

Adra

The latest news, information
and stories from your
local communities

Winter 2022
Here for You



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And much more

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Biodiversity day in Llanllyfni area



A chat with one of the team members who is here for You

This is Rhys, one of the team members who is ready to help and support you with living costs.

We had a chat to catch up with him and to know more about what he achieves in his job.

Can you explain what you do in your job day to day?

The main purpose of our work is to support our customers to maximise their income which means helping you get the most money in as possible. We do this by discussing your situation/income, to make sure you get what you are entitled to. Benefits such as Universal Credit, Housing Benefit, and more. We also work with other agencies in order to offer support for you to be able to apply for benefits, grants, budgeting and looking into energy costs.

Can you give an example of how you have been able to help an Adra customer with their costs?

The most recent example that comes to mind is when I had a customer who had lost her mother and she was now living alone. She didn't claim anything to help her financially. She had been looking after her mother and the mother's income was the main income in the household. She was worried about how she was going to pay for the rent and also day to day costs. I explained that she needed to apply for Universal Credit. This would give her a personal income and help towards paying her rent as she is not working.

Also, as she lives in a two-bedroom home and is alone, she would be affected by the 'bedroom tax'. Given this, Universal Credit would deduct around £14 a week from rent payments she wanted to receive.

I completed a 'Discretionary Housing Payment' form with her in order to get help paying this. This help is available through Gwynedd Council and is available in every county. In this case we were successful in

receiving 'bedroom tax' payments in full. This was a great help to the customer that she did not have to worry about her rent - between receiving the Universal Credit and the 'Discretionary Housing Payment' she had her rent paid in full. This took the pressure off her shoulders and gave the customer time to focus on other issues and claim other benefits.

The customer had a disability so I referred her to Citizens Advice to see if she was eligible to claim 'Employment and Support Allowance / PIP (Personal Independence Payment)' in order to get further help in making an application and completing the forms.

Being able to support and help people like this is such an important part of the job and I take great pride in doing that. We encourage any of our customers to contact us if they are concerned about financial matters, we will do what we can to help.

Cost of living crisis Here for You

We live in unstable times with the cost of living increasing. It is completely natural for you to feel concerned about the situation and we want you to know that we are here for you. Remember that our team is here to help you and offer advice and support.

Worried about your financial situation?

If you are worried about your financial situation and not sure how you can afford to pay your bills - there is help available. Our Rent Team and Tenancy Support Team are here to help you and to refer you to help from others.



Contact us immediately if:

- you are worried about your financial situation
- you have lost your job
- you anticipate that you will not be able to pay all your bills

Our team has a great deal of experience and knowledge to help you find ways to resolve your concerns, and to ensure you claim every benefit and grant aid available to you.

For specific information about grants, food banks, energy wardens, Citizens Advice, and more, visit our website or contact us directly:

enquiries@adra.co.uk / 0300 123 8084

We collaborate with a number of partners who offer services to support our tenants such as Citizens Advice, Welsh Water, iCan and Energy Wardens.

We also have awareness raising events and cost of living support, to give in-person advice and show what support is available from our different partners. Keep an eye out for dates and times we have these on.

Food in an emergency

Local Food Banks provide emergency food boxes to people and families in need.

If you need this service contact your local Food Bank.



The Trussell Trust website can direct you to your local food bank, and their contact details.

Go to their website www.trusselltrust.org or call 01722 580 180.

Here are the details of some of the food banks in Gwynedd:

Bangor Cathedral Food Bank

Location: Diocesan Centre, Cathedral Close, Bangor, LL57 1RL (behind the Cathedral).
Contact info: For more information email lesley.beckton@yahoo.co.uk before 1.30pm on our opening days please (Monday, Wednesday, Friday).

Arfon Food Bank

Location: Gwyrfaï Centre, Lôn Cae Ffynnon, Cibyn, Caernarfon, LL55 2BD.
Contact info: Find out more by emailing info@arfon.foodbank.org.uk, calling 07586 053961 or visiting the Facebook page.

