

# Cadwyn Service Improvement Team (CSIT) Disability Review Report

January 2020

## Cadwyn Service Improvement Team (CSIT) Disability Review 2019

#### Introduction and Context

The Cadwyn Disability Review started in June 2018. This topic has been identified as being of interest to the members of the CSIT for some time. There had been a recent survey of disabled tenants by Cadwyn (following the Tenant Satisfaction Questionnaire (2018)). It was thought that the CSIT could build on and add value to the recent survey but without wishing to duplicate it.

The definition used by the CSIT is that used by the EHRC (2018a), 'people with a range of impairments including: physical and sensory impairments, learning disabilities, autism, and mental health conditions.'

The topic is of particular relevance to the organisation since ~ 42% of Cadwyn tenants classify themselves as disabled. This recognition is also reflected in the organisation's goal to achieve a Tai Pawb QED mark for housing associations and the recent Chief Executive Equalities Analysis Report to the Governance, Equality and HR Committee (2019)

The issue of Housing Adaptations alone is recognised as hugely important by the Welsh Government and as reflected in the Wales Audit Office (2018) report on this topic, the overall conclusion of which, is:

'User satisfaction with housing adaptations masks a hugely complicated, reactive and inequitable system that is not delivering for all those who may need it, and public bodies are not taking opportunities to improve value for money.'

Other relevant policy includes,

- Housing and disabled people: Wales's hidden crisis (EHRC 2018b)
- Cardiff Housing Strategy 2016-2021 (Cardiff Council 2016)

This report is in three parts:

Part A: Methodology (including details of review findings): pages 3-18

Part B: Key Themes, a Summary of Findings and Recommendations (which can be

read as a headline summary for the whole report): pages 19-25

Part C: Appendices: pages 25-28

## PART A: Methodology

#### **Review objectives**

- 1. Assess how effective Cadwyn processes are in identifying a tenant or family member who has some form of impairment or health condition and in using this data for the benefit of tenants through customer facing services
- 2. Understand **the level of awareness amongst Cadwyn staff** about the needs of disabled people and how to address them
- 3. Assess to what extent Cadwyn provides a person-centred service to disabled tenants, i.e. addresses their individual needs in relation to a range of issues including repairs, transfers, handypersons, access to support
- 4. Assess **the clarity and completeness** of Cadwyn's information for disabled tenants
- 5. Understand how Cadwyn manages adaptations in its properties; and understand tenants' experiences of the PAG system
- 6. Identify **good practice** from elsewhere (including Tai Pawb)

This was also an opportunity to implement the recommendations of the Scrutiny Workshop that took place on 20 March 2019, namely: (see Appendix 2)

- Encouraging more people to take part in scrutiny (tenants and staff)
- Communicate Scrutiny Effectively
- Supporting CSIT members to undertake their role

#### Intended outcomes (longer term):

- Staff are more aware of the needs of disabled people generally and feel more confident about meeting their needs; and more aware of the needs of individual Cadwyn tenants and able to adjust their practice accordingly
- Cadwyn systems and processes are more geared towards prioritising the needs of disabled tenants
- Clearer information is provided by Cadwyn about how disabled tenants can be supported by Cadwyn and other services
- Cadwyn makes the best possible use of properties with adaptations; and there is increased awareness within Cadwyn of any negative impacts of PAG work on disabled tenants and how to mitigate them

## Cadwyn Improvement Service Team (CSIT) members and contributors

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- Sue Court, Tenant Scrutineer
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- Karen Hayes, Tenant Scrutineer
- Neil Hinton, Tenant Scrutineer

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#### Plus

- Margaret McLaughlin, Consultant with Promo-Cymru and facilitator
- Cindy Chen, Promo-Cymru

CSIT would like to thank the staff members who contributed to this review, including the Communications, CanDo, Rent and Housing Support Teams. We are grateful to Taff Housing's Disability Action Group (DAG) for allowing CSIT members to attend one of their meetings and to the Internal Auditor, for his input. The Team would also like to give special thanks to those tenants who took time to respond to our correspondence and to speak to us during the community walkabouts and targeted phone calls. It has only been possible to undertake this review thanks to their valuable input.

#### Methodology

The review was overseen by tenants of the CSIT, which met 14 times between June 2019 and January 2020. Below is a summary of the review methodology used.

Approach	Purpose	Further detail
Scoping	To prioritise and focus the review, encompassing the Cadwyn Survey of Disabled Tenants (2019)	Involving staff and tenants on 31.7.19 See Appendix 3 for a snapshot of tenants' suggestions
Promotion	To make people aware of the review and its objectives  Targeted communications at respondents to the earlier survey including by phone	Supported by Cadwyn Communications Team including event notices and social media
Staff questionnaire	To understand how aware staff are of disability issues	See Appendix 4 for an excerpt from the staff awareness questionnaire
Staff interviews/ discussion/ system demonstration	To gain understanding of the issues from the perspective of key personnel	24.9.19 23.10.19 6.11.19 4.12.19
Internal Auditor involvement	To provide insights and input	June 2019 9.10.19 4.12.19
Wider tenant feedback	To take into account feedback from initial questionnaire and phone calls with individual tenants;	Ongoing

	plus input from CSIT members	
Community walkabouts	To focus on targeted properties to gain more indepth tenant feedback and understanding	4.11.19 7. 1 .19
PAG tenant interviews/feedback	To gain feedback from tenants who had received a PAG since April 2019	From December 19
DAG Visit	To understand how DAG works and what can be learned	31.10.19
Desk Research	To assess the information Cadwyn provides and compare with others; and identify good practice	Ongoing
Thematic analysis	To identify the key themes from the review findings	19.11.19 4.12.19 18.12.19

#### Scoping

The review started with a scoping exercise to ascertain its priorities and focus, which involved 3 tenants and 2 senior staff members and resulted in the objectives and outcomes highlighted above.

In the course of the review, CSIT members have come to realise how ambitious the review scope has been. Each of the review objectives has turned out to be almost worthy of a review topic in itself and especially adaptations. However, the broader perspective taken by the CSIT has allowed for links and connections to be made that might otherwise have been overlooked.

The following are outside of the review scope. Although they are all relevant to the review and most are at least touched on, they are not its specific focus.

