of taking such a major step.
- **Halls to House** annual campaign informs students living in halls of residence about living in the private rented sector. Held before the summer break, partners come together to give advice to students about re-use, sustainable travel, securing valuables and advice about moving from halls to houses.
- **Cardiff Digs** is a dedicated website for students to access a range of housing and living advice on private rented accommodation including costs, accredited letting agents, landlords, moving from halls etc.

- **Get It Out For Cardiff** is a joint, award winning campaign that helps students to clear out their rubbish at the end of the academic year with the aim of re-using and recycling as much as possible. During 2013, 18 tonnes of waste was re-used by students donating unwanted items to charity. Many halls of residences across Cardiff now have permanent YMCA clothing banks that encourage students to recycle unwanted goods all year round.

2.3 Plans for the future

The Action Plan at Appendix A highlights in detail the specific actions we intend to undertake to address accommodation issues in the City. The following headings therefore represent the overarching objectives of this new revised Plan.

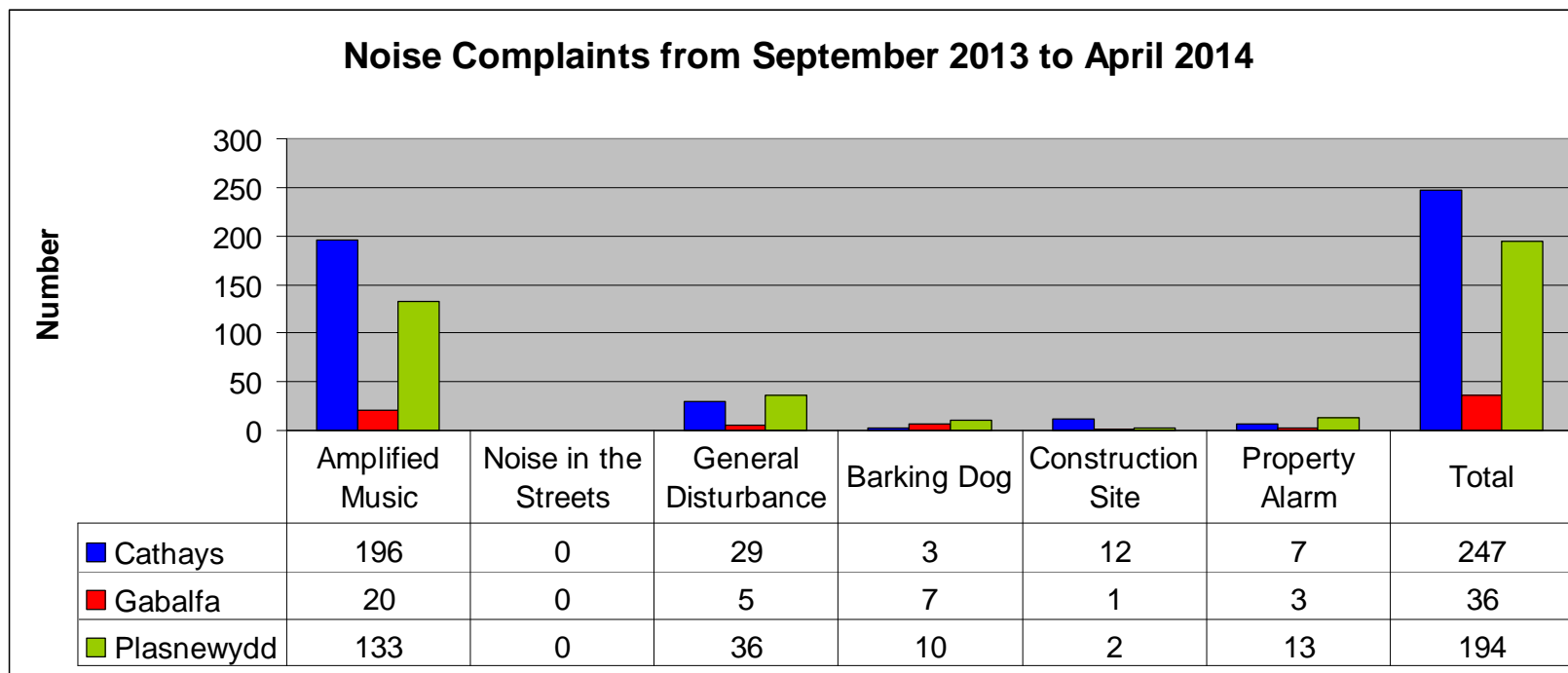
1. Monitor any population changes of students
2. Ensure student accommodation and impact are incorporated into planning policy
3. Ensure adequate supply of Halls of Residences
4. Maximise opportunities to provide information on accessing the private rented sector
5. Reduce the level of properties below the legally required standard
6. Educate and improve student knowledge of legal rights
7. Review access to accommodation for disabled students

3 Encouraging neighbourliness and community respect

3.1 Background

It is understood that many student and non-student residents do not engage with one and other due to the transient nature of their occupation, which can lead to feelings of 'loss of community'. The 2011 census showed that 40% of privately rented households in Cathays, 20% in Plasnewydd and 20% in Gabalfa are inhabited by student tenants, who tend to be short term residents.

The high concentration of students residing within one small geographical area can result in a number of negative issues coming to the fore. Issues concerning litter and rubbish, noise and anti social behaviour can lead to tensions between local residents and students. Students are often the target for criticism and can be perceived by some as messy, noisy, transitory, alcohol infused and with little stake in the areas in which they reside. Whilst there is little evidence to support this, information from the City of Cardiff Council's Pollution Control team regarding noise complaints indicate that more noise complaints are received from Cathays, Gabalfa, and Plasnewydd than other City Wards. The graph below shows that the main type of noise complaint received related to amplified music. It is unclear if these complaints are in relation to student households but on those occasions where they are, there is good partnership working between the Police, Universities, and the City of Cardiff Council to resolve anti social behaviour in the community.