Barmouth

Location: Revelation, Park Road, Barmouth, LL42 1PH.
Contact info: Find out more by calling 07973 914599 or emailing info@southgwynedd.foodbank.org.uk Or visit southgwynedd.foodbank.org.uk

Porthmadog, Penrhyndeudraeth, Bala, Dolgellau and Thywyn

Location: Emergency food parcels are available for collection from Porthmadog, Penrhyndeudraeth, Bala, Dolgellau and Tywyn.
Contact info: Find out more by calling 07973 914599 or emailing info@southgwynedd.foodbank.org.uk

Ffestiniog Food Bank

Location: Church Hall, Church Road, Blaenau Ffestiniog, LL41 3HB (opposite Tan y Maen Centre).
Contact info: You will need to go to the Y Dref Werdd's office to get a referral to the Food Bank. Find out more by calling 07435 290553 or visiting the Facebook page.

Pwllheli Food Bank

Location: St Peter's Church, Pwllheli, LL53 5DS.
Contact info: get more information by emailing or calling pwllhelifoodbank@gmail.com 07359356383 or visiting the Facebook page.

Coming together to offer a warm welcome during the cost of living crisis



We are teaming up with partners across North Wales to offer warm, safe spaces for people struggling to cope with rising energy costs, including our customers and local residents.

Warm Welcome is committed to opening up spaces in offices, libraries and other community centres. Here people can visit to keep warm and have a hot drink or food without having to turn on their own heating or homes during the day.

Some Warm Welcome locations will also include community activities and information events such as how to save energy and increase income.

We will put messages on our social media about the locations of Warm Welcome places. We will also send a text message to people in the area and put information posters around nearby homes so you know.

Further to this, Menter Môn has an interactive map that shows the Warm Welcome areas of all our partners and you are warmly welcome to use any of these areas.

Among the partners who are opening Warm Welcome spaces are Adra, Cartrefi Conwy, Cynefin, North Wales and ClwydAlyn Housing Associations, Denbighshire County Council and the housing services charity Canllaw.



Investing in your homes to make them more efficient

Continuing to invest and spend on our existing houses is crucial for us as well as building new quality houses to meet the local housing need.

One way we address this is by carrying out external improvement work on the houses and carrying out work in different areas in Gwynedd.



The work will vary from home to home and our staff will discuss with each tenant individually following an inspection of the home. Here are some of the external works we carry out on our existing houses:

- Install a new roof
- Re-whip walls
- Insulate the walls of the home
- New windows and doors
- Install new gutters and fascia boards
- Improve or install new fencing and paths

Doing work like the above is a significant amount of work on a home and completing work like this takes time. But we feel that investing money and time to do this work is one of our main priorities. With energy prices increasing, and the cost of living so high we understand the pressure on everyone and therefore understand the importance of making your home as efficient and efficient as possible.

Mathew Gosset, our Assistant Director of Assets said

“Having collaboration with local companies on these schemes means that we keep the pound local and that the local community benefits from the investment through social value schemes.”

“This type of work has a positive effect on carbon footprint and energy efficiency of the home. On average each home that receives insulation work reduces its footprint by around 20% and it also helps to reduce energy costs for our tenants, which is very important in the current climate”.



Keep an eye on our social media to see pictures of how these developments are progressing over the coming weeks.

Maintenance of your home

Our Repairs Team are working very hard, re-plumbing, plastering and solving problems in your home as soon as possible.

But do you know what your responsibility is? The list below gives you an idea of what your responsibilities are as a tenant:

- **Re-pressurise your boiler**
- **Bathroom** – repair of cupboards, mirror, shower curtain, rails, plugs and chains
- **Decorating** – any painting or wallpaper you want to change
- **Doors** – if you have had new carpets and need to adjust the doors
- **Electrical appliances** – such as ovens, fridges and washing machines
- **Fireplaces and surrounds** – anything to do with fireplace surrounds and ash trays
- **Fixtures and fittings** – things like coat hooks and curtain rails

- **Gardens** – cutting grass, bushes and hedges
- **Lean-to** – a roof/shelter attached to the side of your home
- **Light** – bulbs, fuses and bulbs in the kitchen
- **Locks** – if you lose your key or repair the door after forced entry (Refund)
- **Toilet seats** – cracks in the seat or a loose seat or fit a new seat

New videos on our website help you with some of these tasks.

If any other repairs need to be done in your home, then contact us.



