

**ADRODDIAD BLYNYDDOL 2018/19
ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

**GCPP
APCG**



ENW'R GRWP /NAME OF GROUP:

All Party Council Group on Urban Resilience/ Grŵp Cyngor Pob Plaid ar Wytwnch Trefol

CYFANSODDIAD/MEMBERSHIP:

Council Members

Chair (2018/19)

Cllr Phil Bale (LAB & CO-OP, Llanishen & Thornhill)

Vice-Chairs (2018/19)

Cllr Ali Ahmed (LAB, Cathays)

Cllr Joe Boyle (LIB DEM, Penylan)

Cllr Stephen Cunnah (LAB, Canton)

Cllr Jane Henshaw (LAB, Splott)

Cllr Sue Lent (LAB, Plasnewydd)

Cllr Elaine Simmons (LAB, Caerau)

Cllr Joel Williams (CON, Pontprennau & Old St. Mellons)

Cllr Bob Derbyshire (LAB, Rumney)

Cllr Dan De'Ath (LAB, Plasnewydd)

Associate Members

Cardiff Civic Society

CYLCH GORCHWYL / TERMS OF REFERENCE:

The All-Party Council Group (APCG) on Urban Resilience was established in 2018 as a forum between Council Members and academics, NGOs, businesses and local government networks that are at the forefront of thinking about making our cities more resilient.

We explore and debate issues relating to the pressures on world cities, with specific relevance to Cardiff.

MATERION POLISI/ POLICY MATTERS:

During the year, the Group welcomed a mix of guest speakers and study visits and we would like to thank everyone who has supported the Group's work over the past twelve months.

In particular, we would like to thank the team at Cynnal Cymru for providing the Group with invaluable secretariat support.

APCG highlights for 2018/19 included:

Cardiff's Music Strategy – Music and Resilience

In spite of snow-fuelled panic across Cardiff the All Party Council Group's meeting went ahead with a theme of music and resilience and with guest speaker John Rostron,

founder of Swn Music Festival in Cardiff, Welsh Music Prize and Association of Independent Promoters.

John is currently working on Cardiff's new Music City strategy and spoke about some of the drivers for change in the promotion of live music internationally, and offered some thoughts on possible responses from city, regional and national governments.

The All Party Group are very grateful to John for sharing his wide ranging expertise with Council Members (despite the snow!) and wish him and Sound Diplomacy well finalizing Cardiff's Music Strategy.



APCG on Urban Resilience - Visit SOLCER House

On Monday 3rd December 2018, the All Party Council Group visited SOLCER House. The house, designed by Professor Phil Jones and his team based at Cardiff University's Welsh School of Architecture, is a prototype to meet targets for zero carbon housing. Designed and constructed as part of the Wales Low Carbon Research Institute's (LCRI) SOLCER project, and supported by SPECIFIC at Swansea University, its unique design combines reduced energy demand, renewable energy supply and energy storage to create an energy positive house. The Solcer House is located at the Cenin site in Stormy Down, and has been designed to meet social housing standards. The house was constructed in 16 weeks using local supply chains.

APCG on Urban Resilience Study Visit – Plasdŵr

On Thursday 27th September 2018 the Cardiff Council All Party Council Group on Urban Resilience attended a Study Visit at the Redrow Homes site. The purpose of the visit was to question developers on the resilience of the development and to what extent it planned for the future of Cardiff.





APCG on Urban Resilience meeting on Cardiff's Urban Development strategy

In 2018, the Group welcomed a speaker from the Council's Planning Department at our first meeting to give Councillors an introduction to the Council's approach to design and master planning, with the city's projected growth and new Local Development Plan.

CANFYDDIADAU/ FINDINGS

STUDY VISIT TO SOLCER HOUSE, BRIDGEND – DEC 2018

- During our visit it was clear that Wales has the potential to lead the world in the development of new sustainable housing, with many partners involved in the SOLCER House project based in, or connected to, Wales in one way or another.
- The National Assembly's Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee in their August 2018 report entitled 'Low Carbon Housing: The Challenge', has urged the Welsh Government to bring forward a new ten year strategy for low carbon housing, but little progress had been made to date.
- Solcer House highlighted the benefits of having an exemplar project in Bridgend as an insight into future housing designs and technologies. We understand the last Council administration held discussions to develop a new eco/smart city home in Cardiff, which would act as a demonstrator for new technologies and local suppliers.
- We were impressed at the commitment shown by Cenin Renewables, the site owner, towards welcoming school educational visits to learn more about their facilities, and believe a similar model home project within Cardiff would be extremely beneficial in helping our local schools and colleges to deliver the national curriculum.

