



You matter | Ti'n cyfri

**Welcome, session starts at
2:30pm**

**Affordability: involving tenants
in rents and service charges.
12 things to think about.**

David Lloyd
December 2020



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in rents and service charges.
12 things to think about.**

David Lloyd
December 2020

Tweet or email me



@davidthelloyd

@TPASCymru

david@tpas.cymru



“Christmas is coming”



Michael Bublé Emerges from his cave



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Chairs of Registered Social Landlords
Director of Finance of Local Housing Authorities
Director Housing of Local Housing Authorities

30 November 2020

Dear Colleagues

Social Housing Rent and Service Charges from 2021-2022

The purpose of this letter is to advise social landlords of the maximum rent levels that tenants can be charged from 6th April 2021.

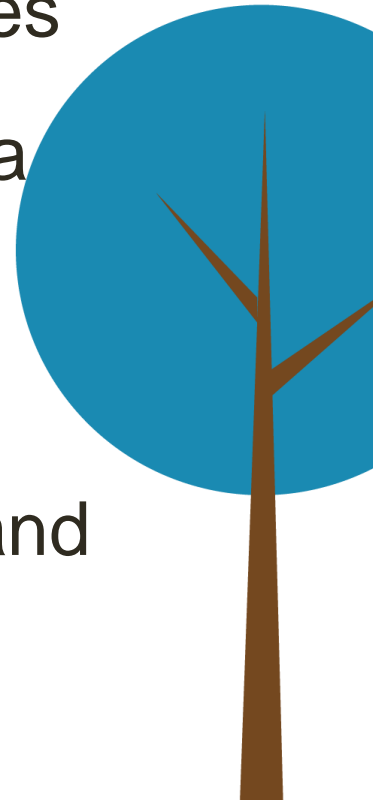
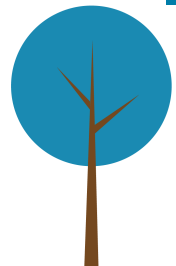


You matter | Ti'n cyfri

**Involving tenants in rents
and service charges.
12 things to think
about.**

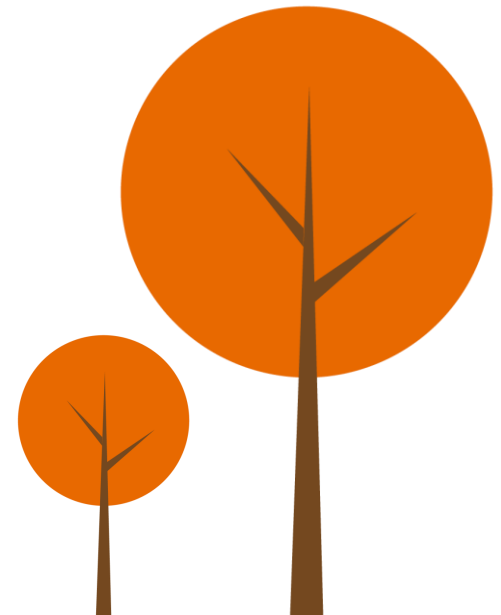
Context

- **Timescales** – what’s realistic for April 2021?
- **Journey** – 5yr , annual rent setting.
- **“Affordability”** – subjective?!
- **Poverty & Economy** – current challenges
- **Future challenges** – e.g. decarb agenda
- **Online engagement** – opportunities & limitations, new skills.
- **Strategic decision** – board assurance and challenge.



Questions to you!

- Do you actively take part in online surveys and focus groups?
- Would you attend a Council Tax affordability focus group?



A photograph of a row of terraced houses with stone walls and white window frames. A semi-transparent blue overlay covers the top half of the image, containing white text. The text reads: "12 things to think about.... in no particular order!".

12 things to think about.... in no particular order!

BRINSONS
SOLO
Diamonds
To Let



**One size
doesn't fit
all.**



- Organisational culture
- Tenant Profile
- Existing involvement approach
- Relationships with tenants
- Investment and commitment in getting in right
- Digital engagement options and knowledge



What's your starting point?

Starting point

- What has already been decided? –
- Mapping:
 - Any consultation already done?
 - Any existing tenant insight available?
 - What current tenant involvement methods could you use?
 - Tenants profile, communications preferences etc
- Which dept is leading on this consultation? Who's heading it up? Who else internally needs to be involved?