3.2 What we've achieved so far

The issues around waste, community relations, noise and anti-social behaviour are key messages that need to be given out year on year due to the transitory population of students. The work we have undertaken as partners is about fostering good habits and relationships from day one. Making students aware of issues they may face and their responsibilities prevents problems and predictable pitfalls. The partnership tries to address the student population in unique and innovative ways so that the student's experience of University and the City exceed expectation and makes a more positive experience for everyone.

Many steps have been taken to address issues of neighbourliness which have had a positive impact on the community and examples of these can be found below.

- Regular **Partnership and Communities Together (PACT)** meetings across the main student wards provide an opportunity for residents to highlight community issues having an impact on quality of life. Attended by a wide range of authorities and community members these meetings have improved relations, increased community representation and have led the way in terms of consultation over key messages, information, education priorities and identification of key community priorities.
- **'You're In. Now What?'** annual campaign aims to inform students of their tenant responsibilities in the private rented sector by distributing and displaying information on issues such as community relations, rubbish and recycling, security and health and safety. Moving in checklists are distributed to students and landlords as part of this campaign.
- **Operation Saturn** is a police led operation held annually to coincide with the return of the university students in Cathays after the summer vacation. The initiative aims to deter crime and anti social behaviour, and ensure the safety and security of the community and student population. Increased police resources are provided and Council Noise Officers are available throughout the evenings to respond to noise complaints and improve community responsibilities relating to noise.
- **Local resident volunteers work alongside students**, joining and supporting crime and waste awareness walkabouts and education drives.
- **Community postcards and Unity News** bridge the gap between student and non student residents by creating communication channels between the two groups.

- **Community cohesion events** such as community fun days run by South Wales Police, allow the public to engage with the student population.
- **Partnership working between the City of Cardiff Council's Noise Pollution team, Police Student Liaison Officers, Universities and Student Unions** to discipline students creating problems in the community, utilising the University Disciplinary process & Noise Pollution powers.
- Through **Cardiff Student Community Action Plan** and the **Student Liaison Officer** role, lines of communication between partners, agencies, communities and students have improved greatly, with all bodies being aware of who to contact when problems arise.
- **Increased understanding by students and non-students** of their social responsibilities and impact has been achieved through key Student Union and University partnerships resulting in reduced negative associations between the groups.

3.3 Plans for the future.

The Action Plan at Appendix A highlights in detail the specific actions we intend to undertake to address neighbourliness and community respect in the City. The following headings therefore represent the overarching objectives of this new revised Plan.

8. Maintain and improve strong community relations through effective Neighbourhood Management.

4 Improving community health and safety

4.1 Crime

Cardiff is a very safe city; the Complete University Guide to the UK's best and worst cities for burglaries, theft and assault found Cardiff in its top 12 of safer cities. However, students can sometimes be seen as vulnerable or easy targets by those who commit crime.

Students and student houses can be a high target for crime as student houses will commonly have multiple high value electronics present such as MP3 players, mobile phones, TVs, DVDs, laptop computers etc. With many multiple householders in a student property, burglaries of student houses can be a very profitable enterprise and the concentration of student houses within an area can assist burglars to target a number of houses within a limited area and time. The presence of bicycles is also an easy target for thieves due to difficulties of storage and a lack of appropriate locks.

Joint partnership working between South Wales Police, the City of Cardiff Council, the Universities and Students Union, plays an important part in reducing crime against students, and educating students on crime prevention.

Between 2012 and 2013, South Wales Police and the City of Cardiff Council's Housing Enforcement department, worked in partnership to tackle crime and unlicensed properties in Cathays. Student Police Volunteers helped to identify all unlicensed HMO properties in Cathays, by door knocking and speaking to residents on crime prevention walkabouts. Approximately 500 properties were visited by Student volunteers, and through this 63 licensable properties have been identified. This resulted in an **81% reduction** in reported burglaries in the top five streets, and across the Cathays sector there was a **29% reduction** in reported burglary in the same period.

4.2 Access to health services

Students living away from home for the first time may not be fully aware of the health services available to them, due to different services available at their home in other areas of the UK and/or abroad. With 36,000 students residing mainly in three areas of Cardiff, there is also the issue of too high a demand on services. However, allocation and access to health services is high on the partnerships agenda and partners work together to ensure every Cardiff student registers with a local GP and is made aware of the wider health provisions available to them. The partnership ensures students have access to enhanced mechanisms of support and treatment by requiring them to register with a GP practice when they first arrive at key collection and Fresher's events.

4.3 What we've achieved so far

In addressing Community Health and Safety, the Partnership has worked collaboratively to introduce initiatives that raise awareness amongst students to minimise crime in the community, deter crime and anti social behaviour and ensure the safety and security of the community and student population as follows:-

- **'Lock it. Hide it. Keep it'** is a joint campaign with the police aimed at students to increase safety and reduce/prevent burglaries. A range of initiatives are in place including increased police presence, marketing drives including door to door safety and community awareness messages, property registration initiatives, and a team of volunteer student police wardens.
- The **Police Student Volunteer Initiative** gives students the opportunity to volunteer alongside the police, community and partner agencies and help educate and inform students of key safety and security information. Campaigns have included advice and door to door visits, a mini bus service that identifies vulnerable individuals and gets them home safely, advice on going home for the holiday, CCTV operations, Operation Belladonna to reduce underage drinking, assisting in the policing of large events e.g. Varsity and music events across the city, plus community relations and social responsibilities. The initiative has grown in scope and impact each year.
- **Operation Saturn** is a police led operation held annually to coincide with the return of the university students after the summer vacation, and takes place in Cathays and the City centre. Aimed at deterring crime and anti social behaviour and ensuring safety and security of the community and student population, increased police and council resources are provided to respond to issues that arise. Between September and October 2011 Robberies and sexual assaults were down by 100% on last year and offenders of

the small amount of burglaries that have occurred have been arrested and charged. Over twelve months 2010/2011 there have been 4,411 less victims of crime and 429 fewer burglaries compared to the year before.