- The role of carers, which might warrant a separate review in the future.
- The Cadwyn complaints process, which might warrant a separate review in the future
- The full complexity of the PAG process as outlined in the Wales Audit Office Report into Housing Adaptations (2018) including strategic and partnership arrangements
- Strategic planning for the future housing needs of disabled people, which might warrant a review in the future
- The experience of tenants in supported accommodation, which might warrant a separate review
- Compliance with GDPR including in relation to gathering and storing personal data

The CSIT is aware of the recent review of PAG (Physical Adaptation Grants) undertaken by Welsh Government but not of the outcome/s.

#### **Review Limitations**

The review took place in a dynamic context for Cadwyn, especially in relation to sharing of tenant data across multiple IT systems, website development and the production of a new Cadwyn Strategic Plan. Therefore, it is possible that some findings may already be out of date.

Although the CSIT was asked to include PAG in its review, it did not receive any PAG data from CanDo. Several requests were made for such data but it was not forthcoming, the reason for which is not clear.

#### **Promotion and Communication**

It was agreed to use the earlier Cadwyn disability survey as a reference point and a means of engaging with disabled tenants (see Appendix 4). This was only partly successful since there was a gap of a few months between the survey being issued and this review starting. We reached a few tenants by phone, some of whom were added to the Review Communications List. A couple of people who had expressed an interest in joining the CSIT turned out not to be well enough to do so. One individual attended one meeting but quickly realised it was not what they had expected.

Following a meeting with the Cadwyn Communications Team and in line with the Scrutiny Workshop recommendations, it was agreed that the Disability Review should be promoted more widely to tenants and within the organisation. This happened primarily via the Events Calendar with its links to social media platforms, the website and the newsletter.

## Staff Disability Awareness Questionnaire

A disability awareness questionnaire compiled by Promo-Cymru was circulated to staff members between August and September 2019 and was completed by 49 people.

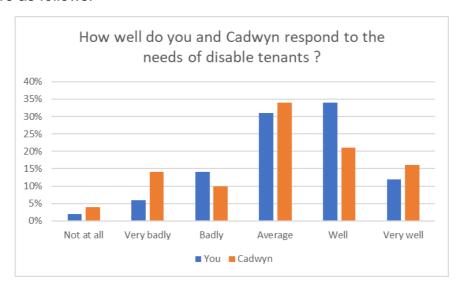
Questionnaire findings include:

- 29% reported having received disability awareness training with Cadwyn (71% not)
- 18% reported disability topics being included in their induction with Cadwyn (82% not)
- Concerns about working with disabled tenants are:

Concern	Number	%
Saying the wrong thing	19	38.8%
Doing the wrong thing	17	34.7%
Upsetting someone	22	44.9%
Not understanding someone	34	69.4%

 53% staff would like to receive more training; 57.1% more information; and 30.6% 1:1 advice to support their work with disabled people

- The level of staff confidence and experience varies widely across individuals and teams, e.g.:
  - 'I have personal experience of dealing with people with disabilities.... '
  - 'I used google for most of the information. Not ideal. If training is arranged then refresher training should also be done on a regular basis.'
- A number of respondents emphasised that the issues affected staff as well as tenants and that the issue of equality was wider than disability:
   'Think we are very non-disability friendly, both as an employer and through our services. Think this is due to us failing to plan in advance rather than anything else. Huge improvements that could be made. Biggest one being to employ more people with diversities.'
- In response to the questions: how well do you respond to the needs of disabled tenants and how well does Cadwyn as a whole respond, the results were as follows:



- 74% of staff members said they did not know where to get relevant information to pass onto disabled tenants and 26% said they did.
- Staff came up with interesting ideas about how to improve services for disabled tenants, including staff training, accessible premises, improving PAG information and processes and a staff and tenant forum. The full list of staff suggestions and ideas can be found at Appendix 3.

## Staff interviews/ discussion

The CSIT met with members of staff on several occasions:

Housing and Rent Team officers. Key findings include:

#### Identifying needs:

 The teams estimated that ~ 50% of Cadwyn tenants are disabled or have a chronic condition

- Cadwyn learns about impairments through the initial tenant application process.
  The Housing system allows flags to be used to highlight tenants' specific needs
  and/or vulnerabilities. Although the flagging system has not always been used to
  its full extent in the past, the team is now making a conscious effort to review it on
  a 6-monthly basis
- Housing staff emphasised that getting to know tenants was key to understanding their needs
- The housing team reported that the CanDo team is able to access information about tenants through the daily updating that takes place from the housing database to the CanDo database including 'vulnerability indicators'

#### **Information and Support:**

- The team asks people how they wish to be communicated with and are prepared to try everything including e-mail, WhatsApp etc
- It was attempted under a previous scrutiny review to make rent statements more accessible with text boxes and summaries, but technically it was not possible.
- The difficulty with responding to every request for a visit or support in person was described since caseloads have increased, issues have increased and 'old-style tenant support' is no longer available.
- Re the housing transfer process, Cadwyn offers to help tenants with the application process and also offers home visits and Friday morning sessions for this purpose
- Tenants may be given the choice between a transfer and an adaptation but some properties are not appropriate for adaptation.
- Housing officers tend to explain processes verbally (for transfers) or demonstrate them. It was thought that on the whole tenants do not want explanations but answers and solutions, which are rarely immediate. There is little written information available although lots of things have been tried in the past (e.g. tenant handbook and tablets) and continue to be tried (e.g., Facebook messaging). It was agreed that the problem with written information might be how it is presented and it would be good to provide it in an accessible way.
- Cadwyn is able to undertake a maximum of 10 'management transfers' a year, all of which are used. Although allocation overall is fairer, it does limit Cadwyn's flexibility for moving tenants based on their specific needs.
- It can be hard for tenants in adapted accommodation to transfer since there are some adapted features that Cadwyn will not be able to change such as a walk-in shower
- It is not always easy to plan for long-term needs (where a tenant has a
  progressive and deteriorating condition such as arthritis) since priorities change.
  Therefore, in the short term someone who has had a stroke and needs to be
  discharged from hospital would take precedence.
- Lots of examples were given of the kinds of adjustments made and support
  offered to disabled tenants including, big print; hearing aids, specialist doorbells,
  and smoke detectors and door release systems. Referrals include to (Council)
  tenancy support, mental health services, social services, carers services and

- community alarms. Links are made to community support including voluntary services, employment support and VEST community transport.
- Mobility scooters, charging and storing them is increasingly an issue for tenants
- The orange sticker bin system (for disabled people) does not work well and it
  could be worth working alongside other housing associations to try to resolve it
  with the Council.