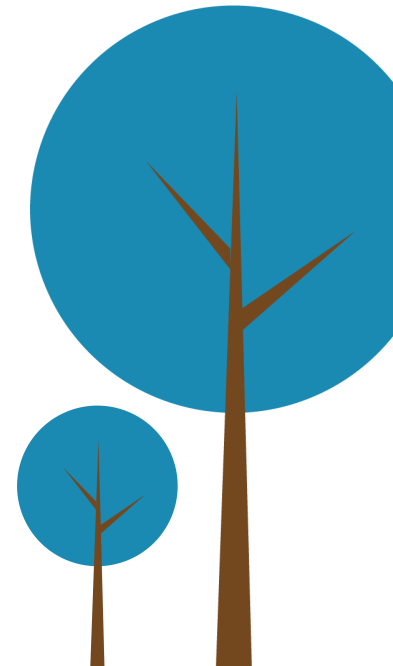




Scope & Red Lines

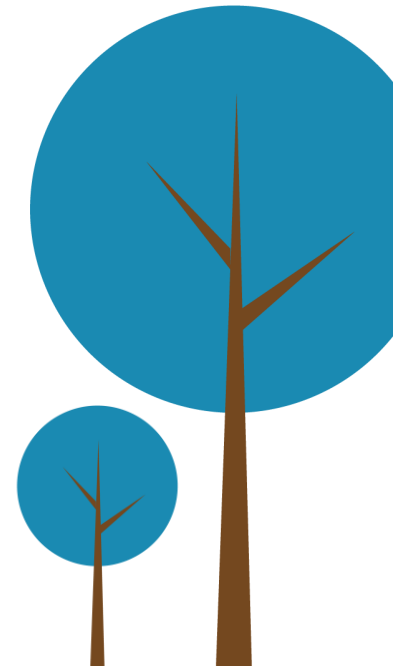
Scope what are you engaging with tenants about and what you aren't! .

- Actual rent/sc level or the principles of rent setting e.g. *fairness, JRF, local rents, 'pay for what you get' e.g. low energy.*
- Service Charges – charge? Service provision/quality? or both?.
- Accessibility and ease of rent/income service and payment options.
- Affordability of paying off rent arrears.



Scope what are you engaging with tenants about and what you aren't! .

- 'Values' red lines – e.g. Foundational/local economy ethical spend, environmental impact.
- Tenant's general priorities about services and values
- Tenants paying towards building new homes.
- Value for Money





Role and reach of Tenants

Role of Tenants

- Influencers?
- Co-producers?
- Challengers?
- Decision makers?

Reach of Tenants

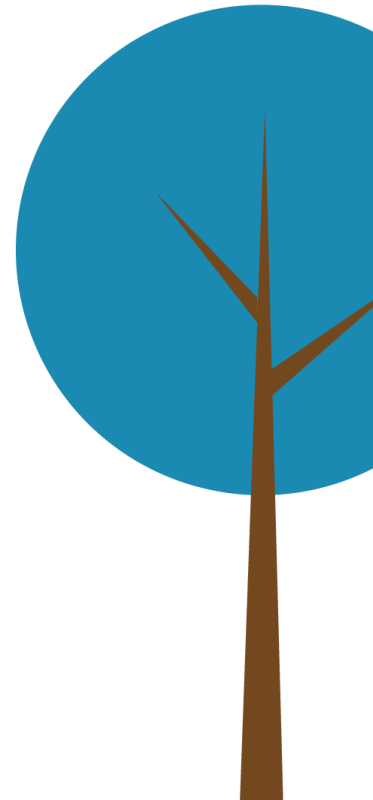
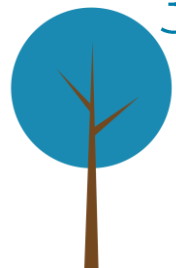
- Inclusive & diverse
- Experienced poverty
- Experienced difficulty paying rent
- On low/irregular incomes



Value for Money (VFM)

Value for Money – (VFM)

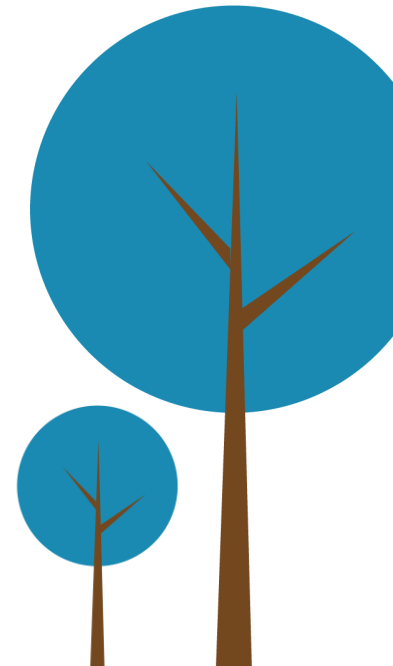
- Is value for money the important issue for tenants?
- Assessing VFM – 3 'E's or 6 'E's.
 1. Effective – do tenants get what they pay for?: *safety, warmth, quality, cleanliness, responsive /accessible services, support.*
 2. Efficient - could it be delivered in a different way, saving times, waste etc
 3. Economic – costs, comparisons with other providers





