



Adra

The latest news,
information and
stories from your
local communities

Summer 2022

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And much more

adra.co.uk    @adrataicyf

A word from Sarah, our Director of Customers and Communities

Sarah Schofield
Director of Customers and
Communities



Time flies, and its time for our newsletter to arrive on your doorstep once again. This is an opportunity for us to keep in touch with you and to let you know about the latest news.

We hope that you're all keeping well and can enjoy now that everything is open again after a challenging period of Covid-19.

On the other hand, we know that there are hard times ahead of us with living costs and energy bills steeply rising. We understand that this affects everyone and affects our tenants significantly. The main thing we would like to say to you about this is that we are here to help. Our rent team is here to give you advice and to help you. They do so much more than just manage rent. If you are finding things difficult let us know so we can see how we can support and help you. We also have an Energy Wardens scheme, read more about this on page 12.

We'll be out and about over the coming months as our Estate Visits resume. We are so pleased to be able to do this again to chat with you and understand more about some of the things which are important to you.

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act is going live on December 1st 2022. This affects every tenant and landlord. The purpose of the act is to simplify contracts and improve the condition of Welsh rented homes and offer tenants and landlords more protection and security. There's more information about this on page 10 and 11.

We are also investing more in our homes to improve their condition and make sure that we invest in the houses we already have as well as the new ones we are building. More information on page 7.

Best wishes,
Sarah

Board Blog

As you know, we have a Board of people here at Adra to help us govern and make important decisions about the company's work. It is therefore important that you know what is prioritised by the Board.

Here is a word from Hywel Eifion Jones, the Chairman of Adra's Board.



I'm pleased to have the opportunity to greet Adra's customers directly and give you a taste of some of our priorities.

It has been a busy time for the Board as Adra's 2022-2025 Corporate Plan goes live. The Corporate Plan outlines Adra's future over the next three years and what we hope to achieve within these years. It outlines our priorities, which are:

- Provide an excellent customer experience
- Provide quality homes to be proud of
- Decarbonise our homes
- Support people and communities to thrive
- Strengthen our business

Our repair service is something that the Board continually focuses on, and we receive regular updates to help us strive to maintain a quality service and timely repairs.

Investing in our current homes is obviously very important for us and we making detailed plans for where we spend money to invest in your homes over the next five years.

Other areas which are receiving attention from us are decarbonising, health and safety, new builds, the Renting Homes Act Wales and more.

Thank you and regards,

Hywel Eifion Jones
Chair of the Adra Board

For more details about the role of the Board, go to

adra.co.uk

Your Views

Every year we contact around 1400 customers to ask your opinions about our services. Here is a summary of your feedback for the year 2021/22.

It showed that



86% of you were satisfied that the rent offers value for money



90% of you trusted Adra



92% of you were satisfied that your home is safe



91% of you were satisfied that your neighbourhood is safe



78% of you were satisfied with the quality of your home



80% of you were satisfied that we listen to your opinions and act upon them



79% of you were satisfied with the way in which we deal with maintenance work

Overall, we are glad to receive such positive feedback about our services. But we do know that there is room for us to continue to improve. Over the next year we will be looking at the customer journey using our various services and reviewing deadlines to complete repairs in your homes. We'll invest in our existing housing stock - more on this on page 7.

We will also work with tenants to carry out reviews, starting with the cleaning service in communal areas. The purpose of the reviews will be to look at how the service is now and to see if there is room to improve or to do things differently. The results will be published on our website.

Listening and acting

"Through the surveys, we received feedback from customers who did not feel as though we were adequately contacting them about the progress of their anti-social behaviour case. To respond to this, we have introduced 'prompts' within our systems that ensure the officer contacts the customer at least fortnightly to provide an update on their case, whether or not there are any developments to report. Because of this the customer satisfaction for keeping in touch regarding their case has increased from 68% to 93%"

Geraint Jones, Neighbourhood Services Manager

Your words about our services:

"Every time I phone, everyone is polite and ready to help, and problems are solved quickly"

"Adra should phone after completing any work to see if everything is ok"

"Great, the worker was friendly. As I've had a new boiler, he took time to show me how to use it"

"The time between being offered the house and receiving the keys was very fast"

"I'm still waiting for them to complete the repairs work"

Interested in becoming an Adra Shareholder?

