

Grapevine

UNIVERSAL CREDIT

What does the roll out mean to you?

COMMUNITY GRANTS

Funding friends and neighbours



Welcome... from our new CEO

to the spring edition of Grapevine.

I am extremely pleased to join Linc after many years of working in Wales and admiring the positive difference Linc makes within its communities. My long history of working for housing associations, across different departments, has shown me how quickly things can change for tenants, not least the welfare benefit system, that is now placing significant pressure on people's finances and home life. Linc is playing its part in trying to reduce the impact of this pressure and having worked in partnership with Linc a number of times, it is evident that there is a strong passion for delivering great homes, enjoyable communities and services that mirror the expectations of tenants and residents. The manner in which I have led Charter Housing and Derwen Cymru over the past 13 years compliments this mindset, so I am confident that we are in a good place to take on the opportunities and challenges for the future.

Having just started as CEO, I am keen to get out of the office and meet as many tenants, colleagues and business partners as possible to hear people's aspirations and ensure we focus our energy on the things that will make the biggest difference. Hearing the voice of our tenants and residents is important to me and I look forward to seeing a number of different communication methods being established to help influence our future. More detail will follow in future magazines.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the Grapevine and I look forward to spending time with you.



Scott Sanders
Linc Cymru CEO

In this issue...

Page 2-6
Community News
Repair Services
Sprinkler Installations
Trained by RNIB
Community Grants
30 Years of Housing
Steel Remembered

Page 7
Universal Credit
What should I do to prepare?

Page 8
Right to Buy
The abolition of Right to Buy
how will it affect you?

Page 10
Competition
Win a £25 Shopping voucher.

Page 10-12
Inspections and contacts

Our usual out of hours
emergency repairs service
will operate on this date
(see Page 12 for contact details)



Changing the way we handle our repairs service.

Changing the way we handle our repairs service - From April 2018 we are going to be changing the way we handle repair calls. R and M Williams, our repairs contractor, will end their contract with us at the end of March. So, we took the opportunity to work with our tenant panel to review how we would handle repairs past that date.

They all said that we needed to handle the repair calls ourselves so that we could make sure the experience for our customers was really positive. So that's exactly what we are going to do!

The tenant panel have helped us to choose a new Contractor, LCB Construction, and they will now be the regular face for all reactive repairs from April 2018. Linc staff will be the people you contact, to advise us of a repair issue, and the work will then be passed to LCB to complete the works.

What does this mean for you:

- **LCB** are going to be sat alongside our repairs services advisors to make sure we are working closely together at all times
- **We will give you** an appointment at the first point of contact
- **LCB will be easily identifiable** as working with Linc as they will have ID cards and vans that show they work with us
- **We will be able to check** that they attended at the right appointment time
- **You will be asked to sign** to say the repair is finished before the operative leaves your home
- **We will be able to check** you are happy with the works quickly after the repairs are complete
- **If you have any feedback** about the repair you will be speak to Linc and we can action straight away

We want to hear from you

over the next 12 months to understand how you feel the service has improved and for you to tell us of further improvements we can make.



Sprinkler installations in Extra Care and sheltered schemes

The safety of our tenants has always been, and will continue to be, a priority for Linc. Many of our homes and schemes already have sprinklers fitted. For those that do not, our Board have given us approval for the installation of sprinklers in communal areas and in individual flats within a number of our Extra Care and Sheltered houses.

We will do our best to make sure these works are carried out with as little disruption as possible. We will be keeping you regularly updated over the coming months so you know exactly what is happening in and around your home.

- Capel Court
- Wellwood
- Willowbrook
- Llys Yr Efail
- Ty Canol
- Aberavon Court
- Ty Scott
- Bill Harry Court
- Cwrt Gwalia

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) are being sent to answer any queries you have, if you have any further questions please speak to your Scheme manager.

Tenants receive training to become Scheme Assessors

A group of tenants have been trained as Tenant Scheme Assessors by the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). The tenants will go on to visit Linc's Extra Care and Sheltered Schemes to rate each complex against the RNIB's Visibly Better Standard.