Responding to the Energy Crisis

Help available

There is a lot of pressure on families to deal with the energy crisis and rising costs. Indeed, a very large number of households need practical and financial help to cope as general living costs rise.

What kind of help is available?

Our energy wardens are available to give unbiased advice on saving energy. Wardens can:

- help save energy in your home
- explain bills and tariffs
- help programming and understanding your heating system
- refer you to other organizations that can provide support
- help with applications for grants such as Warm Home discount and Welsh Water's 'Help Scheme'

For more information and to receive advice, contact our Communities and Partnerships Team on: **0300 123 8084** or **cymunedol@adra.co.uk**

Two chances for two brothers

Giving opportunities to the young people of our communities to develop a career is very important to us. There is so much local talent here, it is important that we make the most of it.

We are very proud to have been able to offer unique opportunities to two brothers from Llanrug recently.

Jac Thomas is one of the brothers. Jac has been studying an Engineering Software degree course at John Moores University, Liverpool and a 12 month work placement is part of his course. Following an interview Jac was accepted as an IT Business Systems Trainee with us for a year. He has had the opportunity to work with our IT team and contribute to the company's work as well as develop his skills.



"I have learned so many useful skills over the past year, from software development skills to my communication skills in Welsh. It's been an amazing experience."

Opportunities through Academi Adra



We are a company with a number of diverse jobs. There are several career paths to be had with us, from supporting people to plumbing work. While Jac has had experience with our IT team developing and maintaining our business systems software, his brother Huw has had a completely different experience with our Repair Team.

Huw joined through the Academi Adra scheme to support individuals to work within the construction world. He was given qualifications such as a CSCS card

"Thank you very much to Academi Adra for the opportunity, it has been an eye opener. There are many options in Adra for someone with a 'trade'. Who knows, maybe I'll be able to get a job here one day after finishing College"

Keep an eye on our website and social media for more opportunities with Academi Adra.

to go on building sites and health and safety courses about working at height. All this before moving on to work with our Repair Team.

Over 150 are part of our Repair Team and their work varies from fixing problems in homes such as a broken sink to re-making whole houses ready for re-installation. Huw had an overview of this work during his time with us. He then went on to gain another two weeks' experience through North Wales Training.



Social Value

Everything we do as a business has an impact on you, our tenants, or on society. We call this effect social value, and we can put a financial number on this value in order to see which activities have the greatest impact. This will help us make decisions about how and where to invest our money and ensure that there is as much value as possible in the good we offer you.

Our social value during 2021/22

Anti-social behaviour and our warden services:



670 anti-social behaviour, safeguarding and domestic abuse cases dealt with, equating to an estimated £3.3m worth of social value.

82% of our customers were satisfied with the service they received.

Repairs and Adaptations:



470 adaptations completed and £633,000 invested in adapting houses for independent living and generated an estimated £1.5m in social value.

CAB Referrals:



£15,000 annual investment into a Citizen's Advice Bureau referral service which provides our customers with finance and debt advice. 101 customers were referred to the service and generated an estimated £714,000 in social value.

Tackling loneliness:



231 people were supported at our Supported Housing sites and 41 people living elsewhere received support from our tenancy support officers.

Education, training and apprenticeships:



70 people were supported into training and employment through our 'Academi Adra' initiative.

Keeping our spend local:



60% of our suppliers were based in Wales and 87% of these were small or medium enterprises.

Since setting up the Cymru Materials Framework, £144,191 has been raised by the social value fund which will be used to support local initiatives, including offering trainee and apprenticeship opportunities.

Promoting the Welsh language:



97% of Adra's staff are Welsh Speakers. We've invested in opportunities for learners – be they staff or contractors working with us – to be supported to use the language in their

everyday work. We've co-designed learning modules with other partners whose staff want to strengthen their use of Welsh.



Frequently Asked Questions

Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016

Working together
for a safe home for all

Q. What is the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016?

The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 is a new law by the Welsh Government that will come into place on the 1st of December 2022.

These changes have been planned by Welsh Government for some time and have been scrutinised and supported by tenant organisations such as TPAS Cymru and Shelter Cymru.

Q. Who does the law affect?

All Landlords – Private and Social

All Tenants – Private and Social

Q. How will it affect me as an Adra tenant?

There is no need to worry. You will still be able to live in your home, you will still pay rent and we will still do your repairs and look after your estates and communal areas.