Want to take part in General Meetings and contribute to decision making?

Want to represent your community's best interests?

If so, we would like to hear from you!

Adra is recruiting new shareholders to take part in making decisions in General Meetings and to contribute to our work.

This is an important role, and we are looking for people who have a passion for what we do, and who want to see Adra succeed.

Shareholders are expected to act in Adra's best interests, and through that role are responsible for making sure we deliver on what we want to achieve.

The time commitment is minimal, and usually includes AGMs and occasional Special General Meetings for some business decisions. The role has many benefits, including the opportunity to become involved in the community, learn more about Adra's business and contribute to effective decision making.

If you are an Adra tenant and feel that you can contribute to the role, we would like to talk to you.

The paperwork for the application is quite straightforward - if you are interested, contact the Governance Team at governance@adra.co.uk for more information.

Please note that we apply a £1 nominal fee for applications to become a Shareholder, and all applications are administered in accordance with our rules.

Experience of a member of our Tenants' Partnership

We asked Rhiannon Davies from Bethesda about her experience of joining the Tenants' Partnership and getting involved with Adra. Here's what she told us:

"Around a year ago I saw an advert for a course with Adra for tenants to learn about being Board members. The main reasons for me taking part were to gain new skills and to raise my own self confidence. I learnt a lot from the course and I'm glad that I went for it and put my name down to take part.

After finishing the course, I decided to join Adra's Tenants' Partnership. Other tenants on the Partnership took to me from the start, without me ever feeling that they were looking down on me. There is a mix of people on the Partnership with various knowledge, skills and experience to share.

I've lived in my flat for 17 years with Adra (and the Council before that). I've always felt that there was a void between me and Adra but being part of the Partnership has reduced this feeling.

I would recommend anyone to join. My confidence has increased over the last few months since being a part of the Partnership. I've been able to meet new people and made a new group of friends too."

Rhiannon will join us when we go on estate walkabouts this year and she can share with you her experiences of being a member of the Tenants' Partnership.



Who is the Partnership?

The Partnership is a group of Adra's customers (tenants, residents and leaseholders), who come together with us on matters which are important to you. The Partnership will discuss a variety of different topics, including setting rents, the home investment program, reviewing policies and discussing changes to services.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Partnership, contact the Community Team on

0300 123 8084

cymunedol@adra.co.uk



Investing in our homes

We understand how important the housing we provide is for you, and for us. We want to continue to invest and spend on our existing homes as well as build good quality new homes to meet the local housing need.

One way in which we address this is by carrying out external housing improvement works and carrying out work in different areas of Gwynedd. We will shortly be working on houses at:

- Maes Padarn, Llanberis
- Fflatiau Caernarfon Road, Bangor
- Fflatiau Llanbeblig, Caernarfon
- Various estates at Aberdyfi and Brynchrug
- Ffordd Llywelyn, Bermo
- Pensyflog, Porthmadog
- Old Palace, Llanellwyr
- Cilcoed/Penywern/Coed Mawr, Bangor



Consultation on the Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023



The Welsh Government wants to ensure that homes provided on social rent are good quality homes so are setting the standards for this. They are now consulting on the new standard that will be introduced in 2023. This will inform landlords how to make their homes better and safer. Landlords like Adra will therefore be required to ensure that the houses they provide meet this standard.

We want to hear your opinion - and this is a great chance to influence the standard of your homes for the future.

More information about this consultation is available on our website. Go to the page by scanning this code. There is space here for you to share your feedback with us, which will greatly assist us in shaping our response to the consultation.