The Visibly Better Standard is aimed at meeting the needs of older people with sight problems. This could involve not only improving services and rights of those tenants with sight loss but could also improve the design of the complex they live in. The tenant assessors have been trained to identify areas in each complex where thought would need to be made to accommodate the needs of tenants with sight loss. Their report will form part of the RNIB's assessment for each scheme.



Significant areas that form part of the assessment include communal bathrooms, kitchens and lounges and hallways and stairwells as well as the external grounds. The team is trained in assessing how easy it would be

for a person with sight loss to navigate the complex.

There is a focus on contrasting colours, appropriate lighting, signage and way finding around the scheme.

Could you be entitled to a community grant?

We have changed the way we manage our Community Grant Fund. You don't have to be a formal, constituted group any more – we're happy to fund friends and neighbours who have got together with an idea. If you and people in your community have a plan for a project or event we can fund up to £500 towards it. We can fund pretty much anything that benefits your group and the

wider community. We aim to fund projects that contribute towards the following goals:

- **Improving** Health and Wellbeing
- **Improving** Skills and Knowledge
- **Reducing** Loneliness and Isolation
- **Improving** Childhood Experiences

- **Making better** Relationships in the Community
- **Improving** Community Safety
- **Improving** the Area or Estate
- **Improving** Relationship with Linc

For more information, chat to Joe from our Community Engagement Team on 07773187015 or email community@linc-cymru.co.uk



Llys Yr Efail Celebrates 30 Years Of Housing

Tenants enjoyed a day of festivities at Llys Yr Efail as the Linc sheltered housing scheme celebrated 30 years of housing, social care and health.

Tenants and members of the local community were invited to celebrate at the scheme on Friday 9th February and were treated to cake and music. Attendees included Blaenau Gwent MP Nick Smith and local Blaenau Gwent Assembly Member, Alun Davies.

Mrs Margaret Myland, a tenant at Llys Yr Efail explains: "This place is very special and is a wonderful home to all that live here. I have gained some brilliant friends and there is always somebody to talk to. For me, it is even more special because my parents also lived

here. They were one of the first tenants to move in. So this celebration holds a lot of memories."

Llys Yr Efail was one of the first older persons scheme to be built by Linc, then known as Shaw (Secondary Housing Association for Wales). It has operated successfully for the past 30 years; in that time, it has had just three scheme managers. Denise Long is the current manager and has run the scheme since 2010.

Read more on this story on our website www.linc-cymru.co.uk



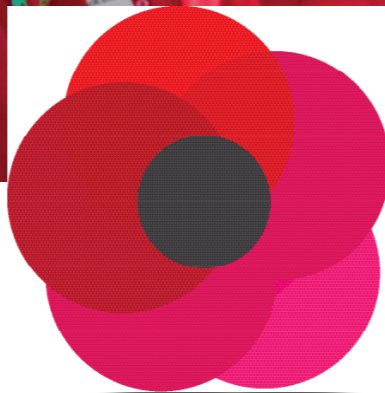
A look back at history through Steel Remembered

Tenants enjoyed a wonderful time at the launch of the Steel Remembered Exhibition, which was displayed at the Senedd. Guests at the event were greeted by men from the Great War Society, dressed in authentic First World War uniform. Children from local schools were told stories of what life was like for the soldiers at the time and had the chance to look at war time memorabilia. They also completed an initial piece of research, that they could take away and share with others. Exhibits were provided by Linc, HLF and the Museum of Welsh Life at St Fagans.

You can read the full story and see more photos on our website www.linc-cymru.co.uk



"First World War – Steel Remembered" has uncovered some remarkable stories from the steelworks which may otherwise have gone untold"
 Suzy Bowers, project lead at Linc



What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit (UC) replaces the six main welfare benefits for working age people.

It includes housing benefit and will be paid to you ...you once a month in arrears. "Full service" is being rolled out across Wales and will be complete by November 2018

Torfaen	Jul-17
Neath Port Talbot	Oct-17
Newport	Nov-17
Swansea	Dec-17
Cardiff	Feb-18
Bridgend	Mar-18/Jun-18
Blaenau Gwent	Jul-18
Caerphilly	Sep-18
Powys	Oct-18
RCT	Nov-18

How can I prepare?

