

Investing in People, Homes and Communities in Torfaen

All about us - January 2009



Our Organisation

We are a charitable social enterprise based in Torfaen in South East Wales employing over 400 staff and with an annual turnover of approximately £50 million.

We are an industrial and provident society and one of the largest Registered Social Landlord in Wales.

Providing Homes

We provide:

- 8,045 affordable rented homes to people in housing need in Torfaen.
- 910 leasehold flats.
- 80 shared ownership houses.
- 910 of our 8,045 affordable rented homes are sheltered housing provided for older people.



A Construction Business

With over 150 trained and skilled craftspeople, we are one of the largest construction businesses in South East Wales with an annual turnover in that area of our business of £34 million. We have just expanded this area of our workforce.

We are specialists in providing construction services for older and vulnerable people with specific needs. We are a construction business that aims to develop our soft skills to provide a supportive approach for our tenants.

A Community Safety Organisation

With a team of five staff dedicated to community safety issues complementing our community housing staff and with a strong partnership with the local authority and Police we are an active partner in promoting community safety in Torfaen. We are committed to dealing with anti social behaviour, supporting victims of crime and are focusing on moving the service toward prevention and mediation and working with perpetrators of crime to modify and change behaviour.

A Training Agency

With 45 apprentices and a programme of learning and development for our membership and our staff we have a major role to play in increasing the skills and qualifications in the Borough.

A Support Business

Older people's services

We are providing support through our Community Alarm Service to over 2,500 older and vulnerable people across the Borough. We provide 24 hour support, making us one of the largest suppliers of these services within Torfaen.

Our Organisation

Community Owned and Democratically Run

We are owned by our members as shareholders. All our 1,210 (as at 31 December 2008) members live in Torfaen and 88% of our members are tenants of Bron Afon. Two thirds of our Board are elected by people in Torfaen. Five of our Board are tenants elected by the tenants of Bron Afon in a postal ballot on a single transferable voting system. In the last election over 3,200 of our tenants voted.

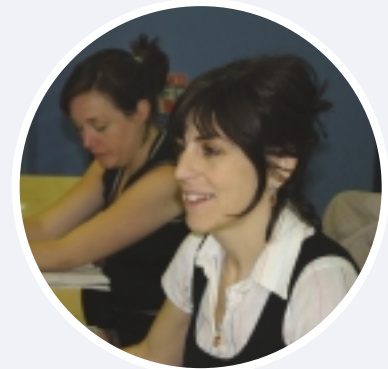
Five of our Board are elected Torfaen County Borough Councillors appointed by the Council. Five of our Board are independent people appointed by the rest of the Board. All Board members have equal status. The membership of Bron Afon elect a Membership Committee to represent them which scrutinises the work of the Board and can review areas of policy or practice. They receive all non confidential Board papers. Board meetings are open to the public for all non confidential items and minutes are published.

Important policies are developed by Task and Finish Groups consisting of members, staff and Board members and are considered by the Membership Committee before submission to the Board for approval. A Sheltered Housing Forum of tenants and staff are overseeing a review of sheltered housing and a Quality and Design Forum of tenants and staff have been closely involved in evaluating contractors for selection as our partners to carry out works to tenants' homes.

Community Based

We have identified four areas, 17 communities and 97 neighbourhoods in Torfaen and our services are based around these Areas, Communities and Neighbourhoods.

- Each Area has a Senior Community Housing Officer, a Repairs Supervisor and an Improvement Team Supervisor.
- Each Area has an Area Forum of our members who meet to discuss local issues.
- Each Area has an Improvement Team carrying out a programme of internal improvements to tenants' homes in that area.
- Each Community has a Community Housing Officer and one or more Sheltered Housing Officers.
- We are developing a Community Team of staff for each community. The first meeting of a Community Team took place in early June for the Blaenavon Team and we are shortly going to set up the next team in Sebastopol and New Inn.
- We plan to develop a Community Forum of local people within each community. Work started in June to develop the Community Forum in Blaenavon and we will then extend this process elsewhere.
- We will be holding regular Community walkabouts in each community picking up on environmental issues that need attention. The first walkabouts started in July.



Our Organisation

- Within each community we will be developing a Community Action Plan, working with the residents in each community, setting out their priorities for improvements.

Delivering high quality personalised services

We have developed a close working relationship with all our tenants.

Our Freephone Helpdesk is open 24 hours a day and deals with over 10,000 calls per month handling housing, repairs and improvements enquiries for tenants. Our Helpdesk advisers have access to all staff diaries enabling them to book appointments with tenants and residents in their homes at their request. We aim to deliver services to tenants in their homes where possible.

We have three Area offices providing facilities for the payment of rent and direct contact for tenants and residents in their area with staff who can provide support and advice for our tenants and residents.

We aim to solve all enquiries on the first phone call to us.