You can also contact the Community Team by phone on 0300 123 8084 for a chat or for further information about the consultation.

This standard gives a list of eight things that a good quality home must have:

- Be in good condition
- Be safe
- Not cost too much to heat, and not be bad for the environment
- Have an up-to-date kitchen
- Have an up-to-date bathroom
- Be comfortable, and appropriate for the person who is living in it
- Have a garden, if possible
- Have a desirable outdoor space, if possible



A new mural to bring colour to the community

We are proud to have been able to work with partners to create new art on a wall in Caernarfon. The mural is on the path that connects Maesincla and Peblig estates where many of our customers live. We are aware that many people use the path and we were eager to restore the mural and to make it a pretty and colourful place to look at on the way to school.

We would like to thank the students of Ysgol Maesincla for their support on this project. The aim was to help young people take pride in their local area.

This path has had a history of criminal activity and a place of uncertainty with many living in that community. The mural on the wall there was dated and covered in graffiti. So we wanted to help and work with Ysgol Maesincla, to refresh the mural and give a new lease of life to the path and improve its appearance. By bringing the students together on this project, we wanted to work with them so that they took pride and responsibility for their own community.

Manon Gwynedd, Head of Ysgol Maesincla, said:

“It has been lovely to be able to work with Adra and Catrin Williams on this project of integrating the community with the school. The pupils of Ysgol Maesincla are very lucky and have had a wonderful experience.”

Sion Eifion Jones, our Community Projects Officer, said:

“The project has been a great chance to work with Catrin Williams the artist, and the students of Ysgol Maesincla to refresh the mural on the Plas path in Caernarfon. The students have obviously had a lot of fun and have also had the chance to develop new skills.”

The project took place over a period of five school days and many of Adra staff, School staff and Police officers supported the project.

One of the year 5 students said that he really enjoyed using a paint brush and being able to use colours and having activities outside of the classroom.

This is part of Prosiect Carn. Prosiect Carn is an artist network which offers creative opportunities and support to artists and communities across North Wales. A grant application through the Arts Council of Wales was successful and enabled Catrin Williams to work with us on the project. Thanks to her for her time and enthusiasm throughout this project.





Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

1 December 2022

THE WAY YOU RENT IS CHANGING

for tenants & landlords

From **1 December 2022**, The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 will change the way landlords in Wales rent out their properties.

The new law **simplifies agreements, improves the condition** of rental homes in Wales and offers **greater security and certainty to tenants and landlords.**

What does the new law

mean for me?

Tenants

Under the new law, tenants and licencees will become 'contract-holders'. Tenancy agreements will be replaced with 'occupation contracts'. The new law will make renting easier and provide greater security.

For contract-holders this will mean:

- receiving a written contract setting out your rights and responsibilities
- an increase in the 'no fault' notice period from two to six months
- greater protection from eviction
- improved succession rights, these set out who has a right to continue to live in a dwelling, for example after the current tenant dies
- more flexible arrangements for joint contract-holders, making it easier to add or remove others to an occupation contract