- **Operation Scott** is a police led cycling operation aimed at improving safety of cyclists and pedestrians. Utilising student volunteers, police officers offer safety advice to cyclists who are on the pavement, who go through red lights, or who are without lights, instead of giving a fixed penalty notice.
- **Student Safety Partnership** meets on a quarterly basis to share best practice across the institutions and set up safety campaigns including 'Be Safe' to heighten safety awareness and advice about living in local communities. This group also supports the U-Safe and 'Going Home for Holidays' campaigns that offer crime prevention advice to students.
- **A Student Safety Bus** provided by Cardiff Students' Union and managed by South Wales Police, identifies students who may be vulnerable due to their intoxication, location or time of night and takes them to a place of safety. The bus runs in conjunction with Operation Saturn during September and throughout the year on Wednesday nights and high profile events by student volunteers. Wristbands were introduced in 2013 delivering the message 'How did you get home?' to promote responsible drinking and to adapt behaviour. The wristband and Student Safety Bus initiatives were deemed so successful that multiple Universities and Councils across the UK are replicating the service in their area.
- **Property marking initiatives** are held where students are given the opportunity to mark their property (e.g. Bikes, phones, electrical items etc.) with Ultra Violet marker pens and to sign up to immobilise.com, a free property register used by the police to identify and return stolen property.
- **Enhanced health service for students** has been provided by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board who have worked in partnership with general practices and Cardiff University to ensure that students across all institutions are able to register with a general practice. This includes clear allocation of GP surgeries and contact and procedure for instances where registration is unavailable.
- **GP registration** has been made a high priority for all returning students, with reminders about GP registration given to students in halls of residence and the private rented sector via Moving In checklists, "You're In Now What" posters, social media and the opportunity to register at key collection and welcome events.

- **Free Home Fire Safety check** provided by South Wales Fire and Rescue Service to ensure households have the correct Fire Safety measures in place.
- Partnership with **Cardiff University Security and Porter Service** to tackle issues such as bike theft and other crimes against students, neighbourly disputes and issues in the community such as noise and waste.
- **Usafe campaign** aimed at 1st year students on their arrival to University provides information about staying safe in the city.
- **Burglary partnership** work between the City of Cardiff Council Housing Enforcement and South Wales Police resulted in an 80% reduction in burglaries across the top five streets for burglary in Cathays between 2012 and 2013. This work is continuing throughout Cathays and the student areas.
- **City Centre Triage and Alcohol Treatment Centre** was set up in 2012 in response to the demand placed on health and police services by severe alcohol intoxication exhibited by people during the night time economy. The centre works in partnership with Cardiff and Vale Health Board, the Welsh Ambulance Service, Street Pastors and South Wales Police, and works by diverting intoxicated patients away from the Accident and Emergency units.
- **Health and Safety page on Cardiff Digs** provides up to date information to students about staying safe and healthy in Cardiff.

4.4 Plans for the future

The Action Plan at Appendix A highlights in detail the specific actions we intend to undertake to address community health and safety issues in the City. The following headings therefore represent the overarching objectives of this new revised Plan.

9. Work collaboratively to minimise crime in the community
10. Ensure allocation and access of health services for students is appropriate
11. Work collaboratively to address alcohol and substance abuse related issues
12. Work collaboratively to minimise fire hazards in the private rented sector, and the community
13. Raise awareness of consumer rights and obligations

5 Promoting environmental sustainability

Sustainability and the environment is high on everyone's agenda. Sustainable living means using resources better, wasting less and considering the local and global implications of the way we all live. Students can play a key role in delivering this by caring for the environment in which they live and study. Making small changes to daily habits can make a big difference in driving efficiency and contributing to the protection of our environment.