**Programme
and pilots.**

- Programme of service charge reviews
- Prioritised and targeted –
 - where costs are high/ increasing
 - low satisfaction
 - service not efficient/relevant
- Pilots – test, learn and adapt
- ‘Quick wins’

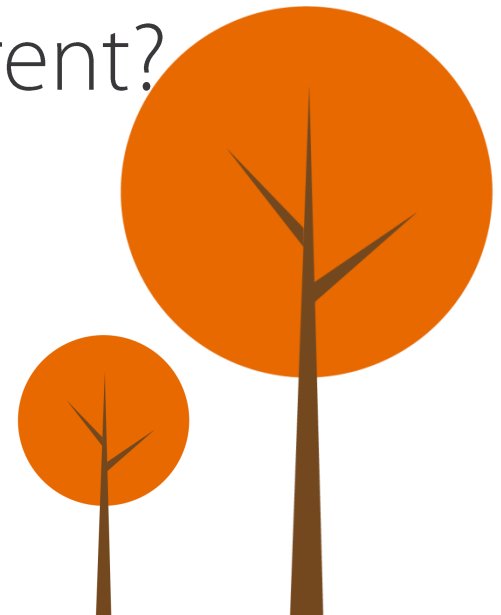




Transparency & Accountability

Transparency & Accountability

- Open to sharing financial data and information?
- Easy to understand and interpret data?.
- Checking of info to be shared
- Staff empowered to be transparent?
- Taking difficult and challenging questions.
- Who's best to respond?





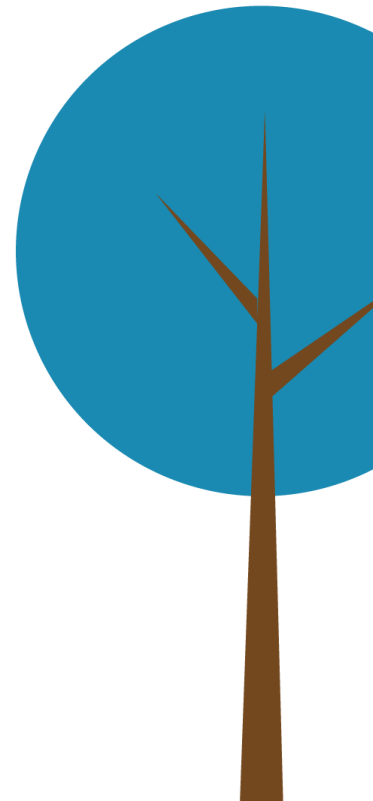
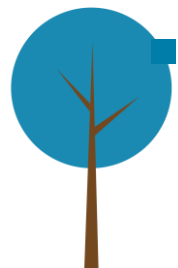
**Involvement
opportunities**

**FORM
FOLLOWS
FUNCTION**

LOUIS SULLIVAN

Involvement opportunities:

- Use existing involvement activities?
- Surveys – online, post, telephone (e.g. Voicescape)
- Service/payment contact points - call centre, website ‘pop ups’
- Online surveys – DooPoll, SurveyMonkey etc.
- ‘Challenge’ or scrutiny session

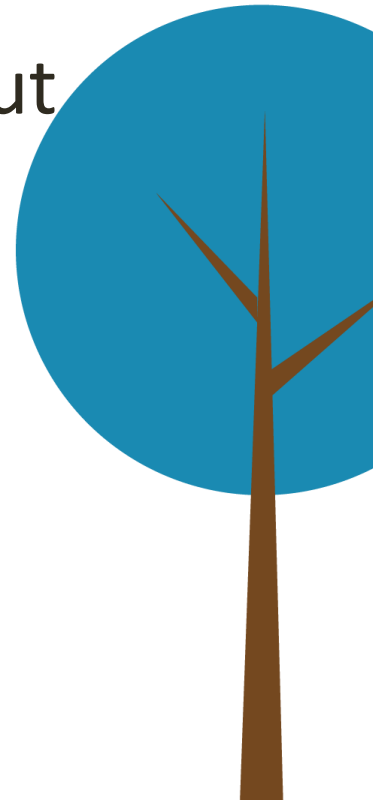
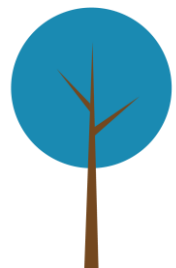


