

Beacon Bulletin

ISSUE 1

Bulletin Highlights:

- The Beacon Promise
- Meet the team
- We need you
- Whats on the horizon

This time, we've written the Beacon Bulletin, but next time we'd love you to help shape what's included, how it looks, and what matters most to you!



Welcome to your **Beacon bulletin**



Hi, I'm Serena Jones, Executive Director of Operations, which means I'm responsible for the quality of landlord services you receive from us at Beacon.

I'm pleased to introduce the very first edition of this bulletin, which launches the 'Beacon Promise'. This marks an evolution in how we work with you to better understand what matters to you and act on that feedback to keep improving the services you receive.

The merger gave us the chance to reflect on the approaches taken by both previous housing associations, build on what worked well, and create a new resident engagement strategy that sets out how we will keep you informed, how you can get involved, and how we will increase trust by making decisions with you.

We have listened to feedback on the strategy and produced the 'Beacon Promise', which is our commitment to asking, listening and acting on what you tell us matters most. We've tried to make it as easy as possible for you to be involved, with a wide variety of ways for your voices to be heard.

"The Promise isn't just words. It's about changing the way Beacon works so that every staff member listens to you, and your experiences help shape how we design, deliver, and review services"

It's important I acknowledge that we know we don't always get it right. Delivering a wide range of services to more than 9,000 homes in a highly regulated environment is complex, but I am committed to leading a team that is honest with you, takes responsibility when things go wrong, and learns from every experience.

It's important that we are honest about the difficult things in this bulletin, not just share good news. We know that in recent months there have been challenges in getting through to staff and getting the answers you need quickly. There are lots of reasons for this, such as recruiting and training new staff, moving to new IT systems and bringing teams together, but we want you to know that we are making every effort to improve call waiting times, response times and the quality of the services we provide.

We know many households are facing cost-of-living pressures and that trust in public services has been affected in many areas. I hope that by improving how we listen to and work with you, we can continue building trust in Beacon and provide services in the best way possible, now and in the future.

I hope you enjoy this bulletin and look forward to meeting more of you in the future.

Serena Jones
Director of Operations



The BEACON PROMISE



At Beacon, we want to create better places for people and the planet by working with you and putting you at the heart of everything we do. The Beacon Promise is our commitment to listen to you, ask what matters to you, and act on what you tell us so we can improve services and help build stronger communities.

So far, **1,053** residents have signed up and are involved in the **Beacon Promise!**



What this means for you:

The Beacon Promise will help to:

- Make services better, quicker, and more responsive
- Communicate clearly and regularly about things that matter to your home
- Make it easier for you to get involved and shape our services
- Be honest! We will own our mistakes, share our successes, and welcome feedback
- Make sure everyone has the chance to be heard
- Give you more say in decisions that affect you

Our three principles:

 **Inform**
 **Involve**
 **Entrust**

- **Inform:** We keep you updated in clear and simple ways, both online and in your community.
- **Involve:** We work with you to shape services and share how we're doing.
- **Entrust:** We give you a say in bigger decisions, such as spending, staff and services.



Get involved in what matters to you

You can choose to join groups focusing on what you care about:



Affordability of rents and service charges



Building new homes and regenerating communities



Building and home safety



Community projects



Communication



Equity, diversity and inclusion



Performance and improvement



Recruitment, learning and development



Repairs and maintenance



Resident experience / housing services



Self-evaluation and regulation



Welsh language

We're happy to talk to you about anything else that is important to you and your home!

To find out more about the Beacon Promise and to sign up to get involved, visit our webpage:

CLICK HERE



LEIGH

STEPH

CHLOE



We are the Resident Engagement Team and let us introduce ourselves. We are **Leigh**, **Steph**, and **Chloe**.

Meet the team!

Some of you may recognise Steph and Leigh. Chloe is new to the team and is looking forward to meeting everyone and helping bring the Beacon Promise to life.

We work alongside your Resident Liaison Team, who work with the Assets and Maintenance Team. Together, we assist residents when they are having improvements and changes made to their homes.

We're friendly, approachable, and always happy to have a chat, so please feel free to say hello if you see us in your area. We're here to listen and make sure your voice is heard and acted on.

Get in touch with the Resident Engagement team:

 promise@beacon.cymru

 01792479200

    

@BeaconCymru

[CLICK HERE](#)





#ChangeYouCanSee



Complaints

Over the past year, we have been working to bring the two merged organisations together. As part of this, we spoke to residents by phone to understand your experience of the previous complaints policies and what matters most to you when you raise a complaint. We listened to what you told us, and your feedback helped us shape a new complaints policy, which we'll be sharing with you very soon.

Communicating with you



You may have seen our recent video launching the Beacon Promise. We'd really love to thank all the residents who appeared in the video! You helped us bring it to life, and we hope this will be the first of many videos and communications that you would like to be involved in.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE VIDEO](#)



In every Beacon Bulletin, we'll share updates on the changes we've made because of what you've told us, how you've been involved, and the feedback you've given us.



STAR survey (Survey of Tenants And Residents)



Thank you to the impressive 2,915 residents who completed the **STAR** survey, a nationally recognised feedback opportunity for all Welsh social landlords reported to Welsh Government every two years. There were lots of questions, and we specifically asked whether you would like to be involved in making decisions about your home and community. We are delighted that so many of you are interested in being involved, and this helped to create the Beacon Promise!

STAR survey results have been reported to Beacon's Board of Management. They listened to what you told us and tasked us with making improvements in the key areas of service charges, anti-social behaviour, repairs, communication and making sure your voices are heard and acted on.