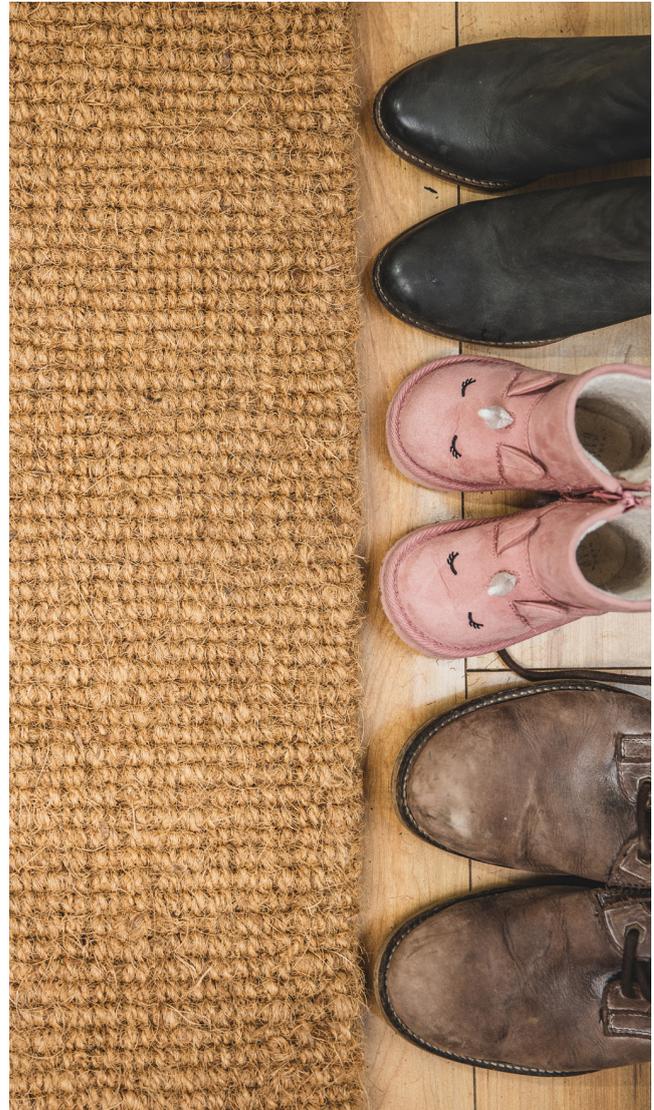
Landlords

All social and private landlords, including those who rent their properties through management companies or agents, will need to:

- comply with the new law
- make the necessary updates to their properties and paperwork

For landlords this will mean:

- A simpler system, with two types of contract: 'Secure' for the social rented sector and 'Standard' for the private rented sector.
- Ensuring homes are fit for human habitation (FFHH). This will include electrical safety testing and ensuring working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors are fitted.
- Abandoned properties can be repossessed without needing a court order.



What should I do next?

We want this transition to be as smooth as possible for everyone.

Whether you're a landlord or a tenant it is important you know what the changes mean for you.

For more information on how the law is changing visit gov.wales/rentinghomes or speak to your landlord.

Working together

for a safe home for all

Responding to the energy crisis Support available



In the face of the energy crisis and costs increasing, there is pressure on families to deal with this difficult situation. Indeed, a very large number of households need practical and financial help to cope as the general living costs rise.

What type of support is available?

Our energy wardens are available to provide impartial energy saving advice.

The energy wardens can:

- Help you save energy at home
- Help to explain bills and tariffs
- Help to program and understand your energy system
- Refer you to other organisations who can provide support
- Help with grant applications such as Warm Home Discount and Welsh Water's 'Help Scheme'

For more information or to receive support, contact our Communities and Partnerships Team on:

0300 123 8084 or **cymunedol@adra.co.uk**

Estate Visits

Its great to speak to so many people through our estates visits this year. Each year we try to visit around 600 homes, to hear your views and see where we can help – whether its about your home, your tenancy, the community you live in or share with you opportunities from Adra and our partners.

Ffrancon Williams, our Chief Executive, took part in the first visits this year in Wrexham in May and said: "The estate visits are a valuable opportunity for me to meet our customers at home and receive feedback on our services. Its so good to speak to people face to face, and it was nice to have such a warm welcome on the doorstep again this year "

The series of estate visits will take place between May and October this year, visiting various estates and homes across our communities.





Creating communal gardens in Dyffryn Ardudwy



We have been working in partnership with the Dyffryn Ardudwy Community group to create community gardens in the local allotments.



There are now over 30 allotments there set up by the Community Group and all the work has been done by volunteers. One allotment has been given to a group of people with learning disabilities who are now taking ownership of the allotment. This will give them the opportunity to develop new skills.

