

Tenant power in action: a transformational year at Trivallis

At Trivallis, tenant involvement isn't something we do - it's the way we do everything. For us, tenants are partners on a shared journey alongside staff and Board. As we move on our journey, we are constantly looking to strengthen this relationship. As a large local employer, we also have many tenants employed across our teams, meaning the passion and knowledge for our communities is embedded in our organisational DNA.

This year, tenant involvement has deepened across Trivallis, with more tenants taking leadership roles, shaping strategic decisions, attending Board and contributing to our committees.

"Thank you for believing in me. Not only was I known as the 'two-person visit' and 'trouble maker' but I had a bad reputation within Trivallis. Being able to give back to my community really has helped my mental health. Starting a new project from scratch is hard work but I love it. The highlight for me was visiting the local school and holding a meeting... seeing the head teacher again after all these years... A real pinch-me moment that I've done well for myself."

Tenant Leader, Community Project Volunteer

This quote is a powerful reminder of what tenant involvement can achieve when individuals are empowered to lead. It exemplifies the transformation at the heart of our work: from stigma and struggle to pride and participation. Our commitment to involving tenants in shaping their communities is beginning to spark meaningful change - socially, environmentally, and personally.

From neglected neighbourhoods to vibrant community spaces, this report outlines how we are not just delivering services but co-creating solutions with the people who live them every day.

Progress of the strategy and programme to secure the highest possible level of involvement in the community mutual

The past year has seen the Tenant Action Panel (TAP) reenergised, working groups empowered, and local leaders emerge from within our homes and streets. In January, Eloise Hinkinson and Martin Barraclough were elected Chair and Vice Chair of our Tenant Action Panel. Under their leadership, a new Terms of Reference and guide to involvement were finalised, building on openness and accessibility. Early results show a rise in new members.

This year, involved tenants at Trivallis gained national recognition for the difference they make at the TPAS Cymru Awards; credit to the amazing team of involved tenants and dedication of outgoing chairperson, Emma Nicholas.

Involved tenants also worked together with staff to organise T-Fest, a celebration and appreciation of over 120 tenants who are giving their time, energy and skill making a difference to Trivallis or their communities.

Tenants actively influenced recruitment, procurement, contractor selection, and service improvement, embedding meaningful involvement at every level, including the appointment of two Directors.

A fresh brand, **Tenants Together**, is currently in development, with a recruitment campaign set to scale.

Working group highlights

- **Neighbourhoods and estates working group**
 - Inspired 8 Great Estate Days across our communities bringing Trivallis, the local council and most importantly, local residents to work together to improve areas. These events have become catalysts for community-led action
 - Advised on reducing patch sizes of housing officers and moving towards a more personable service
- **Complaints group**
 - Tenant advice helped increased satisfaction
 - Improved appointment reliability by **3%**
- **Repairs group**
 - Tenant advice helped reduce the **repairs backlog**, so we are now one of the most improved repairs services in the country and still improving
 - Advocated for increasing missed appointment compensation for tenants from **£5 to £15**
- **Recharges task group**
 - Introduced fairer charging policies for misuse of emergency repairs
- **Community grants panel**
 - Allocated **£32,903** to **43 tenant-led initiatives**
- **Assets group**
 - Piloted **tenant involvement in contractor selection**
 - Developed tenant-informed contractor performance reviews
- **Anti-social behaviour group**
 - Being restructured alongside the Neighbourhoods Team
- **Solar panel group**
 - Investigating historical agreements around solar installations in sheltered housing
- **Sheltered housing**
 - Working with staff we have planned and delivered the winter of wellbeing which has provided a range of services and activities to combat social isolation.

Tenants also played a strategic role in **recruiting new staff and procuring new contracts**.

Progress of the strategy and programme for community development, training and communication, and the identification of neighbourhoods

Our community development approach is spearheading a shift from transactional service delivery to strength-based community building.

Rise Strong project

We received funding from the Welsh Government's Child Poverty grant scheme to work between September 2024 and March 2025 with families in three areas:

- Penrhys
- Caradog Primary School Catchment, Aberdare
- Cae Fardre, Church Village

Over six months the project:

- Involved 597 people in community activities
- Strengthened three community-led groups to develop their role in meeting community needs, building confidence, skills and networks
- Supported the development of sustainable relationships between community groups, schools, voluntary organisations and other services in each of the three areas

The independent evaluation of the project highlighted some features that are indicative of the power of strength-based, community development:

- Attractive activities build community. People will come together because they want to do something that sounds fun. Once that coming together has built relationships and confidence, it becomes possible to also address other needs, such as debt.
 - Projects usually require people to describe what they will do and with whom, before they get started. Giving people the freedom to experiment with approaches allows a completely different way to work. In each area the work was focused on reaching out to new people, taking a risk with a new way of doing things.... and in each case, it paid off. In Caradog school, for example, they said that they had tried to involve parents before but it had never worked. Now local families are sharing skills and people who were previously isolated are much more connected.
 - Although a short-term project, the work supported is sustainable and everyone involved has learned something.
- **St Andrews Court / Hawthorn / Penywaun / Glyncoch / Pant y Cerdin:** Tenant-led improvements following Great Estate Days.
 - All team members have now trained as trainers with **Cormac Russell** in Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD). We will continue to build on and embed a strength-based transformation approach across Trivallis.
 - **Local Hubs:** In Cae Fardre, Heol Y Mynydd, Pen Dinas and Penrhys, tenant-led hubs now offer essential services like food pantries, mental health support, family activities, and trades training.

Current assessment of the wishes and aspirations of neighbourhoods

Across multiple neighbourhoods, tenants have voiced a clear desire for ownership, safety, routine, and community connection.

- **Maes y Deri:** Residents want clean, cared-for public spaces where they feel safe and seen and have been involved in transformative community led action on environmental issues.
- **Penrhys:** Tenants want to continue to shape the redevelopment of their estate; sessions with architects, youth employment projects, and nature restoration are all resident-driven.
- **Cae Fardre:** Desire for a long-term community space has become reality with a tenant-run hub.
- **Aberdare Town:** Previously isolated families are now involved in skill-sharing and school life, showing that trust and belonging are key aspiration but.

These quotes give a flavour of what this kind of action means for local people:

"The community needs this. So many people are struggling that this will help them not only with food but to meet new friends and get them out of the house!" – Tenant

"Even though I suffer with my mental health, doing this at the moment is actually giving me something to get up for each day. I don't work as I have joint pain amongst other things so this is like a job to me and gives me routine. We have so many ideas it's a great chance for us to help the community." – Tenant

Progress of local groups and the transfer of power, responsibilities and assets to or from local groups

Significant power has been transferred to local groups through direct involvement, decision-making, and budget control.

- **Community Grants Panel:** Tenants directly allocated £32,903 to 42 tenant-led initiatives.

- **Assets Group:** Piloted tenant involvement in contractor selection and launched tenant-led contractor performance reviews.
- **TAP:** Steers the wider strategy for tenant engagement; the new leadership team has already increased new member signups.
- **Cwmbach:** We worked with communities to create community ownership of environmental spaces which improved issues with fly tipping and made better use of nature for leisure.
- **Library Court:** residents have taken over management of community facilities at the scheme to deliver activities that promote wellbeing.
- **Miskin:** Strengthened community ties through benefit schemes.
- **Pen Dinas:** Residents have taken ownership of a youth programme previously led by Valleys Kids.
- **Tonyrefail:** Revitalised town centre with local business support.

We are recruiting a Community Benefits Partner to maximise our social value impact over the next year and beyond.

Conclusion: A year of tenant-led transformation

This AGM report shows how tenants are not only involved, but are leading, guiding, and owning community development across Trivallis. Through targeted strategy, training, and neighbourhood focus, tenant aspirations are being heard - and acted upon.

Next steps:

- Expansion of the Tenants Together movement and strengthening our links to Board
- Embedding ABCD principles across all operations
- Increasing involvement at a community level across our 27 patches

One voice, one street, one hub at a time—our communities are rising stronger.

"This year has shown just how powerful tenant involvement can be. We've seen real changes driven by the voices of people who live in our communities. It's been inspiring to work alongside so many passionate tenants — proving that when we come together, we really can make a difference."

Eloise Hinkinson, Chair of the Tenant Action Panel

Tenant involvement in 2024-25

Activity	Total participants (conversations and volunteering together)	Number who are tenants
Maes Deri Great Estates Day and Monthly Follow Up Meetings	28	22
Rise Strong Project incorporating Cae Fardre, Aberdare and Penrhys	592	300
Penrhys redevelopment conversations and nature garden	110	85
Pany y Cerdin Great Estates and follow up		
Penywaun	55	35
Heol y Mynydd Event / support	35	35
Cardiff Bay event	75	50
Too Good to Waste partnership	40	40
Cwmbach community event	45	25

Pen Dinas community group support	7	7
Gilfach events and work	5	5
Sub total	992	604
Grants issued to 42 community groups	210	210
Total participants including grant organisations	1202	814