

**National Assembly for Wales  
Cross-Party Housing Group  
Annual General Meeting  
12-12.15pm Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016  
Room D, Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay**

**AMs in attendance:** Sandy Mewies (departing Chair), Jocelyn Davies, Peter Black, Mark Isherwood, Mike Hedges (Incoming Chair)

**Others in attendance**

Paul Mewies, support to Chair  
Julie Nicholas, CIH Cymru (depart. Sec.)  
Kevin Howell, CIH Cymru (incom. Sec.)  
Aaron Hill, CHC  
Auriol Miller, Cymorth Cymru  
Teej Dew, Tai Pawb  
Elle McNeil, Citizens Advice Bureau

Dave Palmer, Wales Co-op centre  
Steve Clarke, Welsh Tenants  
Jennie Bibbings, Shelter Cymru  
Dorine Pannarale, RLA  
Karan Sanghera, Welsh Women's Aid  
Martin Asquith, Housemark  
David Wilton, TPAS Cymru  
David Morgan, RICS

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome:**

Sandy Mewies, AM & Chair of XPHG welcomed those present and gave a summary of the cross party housing group's history.

**2. Apologies:**

Rhodri Glyn AM, Mark Harris, HBF & Jim Bird Waddington, Caer Las

**3. Annual Report:**

The Chair summarised the report content for the group, thanking AMs for their continued support, as well as giving thanks to CIH Cymru for coordinating the group and the support received from the members of the Homes for All Cymru (H4AC) group.

The report and financial statement were approved by the group with the following amendments:

Homes for all Cymru membership should also include:

- Dave Palmer, Wales cooperative centre
- Steve Clark, Welsh Tenants
- Elle McNeil, CAB
- Martin Asquith, HouseMark

#### **4. Election of Secretary:**

Julie Nicholas stood down as secretary to the group and the Chair thanked JN for her support to the group in 2015/16. The Chair asked for nominations for a new secretary.

- Kevin Howells, Director CIH Cymru was proposed as new Secretary by Jennie Bibbings, Shelter Cymru and seconded by Dorine Pannarale, Residential Landlords Association.

No other proposals were made.

Kevin Howell was elected as Secretary.

#### **5. Election of Chair**

Sandy Mewies confirmed her intention to step down as Chair of the group at the 2016 AGM and invited nominations for Chair.

- Mike Hedges was proposed by Steve Clark, Welsh Tenants and seconded by Auriol Miller, Cymorth Cymru.

No further nominations were received.

Mike Hedges was elected as Chair.

Mike Hedges commenced chairing of the group, thanking Sandy in her role as ex-chair and stating that he was looking forward to taking the group onward and of his understanding of housing activity as an important industry and service in Wales.

#### **6. AOB:**

Kevin Howell gave formal thanks to the two AMs standing down at the next election; Sandy Mewies and Jocelyn Davies. KH thanked SM for being an excellent chair and supporter of housing in Wales stating that the success of the group was in no small part down to SM's support for housing. KH also thanked JD, as former Housing minister and architect of the 2010 Improving Lives and Communities strategy. KH went on to thank Mark Isherwood for his championing of housing and regeneration as Shadow Minister for Housing and Peter Black who's Mobile Homes (Wales) bill became both the first private members bill introduced to the assembly and the first piece of housing legislation for Wales.

Finally KH thanked Paul Mewies for his excellent organisation of and support to the group from within the assembly.

Bouquets were presented to SM and JD on behalf of Homes for all Cymru.

#### **7. Close of AGM**

**The XPHG AGM was immediately followed by:**

**National Assembly for Wales**  
**Cross-Party Housing Group Meeting**  
**12.15-1.00pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016**  
Room D, Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay

## **Minutes**

### **1. Welcome to joint meeting**

Mike Hedges AM and Chair of the group welcomed organisational representatives to the final meeting of the assembly term. He stated that the group would be automatically dissolved and that the secretary would take responsibility for contacting the new/returning AMs and political parties after the May elections to commence a new cross party housing group.

### **2. Leaseholder paper:**

JN introduced the paper prepared jointly by CIH Cymru, CHC, RLA, Wales co-op centre and Welsh Tenants, explaining it was a reflection of the discussions held formerly in the group and had been requested by the previous Chair as a summary document. The intention was for the paper to be approved by the group and then submitted to the Minister with responsibility for housing.

A discussion followed including:

PB: recommended that the paper be amended to include actual cost of charges in a transparent manner. It was agreed by the group that this would be included.

SC: Stated that the CHC cross-agency working group was seeking to include transparency within its good practice recommendations.

PB stated that he had a useful case history for that group if the Chair would like to contact him for it.

The report was approved subject to the amendment above to be forwarded by the Minister.

- a. Dave Palmer referred to the 'vintage green' group in Cardiff an older woman's housing cooperative.

#### Actions:

- JN to amend report and send to the Minister with a cover letter from the cross party housing group.
- CHC to contact Peter Black regarding the case history example.

### **3. Homes for Wales campaign update**

Aaron Hill gave an update to the group of the Homes for Wales campaign. Acknowledging that the housing crisis in Wales was not as extreme as that being experienced in parts of England, AH stated that it was acknowledged across the housing industry that there had been significant cross-party support for continued investment in housing throughout the current assembly term to resolve housing need in Wales. He stated that this included support for the Supporting People programme, capital investment in social homes and the commencement of Help to Buy- Wales. AH stated that the Homes for Wales partnership continued to enjoy cross –tenure support and that the next milestone for the campaign was the housing rally on the 4<sup>th</sup> March, starting at the Senedd at 1pm and ending at the Hayes in Cardiff. There was also an invite to the H4W hustings on 2<sup>nd</sup> March at the Norwegian Church made to the group. AH thanked AMs and members of the cross party housing group for their support and involvement in the campaign to date.

Discussion followed including:

- KH stated that there was still an opportunity to participate in a social media push to support and highlight the campaign and the rally.
- MH stated that it was also important to include a focus on the blight of empty homes in Wales, although much had been achieved through the empty property strategy there was still much to do.
- MI stated that he had signed up to six housing-related hustings, including Cymorth Cymru and CHC, and was pleased to note that the sector was making a lot of noise ahead of the election.

#### **4. AOB:**

- a. JN stated a request had been made to join the Cross party housing group from the Construction industry training board (CITB). JD asked for some information on the group which was provided by other members. The Chair approved the request to join the group, noting that the group would soon be dissolved but that CIH Cymru would take note of the request going forward for the next assembly term.

#### **5. Close of meeting**