The group have been given a budget to expand the project and Adra have made land available for this to happen. The aim of the project is to create sensory gardens, an orchard and a nature trail that will follow from the highest ground down to the back of our Pentreuchaf estate in Dyffryn Ardudwy.

It is a pleasure to work with a partnership and see the good things we can achieve.





Over a year has gone by since we launched Academi Adra. This is our scheme which supports our customers into work and training. It has been a remarkably successful first year, and it was great to be able to support several of you into work or training.

Here are some of the main achievements from the first year

- Supported 70 individuals into work or training
- 29 have found apprenticeships with Adra or our contractors
- 31 have had access to training
- 8 have found work placements
- 12 have gained work with Adra or our contractors

We have more opportunities for you this year. Here's a taste of some of the courses that we will be running:

Course 1

Introduction to construction and maintenance Course for individuals aged 16+

A five-day course which includes an introduction to construction and the chance to gain accredited qualifications which are recognised within the field. Following the training, there is a chance to have work experience with Adra or one of our contractors. Many people who've been on this course have now received work offers with employers. A great opportunity for you to make an impression and get access to work.



Course 2

Online course (remote learning)

This is a great opportunity for people not able to attend a week's course for many reasons such as other employment or caring responsibilities. This course can offer you a chance to see whether this is the best career for you. The course will be during the evenings and online, over a four-week period and there is a chance to complete some modules in your own time. This course will combine learning and assessments to gain qualifications. There will be a period of work experience with Adra or one of our contractors to follow.

Course 3

Women in construction and maintenance

We are eager to get more equality and representation in our workforce. This three day course is specifically for women and will run face to face during the school term. The course hours will be 10am - 2pm. It will combine learning and assessments to gain qualifications. A period of work experience with Adra or one of our contractors will follow.

We are also working with several other partners who are offering different courses and work and volunteering opportunities within Adra's field of work and beyond. Digital support is also available if training or equipment is needed to apply for work.



For further information about how you can get involved with Academi Adra, or to register for one of the above courses, contact our Community Team on 0300 123 8084 / cymunedol@adra.co.uk. We will confirm the dates of the courses when we have a sufficient number of people registered to take part.



Kim's Story

"I started my work placement with Adra in January 2022 and got a job in the Contact Centre through the 'Kickstart' scheme. I was unemployed and had never had a job before. I didn't leave school with many qualifications, and without the opportunity that I had with Academi Adra I know that I would never have had the confidence to apply for a job, and definitely not to turn up to an interview.

During the six months that I've been with Adra, I have been more confident in dealing with enquiries and I have been able to receive training to improve my skills and my CV. I enjoy chatting with customers and helping them, and the team have all been so good in supporting me and have helped me to improve in my role. The work placement came to an end in June, and I have had good news that I have received a contract offer from Adra to continue in the role."

Adra in our communities



Diwrnod Amgylcheddol Maestryfan, Bangor Ebrill 2022

Ynghyd â'r Cynghorydd Elin Walker Jones, Cyngor Gwynedd a phartneriaid eraill, trefnom ddiwrnod amgylcheddol i dacluso stad Maestryfan a chefnogi trigolion lleol i ailgylchu a gwaredu eu gwastraff yn ddiogel.

Maestryfan Environmental Day, Bangor April 2022

Together with Councillor Elin Walker Jones, Gwynedd Council and other partners, we organised an environmental day to tidy up the Maestryfan estate and support local residents to recycle and dispose of their waste safely.



Te prynhawn Cysgod y Coleg, Bala.

Mae criw Cysgod y Coleg wedi bod yn brysur yn mwynhau gweithgareddau gwahanol gan gynnwys cael te prynhawn a sesiynau celf a chrefft.

Cysgod y Coleg afternoon tea, Bala.

The Cysgod y Coleg crew have been busy enjoying different activities including afternoon tea and art and craft sessions.