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| AGM 2024 Questions and Answers  |  | | --- | | **Q.**  I would like to know why Newport City Homes is merging with another housing association in a different borough. I am a leaseholder and as far as I can recall I don't remember having correspondence giving us a say in this matter.  **A.** We are working with Melin Homes on a merger programme which will see the two associations merge to be one of the largest housing associations in Wales. Both associations are committed to providing high quality services to its customers and residents and in supporting the housing crisis, providing much needed homes for those in need. Working in partnership allows us to deliver much needed new homes across South East Wales, and the savings generated as a result of merger will support investment in both new and existing homes as well as continuously improved services for customers.  Our Board and Executive team identified that the benefits of a merger not only offered greater efficiency and financial return but that larger organisations can offer greater flexibility to colleagues, better use of up-to-date technical solutions and economies of scale in order to deliver successful outcomes for customers, colleagues and communities.  An update on progress of the merger programme is planned, with a share member briefing note outlining the reasons for merger being sent to members this autumn.  Individual correspondence has been sent to all our customers, including leaseholders, either by email or post in line with individual communication preference. In April 2024, key information was shared on the merger process, and customers were asked to share their feedback on the services they value the most, the services they would seek to improve the most, and suggestions for new services not currently delivered by either organisation.  The feedback captured from this consultation was used to develop a Customer Promise document, setting out the benefits of merger to customers captured within a series of commitments for operational service delivery. The draft Customer Promise has been shared with all our customers asking for their views, supported by a series of engagement events across communities during August 2024. | | **Q.** We know that hotels and guest houses have and are being asked to ascertain whether they are suitable and accessible for people with disabilities. What external assessment has your and other housing associations housing received to ensure your accommodation, that you claim to be suitable, is actually fit for people? Issues such as depth of treads on staircases, size of rooms for ease of mobility and hazardous steps from kitchens to balconies/walkways and front doors to landing passageways.  **A.** NCH provide specialist adaptations to our customers where a specific need has been identified by an Occupational Therapist. Where works are identified our teams will undertake these alterations to ensure that a property remains suitable for our customer. All our properties meet the relevant standards when they are built and should it be decided that a property no longer meets the needs for our customer we will offer them the relevant support to find a more suitable property. | | **Q.** Diversity and inclusion (D&I) at near £50k a year wage alone and some of the board members are an extension of D&I. Why are neighbourhood managers not diverse and you do not promote men’s day in October.  **A.** The association invests in diversity and inclusion because of the benefits it brings for our customers, communities and colleagues. Our diversity and inclusion strategic commitment seeks to ensure our colleagues are representative of the communities we serve and there is equity in the services we deliver to our customers and communities.  To support our work we mark a number of awareness days across a 12-month period, but these may vary each year. We try to shine a light on a wide variety of issues that matter to us and our customers including those that align to our diversity and inclusion commitment. For example, we marked [Men’s Health Week 2023](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFCT0_pMM98). We also use awareness days to improve our service. During National Customer Services Week each October we run live sessions where colleagues from all areas of the organisation are invited to hear how we respond to customer calls. This enables us to raise awareness of what is important to our customers and learn more about what our customers have to say. We also work in partnership with a diverse range of community groups and communicate this work to our customers across our communications platforms. This has included our recent work with [Newport Men’s Shed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLFZ7YNJMac) and the [Sudanese community](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9o8XXo7se3c). | |  |  |