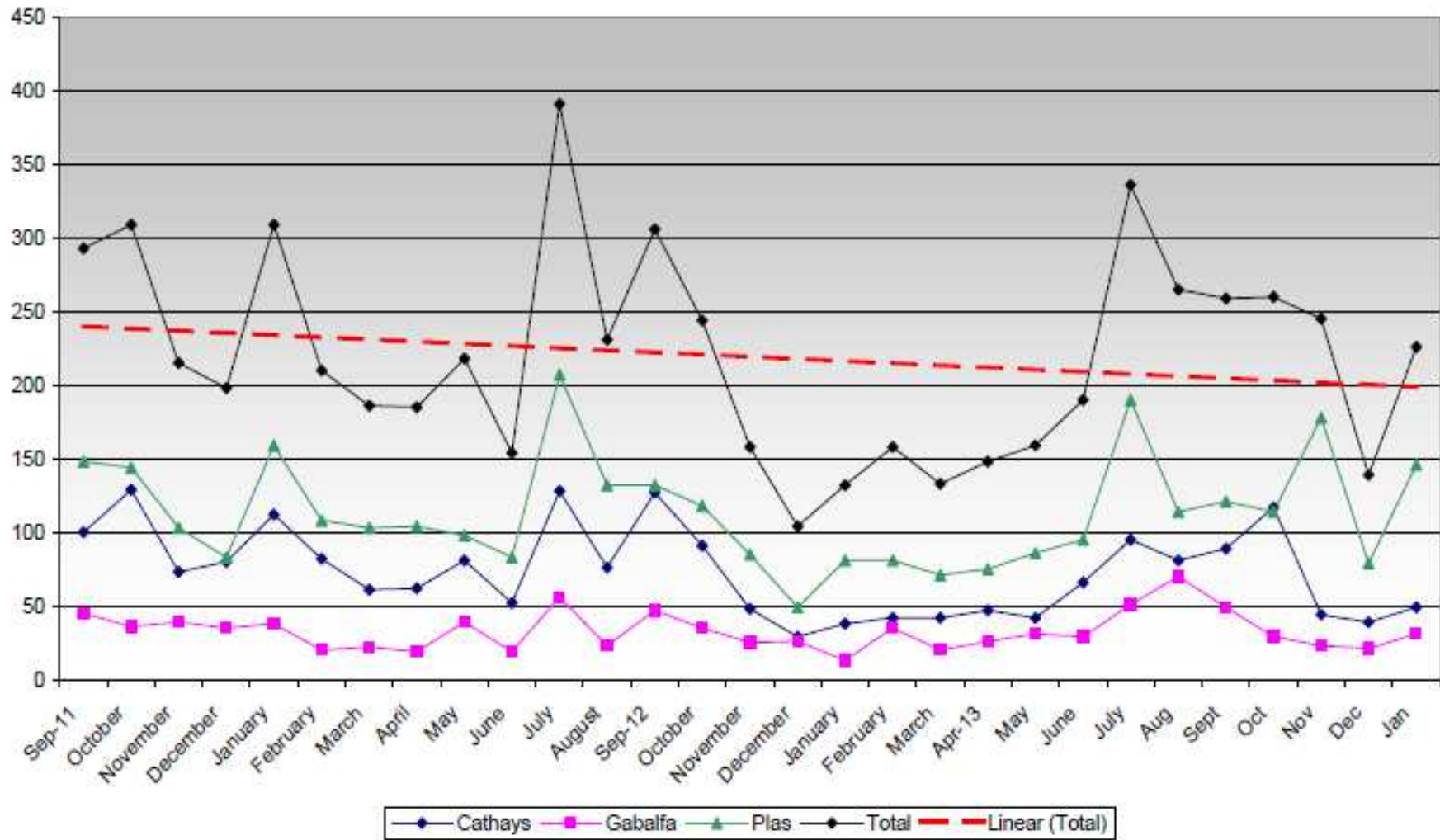
By simply considering, how they travel, the food they eat, the use of energy and water, the amount of waste they produce, re-use and recycling and how they involve themselves in the community, they will not only be making a big impact environmentally, but have the potential to realise financial as well as social benefits for themselves whilst addressing some of the negative issues associated with students residing in small geographical areas.

5.1 Waste Management

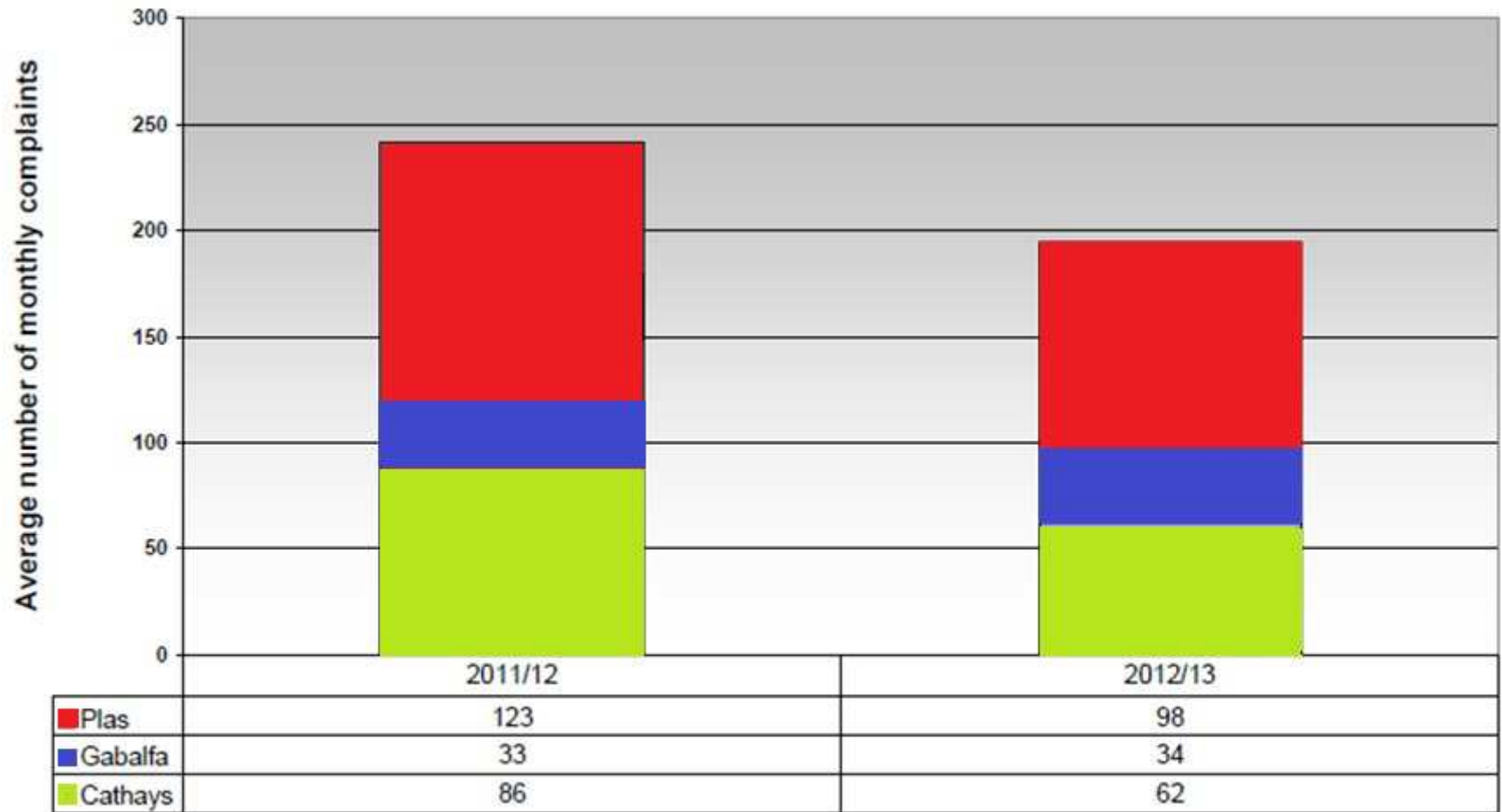
Waste issues have been high up on the partnerships agenda and many strategies have been assessed, actions implemented and improvements made. The main issue surrounding waste management in student households is the amount of household waste and litter on the streets and in gardens, mainly due to incorrect storage and disposal. Education drives and partnership working are key to improving the issues and promoting environmental sustainability.