STUDY VISIT TO PLASDŴR – SEPT 2018

- During our visit, we were advised that the City Council is not currently in discussions about the provision of new Council homes within the Plasdŵr strategic site. However, Redrow Homes expressed a willingness to enter into discussions with the Council to explore this further in Cardiff.
- Whilst the initial Parc Plymouth development now under construction by Redrow Homes consists of 15% affordable housing (with homes set at 70% of the selling price), it was important for us to hear that the overall commitment to a 30% affordable housing target remains in place. We were also told that as part of the master-planning work, there would be specific accommodation for over 55's around the new local shopping centre to ensure older residents could downsize and/or remain within the local community. Although there was no indication that new-build bungalows would form part of a broader mix of house type on this site.
- As Cardiff's latest Well-being Plan highlights, there is currently a healthy life expectancy gap of between 22 to 24 years for people living in some of the most and least deprived communities across Cardiff.

- During our visit, it became clear that there remains a degree of uncertainty as to whether the Council will establish new community primary schools offering Welsh-medium, bilingual or religious/faith provision. We understand the Council is currently considering this issue as part of a wider review and would hope this is completed shortly to remove this uncertainty.
- Whilst it is still relatively early in the construction phase, it was not clear from our discussions whether the Council, developers or individual estate management organisations were leading on a play strategy for major housing sites or who would ultimately fund and maintain communal play facilities.
- In early estate designs on Parc Plymouth, the provision of car parking has also taken precedence over the creation of new natural play opportunities for young children.
- Redrow confirmed to us that a route corridor for the new Cardiff Capital Region Metro had been protected through Plasdŵr, but during our discussions they were unable to say definitively when the new service would be constructed.
- Information on future bus routes was not available during our visit but Redrow does offer new residents a 12 month free bus pass as part of its welcome package. It was encouraging to hear that Redrow also follow this up with a visit after residents have moved in to remind them of the pass and the public transport options available. Each new household will also receive £50 in bicycle vouchers.
- Whilst dedicated cycle routes are planned in the future, we were also told that the Council have opted not to give priority to cyclists at junctions on the cycle lanes installed around Parc Plymouth, something which would appear to be at odds with Cardiff's vision to become a leading cycling city.
- The Group were interested to know how EV charging infrastructure and solar panels were being rolled out across the Parc Plymouth development and were advised these were 'added extras' available to home-buyers.
- We were advised that it was usually more cost effective to install this technology during the construction phase, but were concerned to learn that this option was rarely, if ever, taken up. As a result, we understand the design and capacity of local electricity networks are not being built with the large scale take up of this technology in mind.
- We heard from Redrow about the work which had taken place with the Council to identify suitable local Welsh language place and street names, based on historical research. We welcome this approach and hope this strong partnership is replicated with other property developers in the future.
- We heard that responsibility for the Parc Plymouth and other housing developments in Plasdŵr would be handed over to a management company (with charges set at approx. £210 per year) eventually controlled by the owners of the properties. We understand that in other strategic sites, alternative long term management arrangements through private firms may be under consideration.

FFORDD YMLAEN/ WAY FORWARD:

During the year, the APCG wrote to relevant Scrutiny Chairs and Cabinet Members on 17th October 2018 and 14th December 2018, with numerous recommendations and suggested areas for future work.

All APCG letters can be viewed on our website:

<http://www.cardiffresilienceapcg.wales/news-resources/>

ARGYMHELLION/ RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. DEVELOP NEW LOW/ZERO CARBON HOUSING STRATEGY & MORE AMBITIOUS TARGETS FOR CARDIFF

- We would urge Cardiff Council to consider developing its own city-wide low carbon strategy, with clear timescales attached, which could ensure we fully contribute towards any new national strategy.