#### Adaptations:

- The Neighbourhood Officers report having limited information about PAGs even though they often have to intervene or become involved to support tenants. For example, they do not necessarily know if a tenant is due an OT (Occupational Therapist) assessment or are aware that a tenant is waiting for work to start.
- There used to be a PAG survey providing feedback from disabled tenants but staff are not sure what has happened to it. The team undertakes courtesy visits with new tenants and exit visits with departing tenants and get some feedback through them
- There is a housing support and technical split in the organisation (described as common in housing organisations) in terms of awareness of tenants' needs. An example was given of a member of staff 'who did not get Asperger's' failing to adequately communicate and prepare for the impact of maintenance work on a tenant.
- Adapted properties can be difficult to let when they become empty since there
  may not be enough people who want a flat that is 'age specific, disability specific,
  area specific'.

#### Staff Awareness:

- There is a need for contractors to be more disability aware since 'they are out in people's homes more than anyone else'
- The Housing Team regularly undertakes training and invites relevant organisations to its meetings to learn from them, e.g. sensory loss.

#### CanDo Officers. Key findings include:

#### **Identifying Needs**

- They discuss improvement ideas on a daily basis but work within a number of constraints
- The database used by CanDo (One Serve) is different from housing. It is a scheduling system with very limited details about tenants. They do 'talk to each other' but only in relation to critical flags, which are very limited. They are currently looking into adding more red flags to the systems.
- There is a mobile app currently used by operators to assess risk factors when undertaking work in a property. There might be things it could be capturing that are not currently captured.
- One Serve is now able to highlight where there are issues with a scheme (in red and in bold) but is reliant on people reading through it. Housing can access the K drive which CanDo use.

- A WhatsApp type of app is being trialled to improve communication between Cadwyn teams.
- One building contractor used by CanDo makes use of Slack to show progress.
   Everyone who is a member can see what is happening. However, there are elements that need to be checked further before considering expanding its use such as GDPR compatibility.
- There is no online system for sharing progress on adaptations work easily between teams.
- There is nothing in place at the moment for staff or contractors to alert them to take disability into account but clearly this is something that should be considered in the future including through training. There are resource implications though.

#### Repairs

- The demand on repairs has been 'phenomenal in the last year' and they are hoping to be able to employ an additional person next year. The team is nervous about expanding what they can offer to tenants (because of the demand) but is also concerned about the damage that is being done to relationships currently. They would like to have more information about third sector agencies that might be able to help and have available services on a database.
- Re the current repairs triage system, it was recognised that training needs to be in place for operators to. find out more about the risk that an apparently minor repair might pose to tenants who are disabled
- The new phone system has been a 'nightmare'. It has been in place for 2 months
  and not doing what it should do. Also, CanDo can sometimes experience phone
  lines cut outs (the maximum period being 4 hours) and lunchtime is always very
  busy. The new system should be able to provide data on, for example, missed
  calls.
- Attempts have been made to follow up a sample of tenants receiving repairs. 3 questions are asked at the end of the repair (tidiness in house, how was the experience, repair completed) but the team is not confident they are getting accurate answers. In the past, a worker rang up tenants but so few responded that it did not seem worth it. Some Housing Associations have on line portals for providing feedback and we have considered this but are not sure what is the best approach. Re texting, as the system currently stands, this could be quite costly and it is untested.

#### PAG

- CanDo has taken on the lead for PAG in September 2018 (from Housing). Little
  guidance was in place as to how to undertake the PAG work so the team has
  been learning as they go. It has been difficult in the last 6 months for the team to
  identify and get up to speed with the work. There has been a lot of change in the
  team in the last year or so.
- CanDo is increasingly trying to involve housing officers in PAG (not fast track)
   Discussions have been mainly high level. The last time the teams met was in
   February 2019. This meeting needs to be reinstated. There are around 20 PAGS

- in the system at any one time. It would be good to be able to share with housing when and why there are delays (e.g. accessing an OT).
- Feedback on PAGs This is not being done though Cadwyn should use Welsh Government's Enable survey (CN to send to the CSIT) and has been reminded of this by Welsh Government (and subsequently has been using it).
- CanDo feels that the OTs should be the liaison professionals with tenants (given their skills) but there is a chronic OT staffing shortage in Cardiff Council. This can result in a lack of communication throughout and an example was given of an adaptation being undertaken that an OT subsequently considered to be not ideal.
- Minor adaptations It is the same referral process but if it is small and it costs less than £1,000 there is no need for an OT assessment.
- Re PAG, the team imagines that any problems are not with the workmanship but with communication. They recognise that some slipped for months this year and that for some 'It is not a great journey'. The timescale for OT referral following a visit is a long period (if it involves a child it can take up to 12 months because there is only 1 OT who works 1 day a week). An example was given of a PAG that is taking a long time but "is out of our hands" and involves Welsh Water, the lender and no one signing it off to allow Cadwyn to build. The experience for the tenant is awful and they are not able to access upstairs. The Cadwyn Neighbourhood Officer is visiting to provide support but is unable to give any answers.
- There is little written information available to tenants about the PAG process and all the ramifications (including decant process, advocacy support, moral support etc.) and it is needed so that tenants know what to expect.
- WWHA (albeit has more PAGs) has a dedicated officer and this is what Cadwyn needs. There was previously someone in Cadwyn who fulfilled this role but since she left there has been no one to undertake the communication and coordination that is needed. It is recognised that this is a stressful process and that it can impact on tenants' mental health. It is about relationships and there has not always been time to take this into account.
- Re decanting a tenant for PAG work, there have been conversations with housing about who is responsible for what. Tenants can get caught in the middle and find themselves unsure of what they can expect. The CanDo team is 'not really geared up for this role'.

#### Follow-up visit to CanDo offices. Key findings include:

#### Changes since the first interview:

- CanDo had started to record and monitor the time spent on saying 'no' to repairs
  that are no longer included in the service. The amount of time taken to field such
  requests can be substantial.
- The team is proposing to budget next year so that Direct Labour Officers already
  undertaking a repair in a property where the tenant is vulnerable, can also
  enquire about any additional small repairs/jobs they CanDo while on site. This
  might mean they CanDo things like change a light bulb while they are there but

this does not mean that a light bulb change would warrant a call out. It was acknowledged that communication with tenants about this kind of policy needs to be clarified and simplified

 It is hoped that a new employee in the team will be able to take over the role of coordinating PAGs

#### In addition:

<u>Decanting for PAG</u> - the issue of having to move quickly (because of the 2-day void target and the 1 offer only rule under the Communal Housing List) puts pressure on tenants and can lead to them accepting accommodation which within a very short time turns out not to be appropriate (and is something that it was mentioned also needs to be monitored). For disabled tenants, it can be difficult to make this kind of decision without any OT or other input and this adds to the pressure of the PAG process. Given that the decanting of disabled tenants for PAG purposes is likely to happen 3-4 times per year, is it possible to take a more planned approach?