Housing Officer Mike Rosser says:

"Your housing officer is here to help you and guide you through the changes. It's important that you find out what you need to do and get as much information as you can."

TIP:
 You can practice making an online claim for Universal Credit by visiting <http://www.gov.uk>

Things you can do to help you prepare:

- Open a bank account so you can receive your payment.
- Find out where you can get online, maybe a library or your local job centre if you don't have access at home.
- Once you know you are going to claim Universal credit you

can register your details on www.gov.uk/verify which may help speed up your claim.

- Think about making small regular payments to bring your rent account into advance. Universal Credit is paid in arrears but your rent is due in advance.
- Let us know if you make a claim for Universal Credit so we know the way you pay your rent will change.

Changes to roll out of Universal Credit are being made all the time so to make sure you get the most up-to-date information please visit. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-transition-to-full-service>

So please do call us on our Freephone number 0800 072 0966.



The abolition of Right to Buy

All tenants should now have received information on the abolition of the Right to Buy Bill. Welsh Government has recently advised that the right for tenants of social housing to purchase their property will be ending in January 2019.

Can I buy my home?

Applications cannot be accepted from tenants in either Cardiff or Swansea as both the Right to Buy and the Right to Acquire have already been suspended in these areas and the suspension will not be removed before the right to buy ends.

If you hold a Secure tenancy, this provides you with the Right to Buy. You must also meet the discount qualifying criteria and have held a public sector tenancy for a minimum of 5 years. This can be in different homes with different landlords and the 5 years do not have to be consecutive ones.

If you hold an Assured tenancy, you may have the Right to Acquire. However, this also depends on whether your property is eligible. To be eligible, your property needs to have been purchased or built

with Social Housing Grant funding after 1st April 1997 – this only applies to a certain number of our properties. You must also meet the discount qualifying criteria and have held a public sector tenancy for a minimum of 5 years. This can be in different homes with different landlords and the 5 years do not have to be consecutive ones.

Anyone who is eligible to buy their home in this way will only be able to make an application to do so up until 25th January 2019.

Any applications received after this date will not be considered.



What is the maximum discount I can get?

In all cases, the maximum discount available is £8,000.

Is my tenancy affected in any way?

The end of the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire will not affect your tenancy in any other way.