Involvement opportunities:

- ‘info and answer’ online detailed and incentivised surveys

(watch short series of 2 minute videos then answers question/s on it)

- Online Focus Groups - “Lets chat about keeping our rents low”.
- Social media – closed groups, discussions, ideas, polls., video info.
- Special interest group specific – relevance, translated/ easy read etc

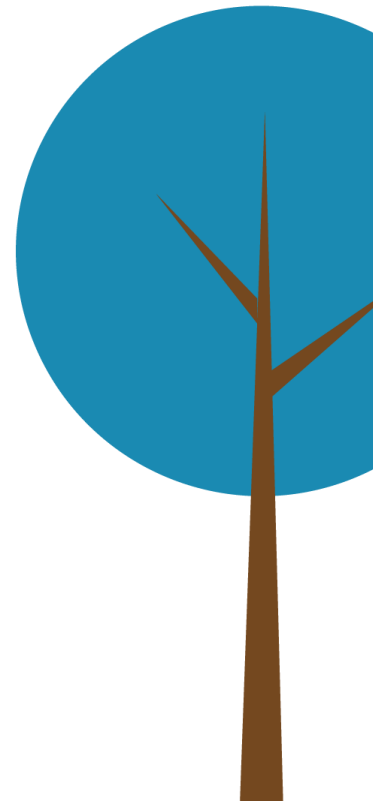
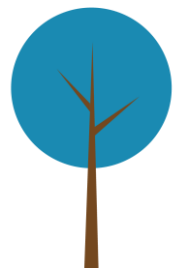


Involvement opportunities:

- Include something else that might attract more people to take part e.g. how best to spend the rent income, be the first to hear the latest news on our repairs service.

Don't forget:

- Social yet professional
- How/who will collate all the insight gathered?
- Feedback and thanks – when will that happen?

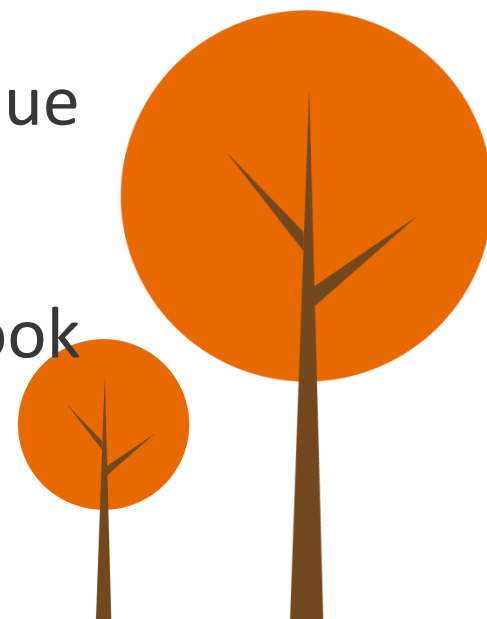




Tone & Terminology

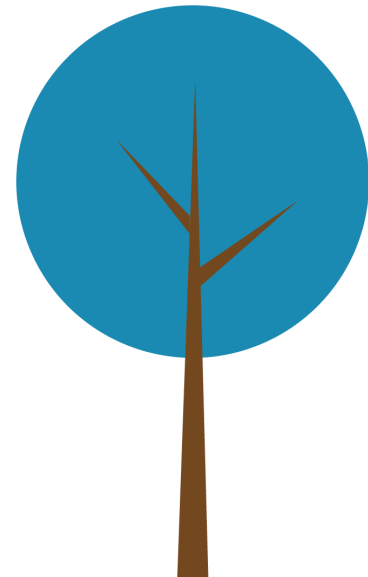
Tone & Terminology

- Is *'rent increase'* your default term?
- Affordability survey
- “Help us to keep rents as low as possible”
- “How should we keep our rent charges fair for all?”
- “What could we do to provide better value for money for the rent/SC you pay?”
- “Be part of an exciting new project to look at our rent charges /SCs”.



Mind your language!