The following graphs show how requests to deal with waste issues increase over the summer months, a period of time when students typically end their tenancy agreement and either move house or leave Cardiff. The "Get It Out for Cardiff" campaign is integral to improving these issues. The campaign educates students about correct waste disposal and encourages them to re-use and recycle where possible. The Get It Out for Cardiff partnership remains strong and partners work to develop and improve the scheme year on year. The second graph demonstrates how service requests and complaints have decreased between 2011 and 2012, thus highlighting the schemes success.

Monthly requests received by Waste Management from the public regarding waste issues, in Cathays, Gabalfa and Plasnewydd between September 2011 and January 2014



Average number of monthly complaints received by Waste Management from the public, regarding waste issues during the “Get It Out for Cardiff” periods.



5.1.1 What we've achieved so far

- **Waste and recycling collections** are now collected on the same day in the student wards to avoid confusion and reduce the risk of waste being put out for collection on the wrong day. Recycling and food waste are now collected weekly, with general waste being collected fortnightly, to encourage recycling and correct waste disposal.
- An **annual education and enforcement drive** is conducted to ensure new students understand their social responsibilities. Tidy Text for example is widely promoted where residents receive a free text message to remind them of the correct days for collections and has been enthusiastically taken up by students.
- **Get It Out For Cardiff** is a joint, award winning campaign that helps students to clear out their rubbish at the end of the academic year with the aim of re-using and recycling as much as possible. During 2014, 18 tonnes of waste was re-used by students donating items to charity. The campaign has won multiple awards including the Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee (LARAC) Award and Green Apple Environment Award, dedicated to recognising, rewarding and promoting environmental best practice
- The **charitable recycling side of the Get It Out scheme** involves Green Zones being set up across the city and all halls of residences including private halls and university halls to collect re-usable items such as clothing, bric-a-brac, media items, food, and kitchen equipment. Whilst most items are donated to charity, kitchen equipment is stored over the summer ready for re-sales at the start of term to allow students to buy it cheaply. This initiative alone raised £1973.27 for the Lord Mayors Charity in 2014.
- A voluntary action group **Environmental Champions** has been set up to tackle sustainability and environmental issues in the local area. The group is made up of students and community members who regularly take part in sustainability events and environmental tasks such as waste awareness door knocking exercises, river clean ups, supporting sustainability week, working alongside Fairtrade Cardiff, innovative litter picks and environmental projects.
- **Recycling** stands in Student Unions' to ensure recycling bags and information are readily available for students.