One Serve scheduling system - The system shows the start time for a job, estimated end time, identification of whether the worker CanDo another job (while in the same area) and does the scheduling for the job. Finding out more information about the tenant (age, disability, communication needs, # children, contact availability) is either not possible or very limited – and there are no drop-down boxes to make it easier. If someone is disabled the most it is likely to say is 'disabled'. In contrast, the housing system (Open Housing) 'has all this detail'.

Cadwyn is in discussion with other Housing Associations who have One Serve to ascertain how they are using it and are aware that others are raising the same questions. WWHA have their own system which is bespoke but they are a large organisation and have had the financial heft to invest in it.

The question of investing in a future system (given that it is difficult to get one system to do everything and that Open Housing may be coming to the end of its lifespan) is one the organisation is in the process of considering and attempting to weigh the costs and benefits of.

#### Communicating with tenants

Tenants are responded to using the medium they have employed for repairs and the system shows preferred communication method. Sending text messages 12 hours in advance of a job being undertaken contributes to a low level of non-scheduling (5%).

However, it was acknowledged that for anything bigger, 'communication was not good'. The example was given of a damp issue being passed to a contractor – but this will not be scheduled in the Cadwyn system. This means the surveyor might just turn up and miss the tenants.

There was some discussion of the information and support that a tenant might need to understand how to work a new piece of equipment or a new technical system – such as a new boiler. Where a direct labour officer is not being used, Cadwyn relies on contractors to pass on the necessary information. Cadwyn does make this a

requirement of their contractual arrangement with a contractor but the pattern is that people start off well and then it slips. The example was given of new windows being fitted in a building but most of the tenants did not realise/ were not shown the importance of keeping the air vents open. In one case, this resulted in damp being reported and a support worker advising tenants to spray a substance which only made matters worse! Understanding how your home works is going to be a priority moving forward.

Restorative Approach- the organisation has been investing in organisation wide training for restorative working and recently undertook a values exercise.

#### Demonstration of Open Housing. Key Findings include:

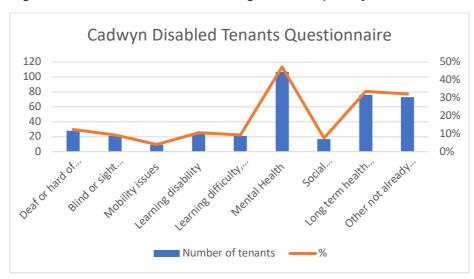
- Open Housing is used largely for the rent function and aims to link any nonpayment issues with referrals (and signposting) for support.
- Of the three tenants (who are known to be disabled) who were searched for during the demonstration, only one was flagged as disabled. Given the crucial role of flagging in meeting the needs of disabled people, this was worrying.
- There are several databases for different functions some of which 'talk to each other' to a limited extent. A CRM with comprehensive functionality is needed to replace them all.
- Although the housing team may know some tenants well, there may be others who are better known by CanDo.

#### **Internal Auditor Involvement**

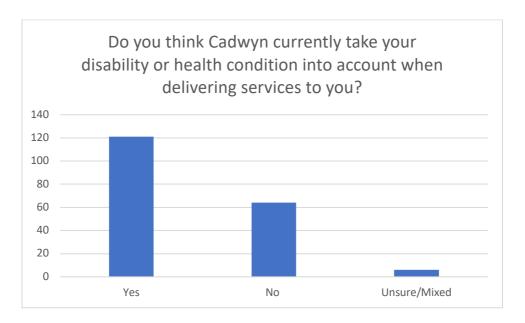
The Internal Auditor attended three/ four CSIT meetings throughout the review. He helped to devise questions for the review and to identify good practice for teams to consider regarding improved communication.

Tenant feedback via disabled tenants' questionnaire undertaken by Cadwyn in early 2019 (226 respondents). Key findings include:

• The range of impairment that tenants experience with poor mental health and a long-term health condition occurring most frequently.



• Of those tenants who responded to how well Cadwyn takes into account their disability or health condition, 121 said 'yes', 64 'no' and 6 'not sure'.



 Top responses for things Cadwyn CanDo better relate to the repairs service and communication (See Appendix 4)

#### Wider tenant feedback. Key findings include:

- Good support from some individual housing officers
- Issues with the repairs service including poor communication and disability issues not being taken into account sufficiently. Feedback of personal experiences includes:
  - Reporting a repair using the App but with no response
  - Complaining about a repair, which ended up in Spam
  - No response to complaints
  - Rudeness and defensiveness from staff
  - Tenants 'getting lost in the system' and giving up in frustration
  - A stairlift being scheduled for removal without consulting a disabled tenant who relies on it.
  - CanDo or contractors turning up with no prior warning and tenants not being ready
  - CanDo and contractors not showing identification as a matter of course
- Poorly planned adaptations, e.g. a ramp that was started, stopped and then abandoned with little or no explanation to the tenants affected; windows replaced in a wall that was going to be knocked down
- The orange badge bin system for disabled people (for the Council's refuge collection) does not work well
- The need for more relevant information for disabled people

#### **Community Walkabouts**

CSIT undertook three walk-about visits to tenants who are either disabled or who have a disabled family member. Key findings include:

- Overall Cadwyn staff are helpful, though it was observed, 'they come and go'
- Good experiences of small adaptations were described by one tenant
- PAG work being undertaken presents challenges including the tenant not feeling fully involved and that their views are taken seriously enough. This is compounded by a lack of clear information about the PAG process, drawings provided being too small to see properly, no written options appraisal for the tenant to consider
- The property was fully adapted for the tenant but failed to take into account future proofing. The hoist does not reach the bath since there is a ceiling light in the way
- Cadwyn needs to be more disability aware. It would be good for Cadwyn to accept 'the level of ignorance in the organisation' and 'should tackle their own fears and prejudices'
- It is important to stand up for yourself (or go to the top) in order to get things done. 'If something is not in writing it may as well not have been said.'
- Disabled tenants wanting to have opportunities to share their experiences and tips with other tenants
- Loneliness experienced by one disabled tenant living on their own

PAG Tenant Feedback, provided by 4 tenants who have been in receipt of PAG since April 2019, include:

- A range of experiences with the adaptation being described as excellent to poor quality (and in keeping with the Wales Audit Office (2018) findings)
- Varied experiences of Cadwyn support ranging from poor to excellent and even 'not relevant' since there was a social worker involved
- Waiting too long was a common theme across all tenants though no-one was sure what caused the delay
- Communication with Cadwyn varied, once again from excellent to 'they don't reply to my complaint'.