2. OPEN NEW LOW CARBON/CARDIFF SMART CITY SHOW HOME

- The Council should engage the public on how new and existing buildings will need to change in the future. We would urge the Council to revisit discussions with housing developers and other city-region stakeholders to advance a smart city show home project.

3. RETROFIT MORE EXISTING SOCIAL HOUSING IN CITY AND REVIEW NEW COUNCIL HOUSING PROGRAMMES TO BUILD GREENER HOMES

- As the largest local authority in Wales, which has also retained its own social housing stock, Cardiff is well placed to make a substantial contribution in the switch to low carbon housing.
- Whilst Cardiff Council currently manages around 13,500 Council homes across the city, there appears to be very limited visibility on progress in delivering a low carbon Council housing strategy.
- The Council has plans to facilitate up to 6,500 new affordable homes by 2026 through its Local Development Plan (LDP) and to deliver 2,000 new build Council homes, which includes those delivered through its Cardiff Living partnership with Wates Residential. Whilst the Council has committed to build a small number of 'Passivhaus' homes on a site in Heath, as part of the Cardiff Living partnership, there were no targets in place at the time of our visit on how many of the planned new Council homes or other types of new accommodation, such as the Council's provision of new homeless accommodation or gypsy and traveller site pitches under the LDP, will meet the definition of low carbon.
- As a result, we suggest that the Council should look again at this issue and consider ambitious new carbon and energy targets for its new build Council housing programme as well as review the city's planning policies to require or encourage a switch to more efficient housing in Cardiff. Future Housing Revenue Account (HRS) Business Plans could show more clearly to Councillors and other stakeholders, progress towards more 'energy positive' and low carbon housing as part of any new local and national strategies.

4. INTRODUCE NEW FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND TACKLE FUEL POVERTY

- In addition to the large number of new homes being built in Cardiff, the city also has a large stock of older housing which needs to be considered for retrofitting.
- We would urge the Council to explore new incentives, including potential Council Tax discounts for low carbon homes, to increase the take up of more efficient

technologies and building materials and would urge the Council to prioritise households in fuel poverty.

5. BUILD MORE COUNCIL HOMES MORE EVENLY ACROSS CARDIFF AND INCLUDE COUNCIL HOMES IN MAJOR NW AND NE CARDIFF LDP SITES

- There is a need to provide sustainable and high quality Council homes in the North West and North East Cardiff strategic development sites. At present, the shortage of social housing in parts of the city leaves the Council with little option but to recommend potential tenants move across the city or consider the private rented sector.
- The APCG therefore urges the Council to either directly, or through its Cardiff Living housing partnership with Wates Residential, include new Council housing in these areas to reduce pressures on those areas of the city which already contain high concentrations of social housing, poverty levels and inequality.

6. CARDIFF NEEDS A CLEAR PLAY STRATEGY TO INFORM MAJOR NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SITES

- The APCG would encourage the Council to consider international best practice in this field, such as Vauban in Freiburg, Germany, where on street car parking has been replaced in favour of natural play and a centralised car park for those residents who have signed up for this option.
- As Cardiff works towards UNICEF 'Child Friendly City' status, APCG members would stress the need for a clear and consistent play strategy in the city's major new housing sites.

7. WORK TOWARDS EARLY METRO DELIVERY AND LOBBY WELSH GOVERNMENT TO INCREASE TAKE UP OF SOLAR PANELS, EV CHARGING POINTS AND OTHER ECO-HOME OPTIONS

- We would urge the Council to do all it can to secure the early delivery of the Metro to this part of the city. Some members also felt that on street EV charging points should be incorporated into new developments as part of an early car club initiative.
- As homeowners can stretch themselves financially when buying a new home, more sustainable 'added extras' may not be seen as an immediate priority and/or may be difficult to finance through a larger mortgage.
- This issue needs to be raised by the Council, both with developers and the Welsh Government, to establish whether an alternative funding model can be developed in Wales which allows this technology to be rolled out as standard.

8. COUNCILLORS SHOULD SCRUTINISE ESTATE MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR MAJOR NEW HOUSING SITES

- We suggest this might be an area of interest for the Council's scrutiny function as there are long term implications for the Council and residents from the various models under consideration in the LDP sites.