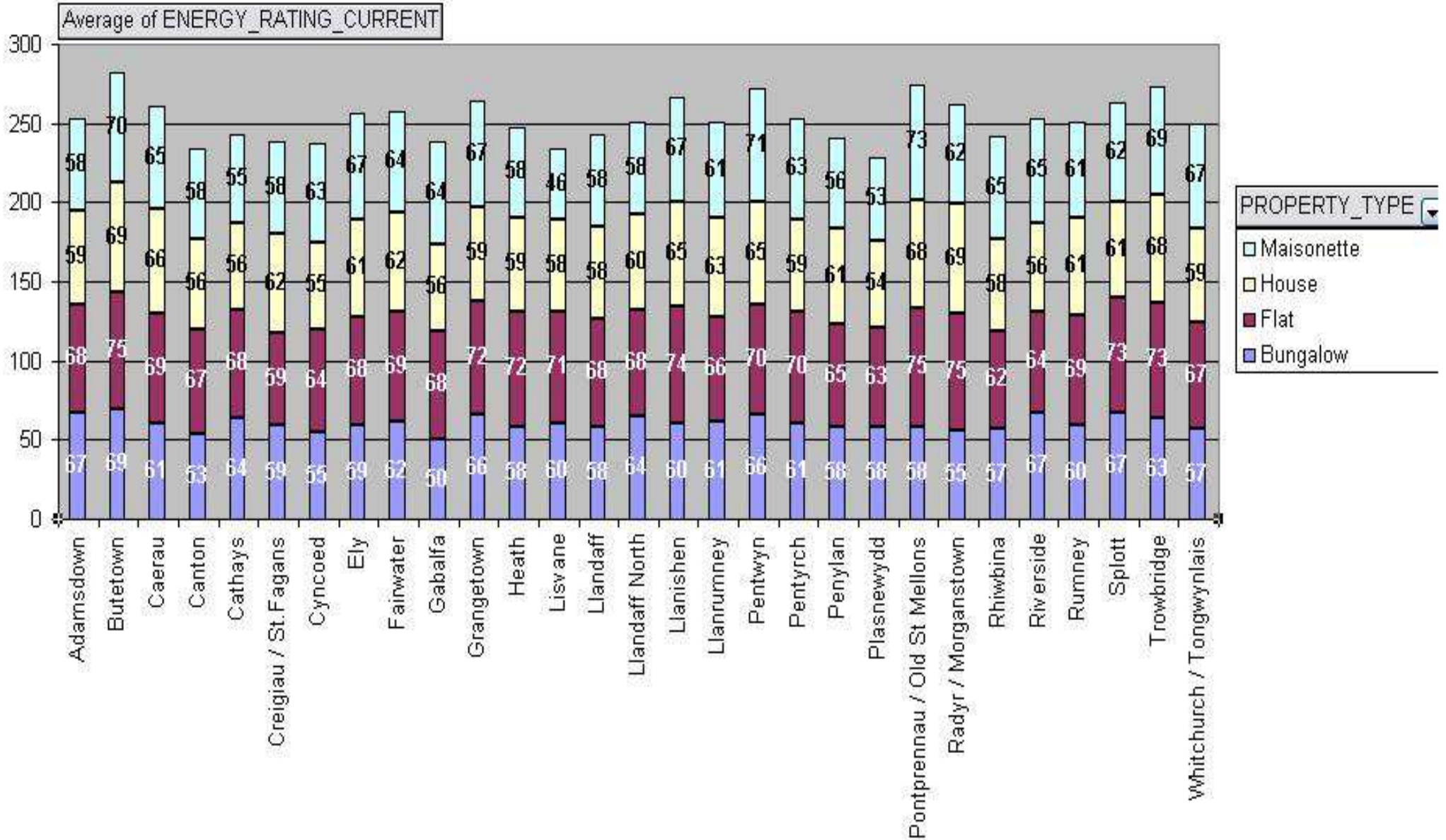
5.2 Energy Efficiency

Students are considered as being in a lower socio economic group and are therefore more likely to struggle to pay their bills, resulting in many students living in cold, damp homes and at risk of fuel poverty. Research suggests that after location, household bills are one of the most important factors for tenants in choosing a property to rent. Energy efficient homes result in many benefits for tenants, including lower fuel bills and more comfortable living conditions, better indoor air quality leading to fewer health problems, and less damage to possessions from damp and mould. Owners benefit from increased value of housing stock, lower maintenance costs, and happier tenants leading to fewer voids and defaults on rental payments.

Landlords are required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) in their property however many students are unaware of the certificates and the role they play in energy saving and energy efficiency. Increasing tenant understanding and promoting the value of EPC's in the student population plays an important role in reducing bills, improving household conditions and the environment.

The graph on the next page shows the average EPC rating in different wards in Cardiff. The data shows that EPC ratings in the students areas of Gabalfa, Cathays and Plasnewydd, are lower than most other areas, averaging in the mid 50's and 60's. This equates to an average EPC score of E and D. There is scope for improvement on this and partners understand the need to work together on energy efficiency measures.

Average Energy Performance Certificate rating in Cardiff by electoral ward.



5.2.1 What we've achieved so far

- **Increased tenant education around energy efficiency** and the Energy Saving Trust has been achieved through utilising digital media and information sharing with universities.
- **Go Green – the path to sustainable living** is advice available through www.cardiffdigs.co.uk, the dedicated website for students, providing advice on recycling, food and drink, around the house and university life advice, shopping and energy.
- **Environmental Champions** a voluntary action group made up of students and community members who regularly take part in sustainability events and environmental tasks such as waste awareness door knocking exercises, river clean ups, supporting sustainability week, working alongside Fair trade Cardiff and innovative litter picks and environmental projects.
- **University Hall of Residence competitions** encourage students to save energy by rewarding them with incentives such as prizes. The competitions help to educate students about energy efficiency and sustainability before their move into the private rented sector.

5.3 Sustainable Transport

5.3.1 Car ownership

It is estimated and perceived that a large number of students bring cars to university and this has an impact on the community from an increased number of cars parked in the area. The proximity of university buildings and the city centre to the residential location of students means that many students make little use of their cars during term time, resulting in cars left unused for long periods in residential streets preventing residents from parking near their homes. Work around education and ensuring suitable sustainable methods of transport for students has therefore played a leading role in this Plan.

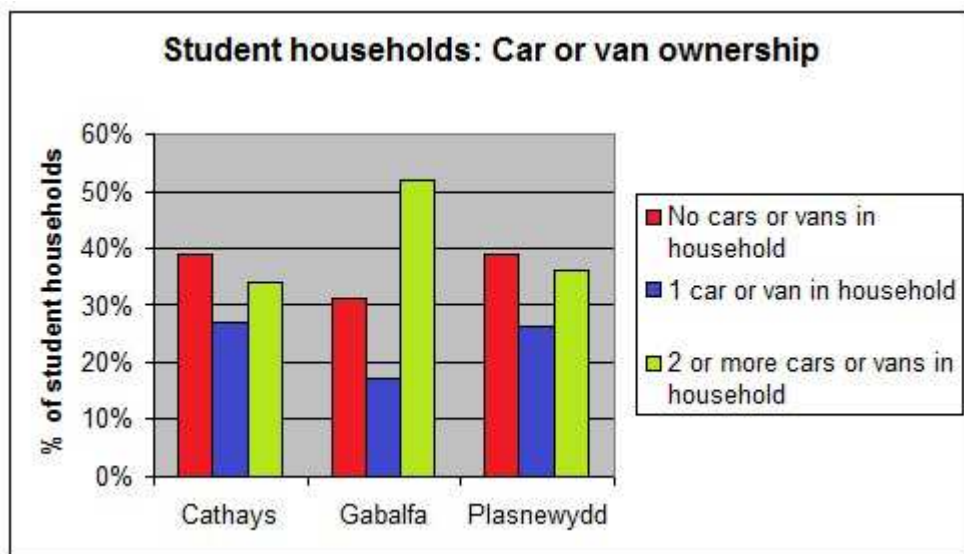
The majority of Halls of Residence do not allow students to park cars on site due to specific planning requirements for the development. As part of their tenancy agreement, students bringing cars to Cardiff are required to park them at least 3 kms from the halls. However, from Local Councillors experiences there are concerns about how effective this rule is, how well it is observed and how enforceable the rule is.