- *Depreciation*
- *Development administration*
- *Cyclical maintenance*
- *Assets*
- *Reserves*

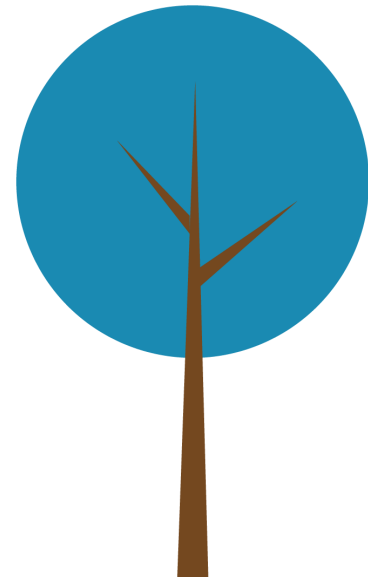




**Inform and
engage staff
and others.**

Inform and engage staff and others

- Gather staff ideas and insight – how best to engage tenants?, what are their tenants views on rents /sc costs?. How can they promote involvement opportunities
- FYI – staff and relevant partner organisations:
 - What's happening
 - Timescales
 - Who to refer queries to



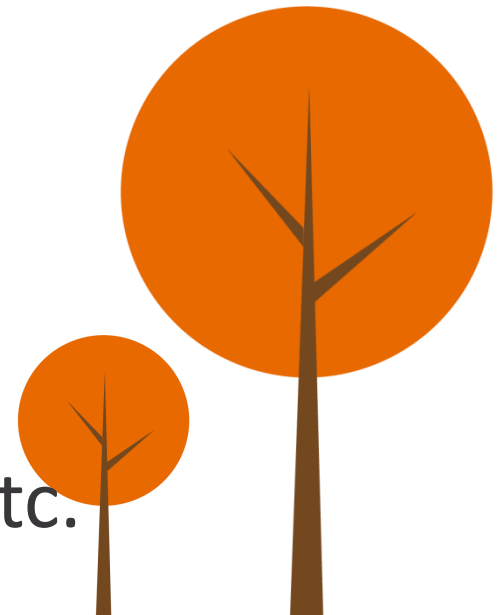


**Skills and
information**

**Staff &
tenants**

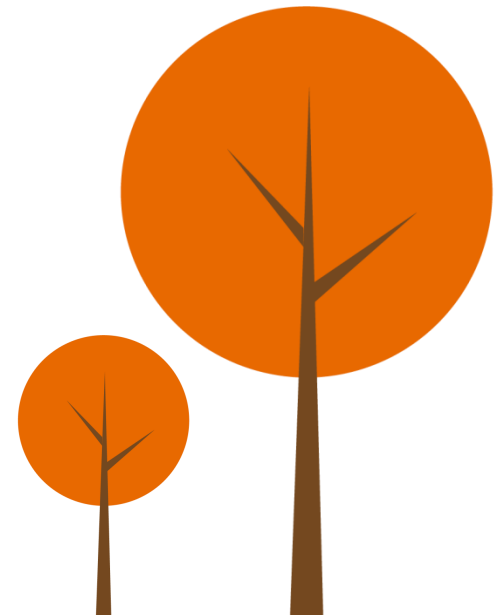
Skills: staff & tenants.

- Facilitation skills – online approach
- Writing survey questions skills – online surveys
- Digital Engagement platforms – functionality and options
- Skills to present complex financial information.
- Informal online pre-event ‘practise’ sessions – getting used to the tech etc.



Information: staff & tenants

- Information and pre-involvement information
- How rents/SC are set.
- What can be changed and what can't.
- WG Rent Policy – easy read!
- Comparisons with other providers.
- FAQs
- Video briefings





'Nudge' & marketing: increasing involvement



MIN

MAX

AWARENESS









EASY

HE

YOUR
M&S

Quality worth every penny

MARKS & SPENCER
CELEBRATING
125 YEARS




Clarion Cedar Court Huddersfield Hotel

[Huddersfield](#) • [Show on map](#) • 2.5 miles from centre

Booked 3 times for your dates in the last 6 hours on our site

Great value

Double Room - Non-Smoking – 

1 double bed

omg they did WHAT last night??!

An elderly woman with short, curly white hair and glasses is sitting at a desk. She has a shocked and distressed expression, with her mouth open and her right hand covering her face. She is wearing a light blue patterned cardigan over a white collared shirt. In front of her is a computer monitor and a mouse. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

FOMO.

**CHALLENGE
ACCEPTED**

What's next?



- 1. 5 mins comfort break before optional Q&A/networking time.**
- 2. Follow up networking session on**



Tweet or email me



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