Visit to Taff Housing Association's (THA) Disability Action Group (DAG) Key points include:

- It was explained that a CSIT member had also been a DAG member for some time and that formerly, more Cadwyn tenant had been members. This is a community group and has been set up to encompass tenants from other Cardiff Housing Associations
- A current DAG campaign is to work with Cardiff Council to have electric wheelchair recharge points made available in a number of venues, e.g. central library. This would benefit all wheelchair users.

- The issue of approaching Cardiff Council jointly re the orange badges for bins for disabled people was also discussed and it was agreed that it would be best to tackle jointly.
- DAG members are given vouchers by THA each time they attend which they can
  use in various places such as cinemas and theatres; and THA pays for the travel
  expenses of all those who attend.
- The DAG is affiliated to Disability Wales (DW) and members attend DW events etc. (2 can go free per group). Individuals can also go free and is also linked to the TPAS Cymru disability network.
- It was thought it would be positive if Cadwyn tenants attended this DAG. The
  precise nature of the relationship could be determined at an executive level
  across the organisations. It was asked if Cadwyn could share spaces with the
  DAG.

#### Desk Research

#### Website information

A search of the Cadwyn website using 'disability', provides links to 7 matches, including Housing Adaptations and Supported Housing. Other matches are to pages such as ASB and Hate Crime which specifically reference protected characteristics including disability. *The Guarantee for Housing Association Residents (Welsh* Government 2010) which can be found on the website (under Our Tenants/ Our Housing Service) includes references to disabled tenants and what they can expect from housing associations generally. Cadwyn's Disabled Adaptations website page can be found easily:

https://www.cadwyn.co.uk/our-tenants/maintaining-your-home/disabled-adaptations/

Examples of adaptations carried out are provided plus a video of a tenant who has been in receipt of an adaptation and the details of a staff member to contact. It states:

#### Do you live with a disability?

"We may be able to obtain grant funding to make adjustment to your home to make it easier for you to move around. To benefit from any adaptations, you will need to be assessed by an Occupational Therapist."

#### However:

- The page is dated from 2016
- The language used does not fit with a social model of disability, which emphasises that people do not <u>have a disability</u> but <u>are disabled</u> (by the attitudes and practices of society)
- No alternative formats are offered including for those with communication barriers or whose first language is not English
- A search of "Cardiff Accessible Homes" did not provide any results. The Find a Home page mentions one single waiting list for Cardiff but does not reference disabled people specifically.

Using 'disability' as a search word, results for other local Housing Associations are:

- Taff Housing Association 17 matches including several to the Disability Action Group, World Autism Awareness Day, Time Banking, partnership with Cardiff Metropolitan University to deliver community training. The Find a Home page references disabled people and provides a link to Cardiff Accessible Homes
- **CCHA** the website includes a *Your Guide to Cardiff Accessible Homes* leaflet
- **Hafod** the website does not reference Cardiff Accessible Homes
- United Welsh the website includes that it is a Disability Confident Committed Employer. Cardiff Accessible Homes cannot be found on the website.
- Wales and West Housing Association references the Cardiff Common Housing Register but not Cardiff Accessible Homes

All of the information provided by Cadwyn and other local Housing Associations on topics of such relevance to disabled people (such as PAG, Cardiff Accessible Homes Register etc.) seems to fall far short of the standards highlighted by the Wales Audit Office (2018) for PAG. They include being user friendly, providing key information in English and Welsh and how to access it in a range of formats including online, hard copy and accessible (large font, audio and range of relevant languages) versions, assistance with application processes; key timings for the different stages to guide applicants on the likely period the adaptation will take; information to other organisations that may come into contact with people in need of housing adaptations; information to professionals who work with people who may need housing adaptations. Although it is not alone in this, it is clear that Cadwyn has plenty of scope to 'improve how it informs disabled or older people of the services that are available and how to access them'.

There is no support related information for disabled tenants available on the Cadwyn website. Of the other housing associations, Taff Housing seems to do marginally better in this respect but primarily through the activity of its Disability Action Group.

#### Good practice (see Appendix 1: References for additional web links)

- Your Right to Accessible and Adaptable Housing in Wales (EHRC 2018c) a guide for disabled people and the organisations that support them such as Housing Associations
- Housing and disabled people: A toolkit for local authorities in Wales (EHRC 2018a), primarily aimed at local authorities but includes aspects of good practice that have wider relevance.
- A range of good practice from Tai Pawb Wales Housing Equality Network including:
  - Tailoring Services to Meet Individual Needs (Tai Pawb?) provides an overview of the importance of knowing your tenants and their needs

- Customer Profiling and Insight Ensuring Equal Outcomes (Tai Pawb 2012a) includes good practice examples from other housing associations that use data to identify and overcome barriers
- Making Information Accessible (Tai Pawb 2012 b) includes good practice examples from other housing associations plus contact details for organisations that can advise such as RNIB and Action on Hearing Loss
- A protocol for contractors and disability awareness training has been developed by Salix Homes' disability focus group. It places disabled people at the heart of service design and delivery and has been adopted by other housing organisations across the country.
   home/improvments/adaptations
- Housing Adaptations (Wales Audit Office 2018) is a review of housing adaptations in Wales. It describes current shortcomings and sets out clear expectations for PAGs including good communication, giving tenants choices and having measurable service standards for adaptations (in order to help to reduce wide variation in experiences)
- Do Electric Cars Show How We Are Failing Mobility Scooter Owners? (CareCo 2019) suggests it is time there were public charging points for mobility scooters

#### Cadwyn Policy

- Equalities Analysis Report to the Governance, Equality and HR Committee (2019) references the range of work being undertaken to address the identification of disability and vulnerabilities across the different Cadwyn systems, mentioned throughout by staff
- Interim PAG Process (March 2019) provided by the CanDo Team

## PART B: Key Themes and a Summary of Findings

### Review findings themes

Based on the combined evidence provided during the review, the key themes to emerge are as follows:

- 1. Communication
- 2. Information and Support
- 3. Repairs
- 4. Staff Awareness
- 5. PAG
- 6. Planning Ahead

Below are the key findings identified under each of the themes.