Read more:

[CLICK HERE](#)



Last year, we carried out a consultation with you about WHQS. **More than 2,000 of you responded**, and we are grateful that you took the time to give valuable feedback.



Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)

The survey gave you the opportunity to share what matters most to you in terms of home improvements, and your feedback will start to shape what we do and where we focus our investment.

Through the WHQS consultation, we asked you to give us your top three priorities, which were:

- **Making homes warmer** and cheaper to heat by adding better insulation, solar panels or more efficient heating
- **Getting a new kitchen** or having your kitchen updated
- **Getting new windows** in your home

We know what your priorities are, and this has helped us decide what we will spend money on this year. We can confirm that we are investing significantly in Beacon homes this year.

We are investing £6.5million in kitchens, bathrooms, windows and doors. We are replacing six lifts and making modifications to two others. We are also installing six sprinkler systems in blocks of flats and carrying out fire safety work to three blocks of flats.

In addition, we are investing a further £4million in solar panels, insulation, heat networks and environmental management systems to make homes more energy efficient and hopefully reduce heating costs.



We are planning more WHQS work with you this year so that we can build on your feedback and input so far. We will keep you updated on what's happening next. If you want to be involved, you can sign up to the Repairs and Maintenance Blueprint Group.

Please feel free to sign up to the Repairs and Maintenance Blueprint group if you want to be involved and have your say!

More information can be found on our website:

CLICK HERE



Recruiting the right people with you

For the first time since the merger, residents were involved in staff recruitment and recently helped recruit our new Resident Engagement Officer, Chloe. They took part in a meeting where candidates led a discussion on the Beacon Promise.

Residents asked great questions and helped choose the best person for the role, with their views playing an important part in the final decision. They really enjoyed being involved, with one resident saying they...

"I felt valued and that my opinion mattered and was heard."

This won't be the only time residents are involved in recruitment; we plan to do this a lot more.

If it's something you would like to be involved in:

SIGN UP HERE

Residents living above and near shops and businesses



Beacon had long been involved in city and town centre regeneration, delivering much-needed new homes and creating spaces for businesses that increased footfall on many high streets. We spoke with residents living above and around shops and commercial properties that we manage to better understand what mattered most about where they lived and to identify any issues affecting their homes and local communities.

During the engagement, residents were invited to share:

- Positive or negative experiences of living in their home.
- Any issues relating to shared hallways and communal areas.
- Views on design features that could be considered in future development plans.

Residents were encouraged to raise any concerns so that colleagues and partner organisations could work together to develop plans to address the issues identified.

Thank you to all the residents who took the time to participate and share their valuable feedback.



Want to be involved?

There are so many ways you can have your say.

Here's what we're working on next:



Reviewing the new **Beacon resident portal**. As you may be aware, our old MyRHA portal closed earlier this year. We know it didn't work as well as it could have, and many of you told us exactly that. We've listened, and we're focusing on getting the basics right. The good news is that we're building a brand-new portal, launching in early autumn, and you will help shape it from the start.



Join our **Affordability of Rents and Service Charges** Blueprint Group. We are going to develop a new policy for rent setting and a set of standards for service charges at Beacon.



Communications Blueprint Group – help us review this edition and design the next bulletin and review our Beacon website, as we want to make communications more interesting for you and with you!



We are also looking for residents to help drive forward work on **Regulatory Standards** and Beacon's Self-Assessment.



Would you like to be involved in any of these? We would love to hear what you think.



The Building Safety (WALES) Act

The Building Safety (Wales) Act has now been introduced by the Welsh Government. It sets out a new approach to building safety, placing additional responsibilities on landlords and residents. We would like to call this **Beacon Safe**. What do you think?

What is the Building Safety (Wales) Act?

- The Bill introduces a new safety system for people living in shared buildings in Wales.
- It applies to all shared buildings, no matter how tall they are or who owns them.
- It was created after the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, where 72 people died.
- The aim is to make sure a tragedy like that never happens in Wales.

Why is this Bill important?

- It makes buildings safer for everyone.
- It sets clear rules for the people who manage buildings.
- It gives residents a stronger voice in decisions about their homes.

What this means for you

- Safer homes and clearer information.
- More power to speak up about problems.
- Confidence that building managers must follow the law.

A massive thank you to the residents from Strand Court in Swansea who helped us pilot this work.

Previously, when there were major works at Strand Court, residents helped us to learn that we need to work more closely with contractors and phase work programmes more effectively. We now understand that we need to communicate better with you and have resident liaison officers in place to support this.

We will be visiting residents in Barons Court, Swansea, and Strand Quarter, Swansea, over the next few months. Please come and say hello to us if you live in either of these locations.





There is a lot more on the horizon at Beacon

**You will be seeing us
in your communities!
Look out for the bus
in your area and the
Beacon Buzz Days.**

We are investing in a **Beacon Bus** that will visit estates and communities to hear your concerns, ideas, and suggestions for improvement. Thank you to all the residents who shared their views and feedback during the design consultation. We are pleased to confirm that this vehicle has been designed to be fully accessible, ensuring it can be used and enjoyed by everyone. We want to start conversations with you about rent-setting policy, service charge standards, building safety, and more.

On **Beacon Buzz** days, every staff member at Beacon will get out and about in communities and visit you at home. We want to create stronger connections and ensure that resident engagement is everyone's business.



Contacting Us

We know that the merger has been a challenging time for many of you, and we really appreciate your patience and support. Bringing teams together and moving to new systems has caused some delays, including longer phone response times. We're pleased to say that this is now improving and we are continuing to prioritise making it easy for you to contact us.

As we continue to embed these new ways of working, we are grateful for your understanding and look forward to working more closely with you and giving you more opportunities to get involved.



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