The Census 2011 captured information regarding car ownership in student households and showed that 60% of all student households will have one or more cars, and 40% of all student households do not have any cars.

The graph and table below both show the percentage of student households that own cars or vans in Cathays, Gabalfa and Plasnewydd.

Out of the 252 student properties in Gabalfa, 52% have two or more cars per household. Evidence suggests that students who live in Gabalfa tend to be medical students who require a car to travel to the Heath hospital for work or for study.

In 2011, to discourage households from having too many cars, the City of Cardiff Council limited parking permits to two resident permits and one visitors permit per household, with the first permit costing £5 and the second costing £30. It is understood that this example of good practice has encouraged students to leave their cars at home and to use alternative travel options.



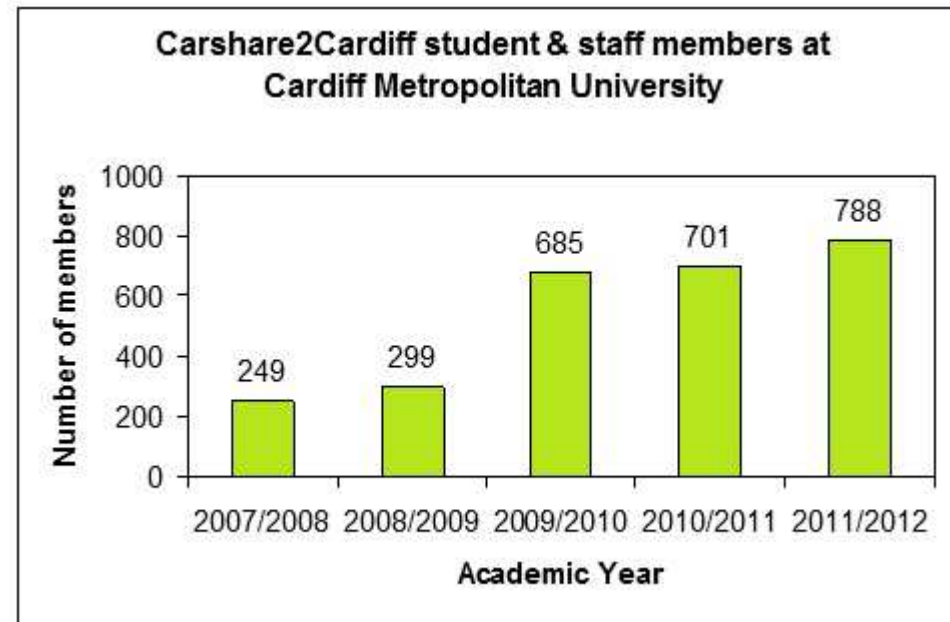
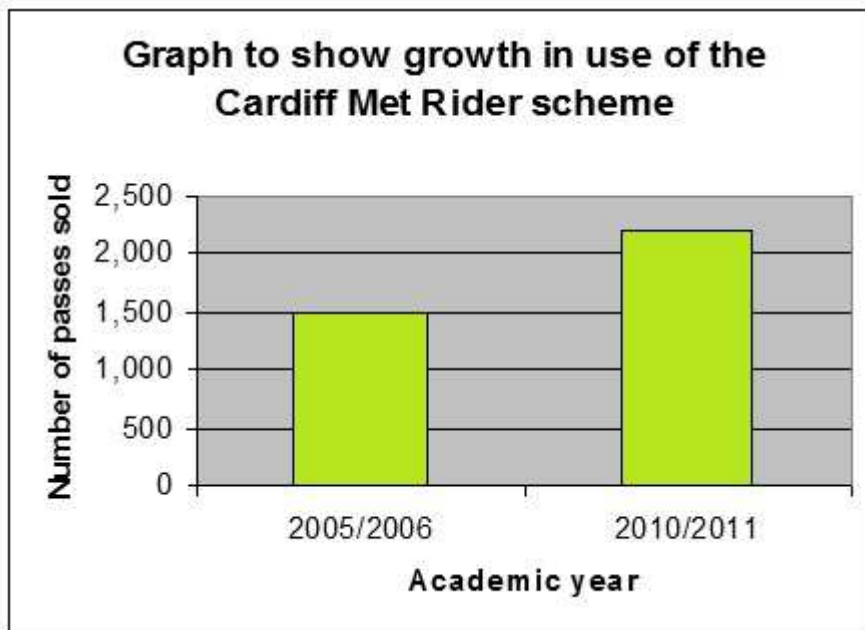
Cars or Vans	Cathays		Gabalfa		Plasnewydd	
Total number of student households	1,841	100%	252	100%	827	100%
No. cars or vans in household	713	39%	79	31%	319	39%
1 car or van in household	500	27%	42	17%	213	26%
2 or more cars or vans in household	628	34%	131	52%	295	36%

5.3.2 Alternative methods of transport

Students tend to live close to University buildings or to the city centre, and are therefore more able to use sustainable methods of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. As well as being more sustainable, cycling and walking is a cheaper way to travel, is better for health, and can be the quickest way of getting around the city. Students are made aware of these added benefits throughout the year and partners continue to encourage sustainable methods of travel.

The partnership between Cardiff Metropolitan University and Cardiff Bus remains strong and the graph on the left below shows the growth in the use of Cardiff Met Rider scheme. The Cardiff Met Rider scheme is constantly growing, with new initiatives to encourage new sign ups.

Each University also promotes car share schemes available to both students and staff. The graph on the right below shows the increase in the number of student and staff members using the Carshare2Cardiff scheme at Cardiff Metropolitan University.