#### 1. Communication

Challenges at several levels of communication were identified, including:

- It is concerning that the Open Housing system does not consistently flag where tenants are disabled; One Serve holds limited information about tenants' vulnerabilities; and contractors are not routinely alerted that tenants are disabled
- Perceptions about what different systems can actually do and the extent to which they 'talk to each other' varies depending on the team and perspective.
- There are accounts of good communication and interaction between disabled tenants and officers (and contractors). There are also lots of examples where communication is poor and very frustrating for tenants, especially with CanDo (see pages 13-15 and Repairs below)
- Tenants consistently report misunderstandings and confusion as a result of staff and /or systems not interacting (see pages 13-15)
- There does not seem to be visible leadership from the Board in relation to disability
- Tenants describe trying to get the orange badge refuse collection system to work through liaison with Cadwyn, the Council and MPs but without success
- Where difficulties occur, there is a pattern of communication failing and even breaking down. Tenants describe managing this in a number of ways including 'always going straight to the top' and/or appealing to local politicians.

#### 2. Information and Support

- Staff wish to do their best for tenants and seem to be acutely aware of where there are barriers to doing so, e.g., a lack of resources.
- Tenants give examples of excellent understanding and good support from individual staff members but this is not always the case
- Examples of good practice were provided including assisting tenants to complete housing transfer applications and housing staff taking a flexible approach to communicating with tenants

- There is little up-to-date information available, including on the website, that is specifically geared to disabled tenants including for PAG, Cardiff Accessible Homes, Disability Action Group and disabled people's rights
- The Disability Action Group, based with Taff Housing Association, used to be shared with Cadwyn. One CSIT member attends already and others say they plan to do so but it is not promoted by Cadwyn
- Disabled Cadwyn tenants are a valuable source of information and peer support but there are no mechanisms in place to harness this resource

#### 3. Staff Awareness

- Levels of disability awareness vary across the organisation
- The staff disability awareness questionnaire and some tenant feedback highlight a need for induction, training and refresher training on an ongoing basis for staff
- Staff and tenants highlight the need for contractors (with some notable exceptions) to be more aware
- Some teams are good at meeting with specialist organisations in order to maintain and grow their awareness. However, it is not clear if or how information about specialist organisations is shared within the organisation
- Tenants are a source of ideas about which organisations staff need to speak to in order to learn more about specific conditions
- Staff highlighted current restorative practice training in the context of understanding tenants and their perspectives better

#### 4. Repairs

- 5. Although repairs are not disability specific, dissatisfaction with the service is highlighted consistently and communication described as especially difficult and frustrating (see pages 13-15 and Appendix 4)
- Repairs and maintenance that are apparently small can have a big impact on disabled tenants' lives
- The current repairs triage system does not take disability into account consistently and CanDo is perceived as not flexible enough in addressing disabled tenants' needs

#### 6. Adaptations

- Tenants and staff describe small adaptations as being relatively straightforward on the whole
- Examples of poorly planned and executed adaptations (including PAG work) were described, resulting in wasted effort and resources
- The lack of PAG data provided for this review has limited CSIT's ability to assess performance. This includes not being clear about what monitoring is undertaken in relation to PAG (apart from the Welsh Government Enable Survey), or what the results of any monitoring are
- Staff and tenants report little PAG information available to them (apart from the Interim PAG process) including a clear policy and active promotion.

- Staff and tenants describe the need for more joint working between Housing and CanDo in relation to all aspects of PAG for the benefit of tenants
- Each PAG work is highly individual and tenants' experiences and outcomes seem to vary – from excellent to poor
- Some PAGs experience long delays especially where there is a shortage of OTs or several organisations are involved in the planning and approval process
- CanDo acknowledge that it has taken them some time to get to grips with PAG, that it lacks coordination and that some tenants may not have a good experience
- The Wales Audit Office Report (2018) on disability adaptations is a source of good practice information

#### 7. Planning Ahead

Staff members highlighted a number of ways in which Cadwyn could be more strategic in working with disabled tenants (see Appendix 3), including:

- Improve Cadwyn buildings to make them more accessible
- Have a programme of building more adapted houses, including for specific tenants
- Plan for the future needs of individual tenants
- Identify solutions re charging points for electric scooters including lobbying the council to introduce mobility scooter charge points at prominent locations, such as town centres and near shopping centres and doctor surgeries.

#### **Recommendations:**

Below are the CSIT recommendations for the key themes:

Theme 1: Communication		
Sub-theme	Recommendations	
a. Communication with tenants	Ensure that the Open Housing flagging system is used and updated regularly to indicate disability and vulnerability (including urgently addressing current omissions)	
	Be more proactive in encouraging tenants to provide update/s on their disability status, e.g. through the rent statement communication	
b. Communication about repairs	See Repairs below	
c. Between departments	<ul> <li>Identify how Housing and CanDo can work together better to support disabled tenants appropriately (e.g. via team meetings and shared procedures)</li> </ul>	
	Nominate disability champions in each team and/or have an identified organisational lead	
d. Between Systems	Gain a clear understanding between Housing and CanDo about the current functionality of data systems (i.e., One Serve and Open Housing) and what it is possible to share now.	