Adra will be known as a 'community landlord', a change from the term 'social landlord'

Q. What is an occupation contract?

This is the new name for your tenancy agreement.



Q. When will I receive my occupation contract?

Existing tenants will receive the occupation contract within 6 months from the 1st of December 2022 replacing your Tenancy Agreement.

Regardless of when you receive your contract, the Act will apply to everyone from the 1st of December 2022.

Q. Do I need to sign the contract?

No. You do NOT need to sign the contract. The written statement is not a new contract, it's a written statement (written copy) of the existing terms and conditions of your tenancy agreement, incorporating additions and/or changes required by the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016.

Q. Is there anything I need to do?

The only thing you will need to do is read your contract when you receive it and familiarise yourself with your rights and responsibilities. Please keep it safe so that you can refer to it when you need to.

We will send existing Adra tenants a written statement (written copy) of their contract within 6 months of the 1st of December. New Adra tenants(contract-holders) will sign the occupation contracts from 1st December in the usual way at the start of their tenancy (contract)

Q. Will you help me if I have problems with my neighbours?

Yes. We will continue to help and support you if you have problems with your neighbours. All occupation contracts will include a term about anti-social behaviour and other prohibited conduct. If a contract-holder breaches this term of the contract, we are able to take action.

Q. Is there anywhere I can get more information on these changes?

Yes.

Welsh Government website:

Tenants: housing law is changing (Renting Homes) | GOV.WALES
Housing law is changing: Renting Homes Wales | GOV.WALES

You can also find an Easy Read guide on the Welsh Government website: Tenants: housing law is changing (Renting Homes) (easy read) | GOV.WALES

Our Website: <https://www.adra.co.uk/en/my-home/renting-homes>



Your feedback

We've been asking many of you for your opinion and thoughts on the cost of living crisis.

We've had over 150 of you replying to the consultation. Thanks to every single one of you for sharing your opinion and experiences with us.

From your feedback, it's obvious that the increase in the cost of living is a concern for many of you.

Over 80% of you felt that you are financially worse off compared to this time last year. Energy and fuel bills are your main worry, followed by the rise in food prices and then your ability to pay your rent.

Details of where to find food in an emergency is on page 4.

Several of you told us that you'd like our Rent and Income Team to get in touch.

Our Officers are busy getting in touch with you to see what further help and support is available to you and to design an individual pay plan when relevant.

Your feedback will be very helpful for us to understand what the main needs and concerns are, and if we and our partners can offer further support in some areas.

We regularly update our cost of living crisis page on our website:

<https://www.adra.co.uk/en/supporting-you/cost-of-living-crisis/>

Also follow us on social media for updates on the crisis and what support we have available with others.



@adrataicyf

Please remember that our Energy Wardens are here to give you advice on:

- saving energy using your energy system more efficiently
- help you to apply for any relevant grants

More information about our Energy Wardens and how to get in touch is on page 7.

Bro Seiont Fun Afternoon



There are quite a few green areas around the Bro Seiont estate in Caernarfon. Recently the residents have come together to chat and share ideas on how we can make better use of these areas.

A fun afternoon was held jointly with Galeri, Caernarfon for the residents - as part of the Canfas scheme.

It is naturally important for us to get the opinion of the people who live in Bro Seiont about these green areas. It was nice to see the residents of Bro Seiont come together

and have a chance to get to know each other.

Everyone had a wonderful afternoon - thank you all for coming along.

Looking forward to developing the ideas of Bro Seiont residents and seeing it all come to life.

Remember if you have ideas about what we can do with these areas, please contact us: cymunedol@adra.co.uk

Afternoon tea on your doorstep

To celebrate national afternoon tea week, we have worked with Age Cymru to provide afternoon tea boxes to some of our tenants who live in supported homes in the Arfon area.

Our Support Officer went around our tenants' homes with a wonderful box full of sandwiches, cakes, sausage rolls and scones created by Age Cymru and had the opportunity to chat with each tenant. Thank you from the heart of Age Cymru - a pleasure to collaborate.



Like stories about our community work?

We provide more than a key to a home. We also take part in a number of community projects and offer a number of work and training opportunities.

If you would like to know more about this work in our communities go to the

Community website: Adra