
HOUSING & COMMUNITIES STATEMENT

Welsh Housing Awards 2021

I am delighted that the Council's Housing First Team has been named Housing Team of the Year in the Chartered Institute of Housing's Welsh Housing Awards 2021. The team provides accommodation and intensive support services to help individuals who have been sleeping rough to rebuild their lives away from the streets. Housing First is a housing and support approach, which gives people, who have experienced homelessness and have complex needs, a stable home from which to rebuild their lives. The Council is currently supporting 30 people in its Housing First provision, with 19 individuals accessing the Rough Sleepers Project and 11 in the Prison Leavers Project.

Struggles to Smiles

Struggles to Smiles is a local charity that delivers food inclusivity projects and works in partnership with the Youth Justice Service to offer employment and training to individuals with a history of offending behaviour. They have recently started working with the Supported Accommodation Team to provide food to complex needs clients at Ty Ephraim (formerly known as the YHA hotel) and, so far, this has been very well received. The team also works closely with the new dietician from our Homeless Multi-Disciplinary Team to ensure that the meals provided are balanced, nutritious and meet the needs of residents. The Council is keen to use this partnership to offer volunteering and, potentially, paid employment opportunities to people with lived experience of homelessness services who are interested in a career in catering.

Local Action Team Update

The Local Action Team was created to help Cardiff residents maintain their gardens and outdoor spaces, including street patrols to help keep neighbourhoods clean and tidy. The team also works with local residents to arrange garden clearances and waste removals. Recent examples of this work in Splott include helping an elderly resident who found maintaining her garden unmanageable and was concerned about slipping due to overgrown grass. The Local Action Team arranged for the clearance of any waste items and cut back the vegetation within the garden to improve accessibility. Another resident was struggling to maintain her garden due to ill health and the team helped to make the outdoor space much more manageable by clearing the sheds, removing overgrown vegetation and cutting back hedges in her front and rear gardens, whilst also retaining some privacy and promoting biodiversity.

Hubs and Libraries

The success of our Hub strategy in Cardiff is a collaborative approach to the delivery of not only Council services, but also services and activities run by cross-sector partners and groups, working together to support and improve the well-being of communities across the city. During the higher alert levels of the Covid-19 pandemic, face-to-face partner activities within the Hubs ceased as it was necessary to limit access due to the lockdown restrictions. I am therefore very pleased that we have started the process of working with our partners again to support them in re-launching a diverse in-person programme within the Hubs for the benefit of our customers.

For example, Grassroots Cardiff have launched Grassroots Baby sessions at St Mellons Hub this month, which support young parents by building on their parenting skills and allowing parents and toddlers to make new friends within the local community.

Another programme that has recently resumed face-to-face sessions is Tots Football at Llandaff North & Gabalfa Hub. The sessions give children aged 3-5 years an opportunity to learn how to kick a soft ball, learn the importance of teamwork and build on their motor skills.

The Learning Club at Grangetown Hub has recently been brought back successfully by ACE (Action in Caerau & Ely). The club is such a good initiative, which involves volunteers working with young people to give them opportunities to experience music, arts and reading, with the overall aim of improving the quality of their lives. I know that they have continued to work with young people while the restrictions on face-to-face activities have been in place and I am sure the children are as pleased as I am that they are able to get back into the Hub and enjoy themselves.

Adult Community Learning classes have also been re-introduced to the Hubs, including at Whitchurch and Rhydypennau Hubs for the first time following the successful refurbishment projects. Members of the community have been able to enrol onto language classes on their doorstep.

Councillor Lynda Thorne
Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities
14 October 2021