_		
		<ul> <li>Agree how information sharing about tenant disability can be improved in the short to medium term</li> </ul>
		Plan for the longer term to have one Customer
		Relationship Management (CRM) system underpinning
		the work of tenant facing services
e.	Between the Board	Increase the expertise at Board level relating to disability
	and staff and the	issues, e.g. identify a Board champion
	Board and tenants	Identify a direct line of communication between the Board
		and disabled tenants, e.g. case studies, attendance at a
		forum etc. (see <b>Staff Awareness</b> below)
f.	With contractors	Ensure contractors are provided with information about
		tenant disability as appropriate
		Introduce a disability protocol and training for contractors
g.	With the Council	Revisit the orange badge system with the Council,
		perhaps via the DAG and alongside partner housing
		organisations
h.	When things go	Review the current complaints process; encourage
	wrong and	disabled tenants to raise issues and to make formal
	communication	complaints; and make it easier for them to do so
	breaks down, tenants	Report on issues raised, complaints made and
	go over the heads of	compliments received to the Board. Include equalities
	staff either to	measures.
	someone senior or	
	outside. Learning to the organisation gets	Undertake communication skills training with staff,
	lost.	including managing conflict, to help avoid
		communication breakdown
	eme 2: Information and	
a.	Information provided	Work with disabled tenants to produce information for the
	for disabled people is patchy	website (and other publications) that is relevant and upto- to-date, including:
		- Your rights as a disabled person
		- Your Right to Accessible and Adaptable Housing in
		Wales, (EHRC 2018)
		- Cardiff Accessible Homes Leaflet
		- Taff Housing Disability Action Group
		- Advocacy Gateway
		- Links to key organisations such as RNIB, Disability
		Wales, Disability Living Foundation etc PAG – see below
h	The Disability Action	Consider how to achieve peer support and information
5.	Group run by Taff	sharing for disabled tenants
	Housing Association	<ul> <li>Revisit the previous arrangement whereby the DAG was</li> </ul>
	(THA) is a fount of	run by THA for 3 housing associations including Cadwyn
	information for	(and bearing in mind that Cadwyn tenants do still attend)
	disabled people and	Promote the DAG via the website and other means
	provides peer support	<ul> <li>Consider use of time credits for Cadwyn tenants involved</li> </ul>
		in participation (as practised by DAG)
Th	eme 3: Repairs	[

a. 'Small jobs' can be hugely significant for disabled tenants		•	Implement CanDo proposal to add small jobs onto larger ones; and identify how to monitor the impact
		•	Work with the CSIT to identify further solutions to small
			repairs, e.g., trial a small repairs initiative (say one day per month) and involve volunteers
b.	Repair Triage does	•	Identify the best way of consistently including
not currently explicitly take disability into			consideration of disability/ vulnerability into the repairs triage process
	account	•	Use real life examples (someone with arthritis finding it
			even harder to turn off a tap with a faulty washer) to train
	Systems and	_	operator staff  Thereusely review the evetere and presence linked to
C.	Systems and processes linked to	•	Thoroughly review the systems and processes linked to repairs and communication
	repairs and	•	Set clear communication standards for CanDo and
	communication		contractor staff
d.	Quality assurance for	•	Continue to explore solutions to getting reliable tenant
	repairs		feedback on repairs (and individual contractors)
		•	Include repairs for disabled tenants in the random 5-10%
	4 04 55 4		sample of low-cost repairs that are inspected
	eme 4: Staff Awarenes		
а.	Although some staff are disability aware,	•	Take a proactive approach to reflecting the importance of disability awareness through a programme of
	many are not		recruitment, induction and staff training
	ay a	•	Promote a social model of disability and use language to
			reflect this; and select trainers accordingly
		•	Increase awareness amongst staff of the support and
			opportunities available to disabled people, e.g. build on current practice to invite relevant bodies to team
			meetings; engage more proactively with networks such
			as the C3SC Health and Social Care Network (and
			receive their online bulletins); and identify a platform such as Yammer for sharing and disseminating relevant
			information within Cadwyn
		•	Explore and identify the best means of maintaining a
			focus on disability related issues, e.g. a disability
			programme of work, the establishment of a staff/tenant
h	Postorativo prostico is	_	forum; team disability champions etc.
D.	Restorative practice is an opportunity to raise	•	Identify how disability awareness and communication skills can be enhanced through the current restorative
	awareness of the		practice training
	needs and		
	perspectives of		
<u></u>	disabled tenants		
	eme 5: Adaptations	_	Engure that appropriate appaidlet advice has been
a.	Some poorly planned adaptations resulting	•	Ensure that appropriate specialist advice has been sought routinely during the planning process for any
	in wasted effort and		adaptation work
	resources	•	Produce a protocol for routinely involving tenants in any
L			adaptations (including all those affected in a complex)
			<u> </u>

	<ul> <li>Monitor mishaps/ false starts of this kind in order to learn from them</li> </ul>
	Include lower cost adaptations for disabled people in the 5-10% random sample of work inspected by Cadwyn
b. There needs to be a	
more structured, coordinated approach	<ul> <li>Produce a PAG Policy that supports a more structured and coordinated approach, including clear division of responsibilities and lines of accountability</li> </ul>
to PAG	Understand and build on best practice to understand
	how Housing and CanDo can work together for the
	benefit of tenants, starting with the links made with the
	organisation identified by the Internal Auditor
c. Better PAG	Promote PAG proactively so that tenants are aware it
information	might be an option for them (including those who may not
(See WAO 2018)	consider themselves to be disabled)
	<ul> <li>Share Cadwyn's PAG policy with tenants, staff and partners</li> </ul>
	Produce (perhaps in partnership with other housing
	associations) an accessible tenant guide to PAG
	including:
	- Eligibility
	- Putting tenant choice at the heart of the process
	- The roles of different professionals
	- Support available
	<ul><li>Decant arrangements where needed</li><li>Timelines</li></ul>
d. Better PAG support	
d. Better FAG support	<ul> <li>Identify how tenants who require it, are offered support throughout the PAG process (either internally or</li> </ul>
	externally)
e. Better quality of PAG	Introduce quality standards (including from the tenant)
work (see WAO 2018)	into the PAG planning process
,	Collecting an appropriate range of information to judge
	performance and delivery of works including timeliness;
	quality; tenant feedback; cost of work; health and safety
	record; and customer feedback
	Undertake regular Audits of PAG to increase learning
	and internal accountability
Theme 6: Planning Ahead	
a. Make Cadwyn	Consider the key ideas raised by staff (see Appendix 3)
buildings more	for inclusion in Cadwyn's new strategy
accessible	
b. Have a programme of	
building more adapted houses	
c. Plan for the future	
needs of individual	
tenant	
d. Explore mobility	
scooter charging point	
solutions	
<b>L</b>	

#### **PART C: Appendices**

#### **Appendix 1: References**

- CareCo (2019) Do Electric Cars Show How We Are Failing Mobility Scooter Owners? <a href="https://www.careco.co.uk/blog/do-electric-cars-show-how-we-are-failing-mobility-scooter-owners/">https://www.careco.co.uk/blog/do-electric-cars-show-how-we-are-failing-mobility-scooter-owners/</a>
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- Tai Pawb (2012b) Making Information Accessible http://www.fcha.org.uk/News.html
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- Welsh Government (2010) *The Guarantee for Housing Association Residents* https://www.cadwyn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Tenants-Guarantee.pdf