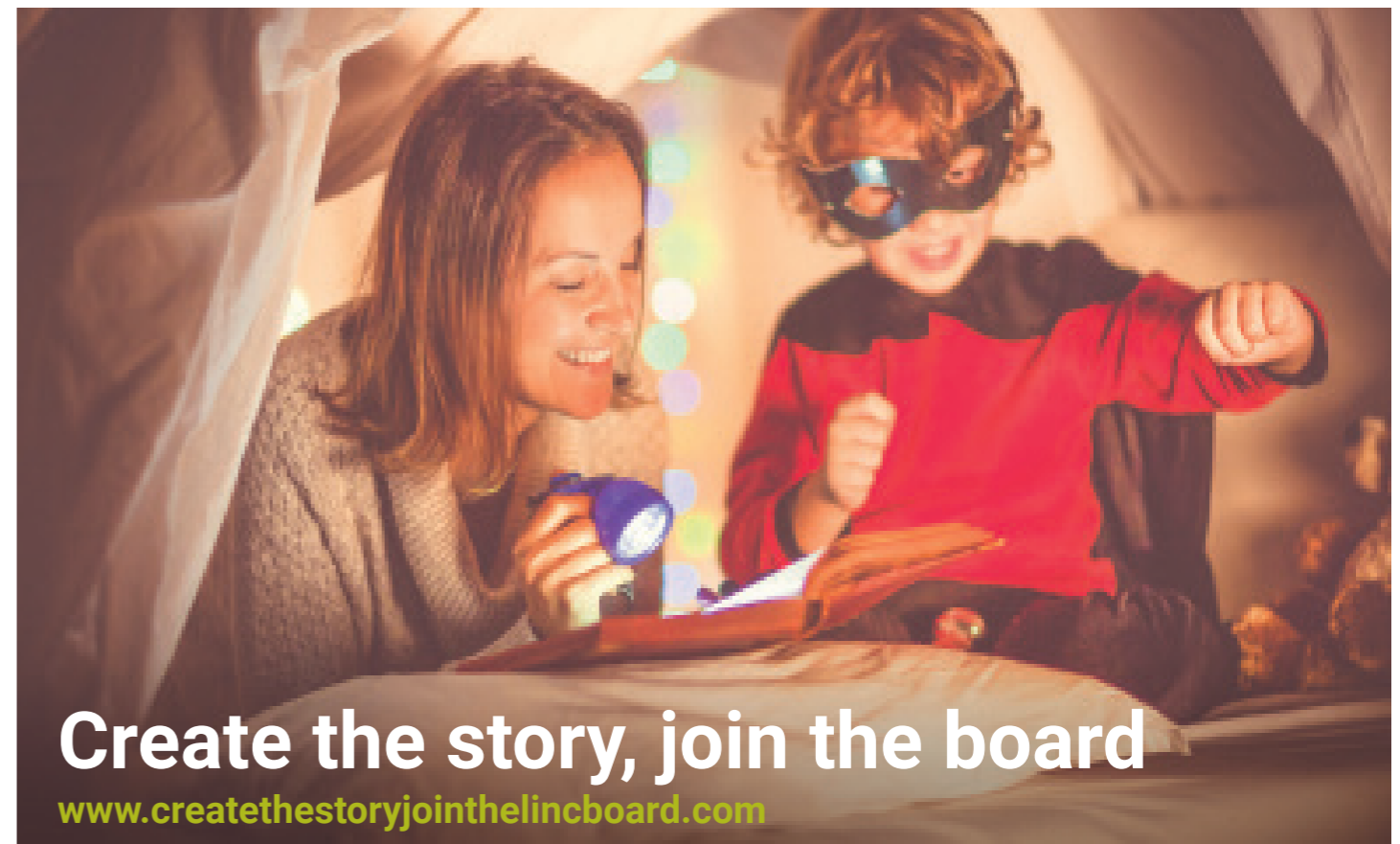
I wish to make an application to buy my home

In this situation, please make contact with our Customer Contact Team who can verify your eligibility to be able to make an application and who can send you the appropriate paperwork. Our contact number is 0800 072 0966.

I still have questions.....

If you still have questions or concerns, again please make contact with our Customer Contact Team who will be happy to assist you. Our contact number is 0800 072 0966.

The full document is available for you to download via our website www.linc-cymru.co.uk



Create the story, join the board

www.createthestoryjointhelincboard.com

"This is an exciting time for Linc. A time that will see us grow and modernise to ensure we enrich the lives of those people that need our support. So if you share our values and you want to help us create our story, join our board. I want to hear from you" Scott Sanders - CEO

Easter Competition!

Fancy getting your hands on a £25 shopping voucher?
Think of all the Easter eggs you could buy with that?!

All you have to do is tell us how many eggs are in the picture below?

Email your answer to comms@linc-cymru.co.uk
or via post to Grapevine Competition, 387 Newport Rd,
Cardiff, CF24 1GG by 16th April.

Why not get creative by colouring the picture in and
sharing your finished masterpiece with us on our
twitter page @Linc_Cymru using #Easter



Estate inspection dates 2018

You can join us on our estate inspections to help us to continue to improve our neighborhoods.
If you'd like to come along, contact your Housing Officer.

Bridgend C.B.C

Lewistown	01.06.18
Llangeinor	01.06.18
Brackla	01.06.18
Kenfig Hill	01.06.18
Coity	01.06.18

Newport C.B.C.