Cycling is one of the main ways students choose to travel around the city, due to the ease and quickness of travelling. Cardiff's Cycle Network, Enfys, is constantly growing and partners have shown their commitment to improving cycling in Cardiff through the Strategic Cycle Network Plan. The plan identifies future investment in cycling facilities, including a series of schemes that will improve cycle routes, cycle parking and signage across the city. University students have been identified as a key stakeholder in the cycle network plan and their interests are integral to shaping Cardiff's Cycle Network. Partners including the City of Cardiff Council, South Wales Police and the Universities, are continually working together to promote responsible, safe cycling in Cardiff.

5.3.3 What we've achieved so far

- **Cardiff Digs sustainable travel pages** encourages students to leave their cars at home and not bring them to Cardiff. The webpage's provide information on sustainable travel to make moving around Cardiff easier, trouble-free, greener and more enjoyable.
- **Keeping Cardiff Moving** is a website set up by the City of Cardiff Council to encourage the public to use sustainable methods of transport such as car sharing, cycle, walking.
- **A Cycling Liaison Working Group** has been set up that works on sustainable travel education, campaigns, policy and planning supporting HE and FE institutions.
- **Enfys Cardiff Cycle Network** has identified main cycle routes across the city and the Strategic Cycle Network Plan outlines future investments to cycle routes, parking and signage across Cardiff.
- **Multi-agency sustainable travel days** take place at Universities to promote sustainable travel to students. Activities include free bike security marking, Dr Bike maintenance checks, light fixing, discounted locks, and information about cycle routes, second hand bikes, and bike safety and security.
- **Free cycle training** is available for University students who want to learn more about cycling safely around the city, courtesy of the City of Cardiff Council.
- **University car sharing schemes** exist at Cardiff Metropolitan University, Cardiff University and the University of South Wales to encourage staff and students who require a car at University to share journeys with their colleagues.

5.4 Plans for the future

The Action Plan at Appendix A highlights in detail the specific actions we intend to undertake to address environmental sustainability issues in the City. The following headings therefore represent the overarching objectives of this new revised Plan.

14. Increase energy efficiency in student housing
15. Ensure the correct disposal of refuse/increase recycling
16. Review sustainable travel into and around Cardiff
17. Review and improve cycling in Cardiff
18. Improve the use of green spaces in Cathays, Gabalfa and Plasnewydd

6 Developing communications to create better informed communities

For many students attending University, this is their first time living away from home and as a consequence they have very little experience or knowledge of their responsibilities as a tenant or member of the community. This can result in many of the negative issues associated with students leading to tensions in the community. As a group, students are accessible and keen to learn and raising awareness amongst students about how to act responsibly is therefore imperative if we are to work together to make the desired improvements to the community. Opening up new communications channels and integrating new partners into actions is therefore imperative.

6.1 What we've achieved so far

- **Cardiffdigs.co.uk**, the one stop shop website for all student housing and living advice is continually reaching out to students and partners with practical information. The website is developed and adapted to meet the changing needs of partners and students and year on year traffic to the site has increased.
- **Innovative communication channels** have been utilised to accompany Cardiffdigs.co.uk including a blog, videos, iPhone readers including quick response codes to help disseminate important and practical information about living and studying in Cardiff.
- **Unity newsletter** is a partnership publication where universities and student unions of Cardiff engage with the community. Published three times a year to highlight how everyone can contribute to a sense of civic pride. The newsletter is distributed electronically through an e-newsletter sign up system, via the Student Unions and Universities and via distribution at key community events and partnership meetings.
- **Tidy Text** the free texting service is widely promoted where residents receive a free text message to remind them of the correct days for collections and has been enthusiastically taken up by students.
- **Cardiff Student Community Plan Partnership events** are held using key note speakers. In 2010, Professor Ken Peattie, from Cardiff University's Sustainable Places Research Institute addressed delegates at the Sustainability and the Environment event on how thinking global can have an impact locally.

- **We have seen a positive increase in the range and scope of partners** involved in the Cardiff Student Community Plan, increasing our potential to make a positive contribution to the community in a wide range of areas.
- Attendance at **Partnership and Communities Together** groups
- **The sharing and pooling of resources** across the Student Liaison Management Group made up of the three universities and council has benefited the Group greatly enabling best practice to be shared and clear lines of communication.
- **Working with Universities and Student Unions'** to disseminate information to students, means important community information is readily available to all Cardiff students. Student focused communication channels such as student newspapers, weekly emails and radio stations are all utilised, including Facebook and Twitter.
- **Social Media presence** to disseminate important information to students. The rise of Facebook and Twitter means that information is communicated more quickly, and links can be made to www.cardiffdigs.co.uk.
- **Cardiff Digs mailing lists** means information is regularly sent out to all partners and stakeholders, including local landlords and letting agents, students and all other partners.

6.2 Plans for the future

The Action Plan at Appendix A highlights in detail the specific actions we intend to undertake to address communication issues in the City. The following headings therefore represent the overarching objectives of this new revised Plan.

19. Increase traffic to cardiffdigs.co.uk
20. Ensure effective communication between partners
21. Ensure effective communication to student population

Conclusion

The Student Community Action Plan has been in place since 2007 and the strategic partnership between the Council and Universities remains strong. External partners continue to support the Student Community Partnership as we continue to work towards a sustainable community for permanent and transient residents alike. This document outlines the partnerships' achievements since the inception of the plan, and identifies further opportunities for development based on the changing nature of the student population. Now we are into the second stage of the plan, much clearer evidence of improvement is emerging and opportunities for development have been identified. The 2015 – 2018 Student Community Action plan, found in Appendix A, gives full details of the future milestones the partnership aims to achieve.

Appendix A. Action Plan in detail