## Appendix 2: Recommendations of the Scrutiny Workshop 20 March 2019

Recommendation	Detail
Encouraging more people to take part	
Starting with Scoping the Review, ensure the CSIT	Make use of current data, databases and review
has the information and contacts it needs to target	exercises (e.g. for disabled people)
the review effectively	Invite tenants known to Cadwyn who are
	interested in the topic to take part (either as part
	of the CSIT or as a contributor in a different way)
	Invite relevant staff members from across the
	organisation to attend the scoping session. This
	should include support staff, neighbourhood
	officers, operatives and at least one executive lead.
	Make use of the experience and expertise of the
	Internal Audit Officer to identify questions the
	review will focus on
Undertake a promotion and publicity campaign to	Liaise with Cadwyn Communications
encourage tenants to become involved in scrutiny	Offer Buddy support to anyone attending a CSIT
	meeting for the first time
	Emphasise organisational support for scrutiny from
	the Board onwards
	Actively welcome concerns and complaints from
	tenants
Take scrutiny to different geographical areas	Try coffee shop meetings
	Try "meet the executive" meetings
Communicate Scrutiny Effectively	
Liaise with Cadwyn Communications to establish a	Focus on communicating the difference that CSIT
CSIT Communication Plan and increase the	makes – better services
visibility of the CSIT and its role across the	Have an annual work programme that can be
organisation	communicated more widely
	Consider best use of the website and social media
	(see above)
	Consider the balance of written and digital communications
	Consider incorporation of CSIT updates as a regular
	feature of staff and tenant e-bulletins
	Consider having a CSIT Introduction Pack
Strengthen links to the Board	Have quarterly CSIT updates to the Board
Strengthen links to the board	Consider having a Board Participation Champion
	(including scrutiny)
	Make use of CSIT to contribute tenant case studies
	and experiences to board meetings
Support CSIT members	
Continue to encourage networking opportunities	e.g. via TPAS Cymru
Support training and development opportunities	,
for scrutineers	
Encourage learning from other scrutiny groups and	
housing associations	
Aim to win an award to raise the profile of CSIT	
	<u> </u>

## Appendix 3: Ideas to improve how Cadwyn responds to disabled tenants: excerpt from CSIT Disability Review Staff Disability Awareness Questionnaire

- Build more adapted properties. Involve disabled tenants in the design of new build developments. Build adapted properties for specific households on the Cardiff Accessible Home s list
- Having more resources to deal with specific disabilities
- Training should be provided to all staff which should include physical and mental health disabilities. A file could be set up on Yammer for people to share information about other organisations that could assist. Contacts should be made to these organisations and relationships built.
- I assume that staff have a variety of experiences in dealing with people with disabilities either from a work perspective or personal. I think that it would be beneficial to have a forum of some sort to enable staff to share experience s, raise any questions etc. This could also potentially include tenants
- Improve Cadwyn buildings to ensure they are accessible to someone with a
  physical disability, without the person needing more support than the y would
  usually, when needing to enter, exit or get around a building e.g, automatic
  sliding doors, wide door ways. Loop systems at receptions, meeting rooms, to
  help people with hearing loss.
- Understanding their needs and requirements
- Feedback
- Accepting that procedures need to be overlooked sometimes in order to accommodate the needs of an individual.
- Consultation. Regular group. Training and education.
- This survey is a good start training for customer facing staff have a CRM that can hold the info so we can collect the data about people that we need, store it and use it adapt our services as necessary develop strategies for improvement as necessary
- Bigger interview rooms,
- Knowledge of each tenant to understand their needs. A disability is not just physical which the organisation needs more training on
- I think awareness of Disability legislation is not as good as it could be generally across the organisation, it should be in 'working knowledge'.
- We do not have as many disabled tenants on the TA side however I have come across a few. But the meetings ended up fine. But I believe we should have training in case we come across a disabled person and we don't know how to respond.
- Better understanding of hidden disabilities and mental health
- We should deal with PAG requests in a more structured manner, communicate with tenants better about time scales etc....
- Repairs team treat every tenant the same when people with mobility issues cannot do the same basic things as other tenants like changing bulbs etc
- Training in different aspects of disability
- Improve our PAG process. CanDo to be more flexible with doing repairs for disabled tenants.
- A nominated organisational lead Better understanding of PAGS across organisation - Literature to provide staff & tenants with regarding what help is available and where. Identify all tenants with disability and plan specific to

their needs of how Cadwyn can assist now and into the future - Planned programme of work specific to people with disabilities - Recognise that people with disabilities can often have a level of MH, and how we work to re cognise this and what we CanDo to help the tenant - Work closer with disability support providers, CCC allocations to ensure they are suitably housed as some disabilities can deteriorate quite quickly - Better understanding of tenancy rights for persons with disabilities; and tenancy implications - property re configurations etc

- Ensuring that they have a Cadwyn 'buddy' this could be a friend/relative /carer or a specific member of C.H.A. staff that engages with them to help them manage their tenancy responsibilities.
- Needs can vary greatly. Our IT system is v limiting on how we can easily
  provide appropriate written communication e g auto printing large print. Visual
  or hearing impairments may be also hard to address (e g BSL). Specific staff
  awareness training based on the ranges of disability in our tenant profile may
  be of more help than generic training.
- An accessible office, more communication through different means. Planning services with people with disabilities in mind. More disabled staff
- Recognition that disability can also mean mental health which is not always
  apparent as cannot be seen by a naked eye. We should ask open questions
  and use restorative approaches to get to know our tenants and be better at re
  cording vulnerabilities on the system(s) with consent from tenants and then de
  ploy a different strategy when speaking to them especially in rent collection
  practice

Appendix 4: Summary of feedback from disabled tenants to Cadwyn questionnaire in response to, 'What more can Cadwyn do?'

Comment	No. of respondents who said this
Poor service re repair appointments	13
Specified how they would like to be contacted e.g. by text	11
Outstanding repairs	10
Support with transfer	7
A handyperson job request e.g. cut grass at a house	6
Clearer communication	5
PAG request	4
Getting through on phone – repairs	4
Would like carer of member of family present for appointments	3
Would like repairs during school hours	3
Damp	2
Better disability awareness	2
Length of time to complete a repair	2
ASB from neighbours	2
Help filling out forms	2
Need an intercom	1
Getting through on phone – support	1