Commercial Road	19.04.18
Albion Close	19.04.18
Ringwood Place	19.04.18
Constables Close	19.04.18
Lysaghts	19.04.18

Neath Port Talbot C.B.C

Melyn Fach	29.06.18
Danygraig	29.06.18
Llys Morfa	29.06.18
Abbots Mews	29.06.18
Llys Groeswen	29.06.18
Morrison Court	29.06.18

Blaenau Gwent C.B.C.

Plantation Row	17.04.18
Pen-Y-Parc	17.04.18
Queen Street	17.04.18
Cwrt Bracty	17.04.18
Cwrt Alexandra	17.04.18
Caer Odyn	17.04.18
Ty Heulwen	17.04.18
Sirhowy	17.04.18
Gwaun Helyg	17.04.18

Caerphilly C.B.C.

Hillside Ave	14.06.18
Glebe Road	14.06.18
Oak Tree Drive	14.06.18
Old School Grange	14.06.18
Parc Derwen	14.06.18
Cwrt Llanfabon	14.06.18
Pontypandy	14.06.18
Borfa Place	14.06.18
Pen-Y-Graig	14.06.18
Cwrt Golwy Y Sianel	14.06.18
Clos Tir Y Pwll	14.06.18
Hilary Court	14.06.18

Cardiff

Chapel Mead	20.04.18
Pontprennau	20.04.18
Thornhill	20.04.18
Penylan	04.04.18
Pentwyn	04.04.18
St Mellons	01.05.18
Grangetown	01.05.18
Trowbridge Green	20.04.18
Doe Close	04.04.18
Ffordd James Mcghan	13.04.18
Barrack Lane	18.04.18
Cwrt Pen Y Bryn	18.04.18
Bronte	04.04.18
Cavendish Close	20.04.18

Torfaen C.B.C.

Jerusalem Close	25.04.18
Llandegfedd Way	25.04.18

Linc Care Schemes/ Properties

Llys Enfys	17.05.18
Plas Bryn	10.05.18
Capel Court	26.04.18
Llys Glyncoed	05.04.18
Wellwood House	11.04.18
Willowbrook	26.04.18
Glyn Anwen	22.05.18
Aberavon Court	14.06.18
Cwrt Gwalia	28.06.18
Ty Scott	21.08.18
Llys Yr Efail	05.06.18
Bill Harry Court	24.05.18
Ty Canol	10.05.18

Updated inspection dates can be found at
www.linc-cymru.co.uk/inspections-estate



Useful contacts

If you can smell Gas:

Please call the National
Emergency Gas Service on
0800 111 999
(24 hour freephone)



Other useful numbers

Citizens Advice Bureau

(Wales):

0844 477 2020

Step Change (debt advice):

0800 138 11 11

Money Advice Service:

0300 500 5000

Money Made Clear

(money advice):

0300 500 5000

Age UK (national charity for
older people): 0800 169 6565

Alzheimer's Society

(national dementia charity):

0300 222 1122

Mind (mental health charity):

0300 123 3393

Refuge (domestic violence help
for women and children):

0808 2000 247

Samaritans (supporting people
in emotional distress):

08457 90 90 90

Electricity, Gas and Water Supply

To find out who your electricity
supplier is please contact:

0845 601 5972

To find out who your gas
supplier is please

contact: 0870 608 1524

To contact Welsh Water
please call:

0800 052 0145

How to report a repair or make an enquiry

Customer Contact Team:

Mon-Fri 8:30am-5:00pm

0800 072 0966

(free from a landline & mobile)

Email:

contactcentre@linc-cymru.co.uk

Website:

www.linc-cymru.co.uk

Option 1 -

Heating and Plumbing

Option 2 -

Any other repairs

Hold the line for any other
enquiries.

Out of Hours:

Emergency Repairs*

0800 072 0966

(after 5pm & on weekends)

*An emergency repair is one which
involves an immediate risk to your health
and safety or serious damage to your
home.

Compliments & complaints

Customer feedback helps us to continually improve our services. We value your comments and will always do our best to respond to you as quickly as possible. If you would like to make a compliment or complaint, you can contact us on freephone 0800 072 0966 or submit your comments at www.linc-cymru.co.uk

Please remove and keep handy

