

WG Self Evaluation Statement

The following self-evaluation statement was approved by the Board of Trustees at its Board Meeting held on 08 July 2025.

Since the Association's last self-evaluation statement, which was submitted in March 2024, Cardiff YMCA Housing Association has achieved the following milestones:

- Continued to strengthen its board of directors/management by recruiting new board members with backgrounds in development, finance and health sectors, in line with our internal skills audit.
- Aligned to the above bullet point, increased the diversity of its board, by recruiting new board members from diverse backgrounds, ensuring a better representation at board level, of the communities the YMCA serves.
- Maintained the annual Board Appraisal/Reflection process that proactively includes evaluating individual performance (including the Chair); planning for board recruitment; and succession planning as the board continues to evolve its skills base and membership.
- Undertaken a further review of our sub committee structures. Following this, the following committees were approved:
Finance, risk and property
Governance and People
Front line services
Development
Fundraising and Marketing
- Maintained the board's annual deep dive process, which is led by the board itself. This year's review focused on the organisation's ongoing compliance with the Big 8 Health and Safety items.
- Successfully delivered 18 new homes (Adref) which is a supported Young Person's scheme in the heart of Cardiff. This development, which is predominantly TACP funded by WG was opened by the Rt. Hon Jo Stevens MP and Minister of State for Wales. This £3.4m development was the association's biggest capital scheme to date and was delivered on time and on budget. It is also the first MMC building scheme it has undertaken.

- Registered high tenant satisfaction surveys across all survey areas and improved processes around dealing with complaints and compliments.
- Maintained its commitment to a merger with YMCA Cardiff and maintained ongoing communication with WG Regulation team. Although delayed at present, it is expected that the merger will complete by October 2025.
- Maintained its co-regulatory approach with Welsh Government Housing Regulation team that included frequent communication on changing business needs and monthly cashflow sharing.

Include an account of how the Board knows the organisation complies with each regulatory standard including reference to key performance data and sources of assurance

Cardiff YMCA Housing Association has well developed and detailed mechanisms to provide the board overall assurance in relation to ongoing adherence to Welsh Government's regulatory standards. Detailed below is a myriad of evidence from board dates to effective reporting through board meetings, sub committees, deep dive, away days and external independent reports that are regularly evidenced in board meetings or sub committees to provide assurance to the board overall. Aligned to this is, the frequent communication between the Board Chair, chairs of sub committees and the CEO and Senior leadership team, where the culture of challenge and accountability is well established. This constant cycle of communication provides ongoing reassurance to board members of the continued adherence and commitment of the organisation to these regulatory standards.

These assurance models are complimented further by a Board Assurance Framework that is regularly reviewed by the board as well as copies of key external independent assurance bodies that are made available to trustees at sub committees and board meetings or on demand. Such bodies, include, Peninsula Health and Safety (and HR) and KPIs returns from its core housing contract with the local authority. **Moreover, in the past year, the organisation has approved the purchase of Asset Management software that will better enable it to maintain controls and assurance over an expanding property portfolio. This is presented to the Front Line Services Sub committee to ensure regular board oversight.**

Assess compliance with the Code of Governance that the organisation has adopted

The association is now well versed in annually reviewing its ongoing compliance to the CHC Code of Governance, which it formally committed to in May 2021. Following this initial review there was a second review from October 2021 through to April 2022, which



culminated in a report highlighting areas for improvement and a subsequent action plan was created.

The CHC code was reviewed again in February- March 2024 and updates were formally presented to board at its March 2024 full board meeting. Reassuringly, the actions highlighted in 2022 had all been achieved, showing full compliance to the CHC code across all sections and areas. This will continue to be reviewed bi-annually going forward by the board, through its sub committee structures that report directly to the full board at least once a year.

The board remain committed to the CHC code and throughout 2025 a deeper longer review will be led by the Governance and People sub committee. Due to the changes in board personnel, it was felt a longer and deeper review was required again, to ensure newer board members had a substantial understanding of the CHC code and the obligations of the association to it.

Explain the principal evidence which has been relied upon in conducting the evaluation

The board receives its assurance on the work of the association by ongoing assessment and engagement and by a variety of different means. As stated above the board meets every other month. However, assurance is predominantly gained by regular engagement with Senior Leadership Team and other key staff through subcommittee structures. Each subcommittee is chaired by a board member and a member of the SLT attends. The culture set in these meetings is one of mutual support but also evidence based in terms of key areas of work. As indicated, the sub committee structure was first reviewed in 2023 and again in 2024 and amended to the following. This revised structure has added in two additional sub committees, as the board adapts to the changing nature of the organisation:

Governance & People Sub Committee- Jeff Owen

Finance, Property and Development sub committee – Richard Miles

Front Line Services Sub Committee - Stacy Thomas

Development Committee- Phil Andrews

Fundraising and Marketing Committee- Rebecca Wolley

Merger Working Group - set up to oversee the current merger with Cardiff YMCA and has joint board members from both YMCAs. This re-started following a period of hiatus following the joint board's decision to pause the merger last year and has been active throughout the year as we prepare for merger. This is led by a cohort of Housing and charity board members.

The sub committee structure is an inherently robust structure as it allows for in-depth discussion and evaluation of a key business area, outside of the main busy board agenda.



Within this system, the board can check on progress through the sub committees and question further using minutes and verbal reporting at each board meeting.

Moreover, subcommittee reporting is a standard agenda item at each board meeting and each subcommittee has an action plan for the forthcoming year along with timelines for implementation. Progress is reported back at each board meeting by the relevant subcommittee Chair and subsequent minutes.

In addition, the board gains further assurance from its Board Risk Assurance Register (BAF). This register operates as a live risk register and assurance checklist for the board on all key areas. Senior Leaders and the board work together to update each risk accordingly at board meetings and update the various levels of assurance on each risk that is required, and any amended actions are recorded appropriately. This is currently under review by the Finance, Property and Risk sub committee as the board has requested a refreshed approach is required, as the organisation continues to grow and evolve. Going forward, the full risk register will be reviewed by the finance sub committee and risks identified as a red score will be put forward to the main board for a deeper analysis and consideration. This new way of reviewing the BAF is designed for the board to focus on the most pressing risks to the organisation at board meetings, whilst the finance committee will maintain a close viewpoint on the long standing risks and report back as required, as risk continue to evolve.

The Front Line Services subcommittee review and analyse the now quarterly WG Business Continuity Survey and this is also presented and analysed by the full board also. Aligned to this process is the annual Deep Dive process, where the board chooses an area of the association's work to focus on, independent of SMT input and undertakes a 2-day audit of this key area. This process is led by Board members themselves and an independent report is then drafted by those members, with any recommendations or areas highlighted for improvement. A subsequent action plan is produced, following the board report and SMT are then tasked with implementing this plan in accordance with board timelines. The board oversees this to ensure compliance through its sub committee structures, which report directly to the board.

The role of the Company Secretary was added to the Director of HR and Quality Assurance duties last year. This effectively means, there is a clear and effective line of communication direct with the board by the Company Secretary and vice versa on all matter of regulation and compliance. Additional reporting by this Director on Company Secretary duties has been added into the reporting cycle for board also.

Finally, the board also utilises the following options to validate its overall assurance:

1. Presentation by external agencies and partners such as Cardiff Council to the board on



its performance in relation to main HSG homelessness contract. This is done at least once every 12-18 months.

2. Sector Risk papers produced by WG or other relevant bodies- these are commonly shared at subcommittees and board meetings and discussed accordingly.

3. Attendance at key sector conferences by board and senior management team, thereby ensuring the board remains updated on all key developments happening across the sector and can independently report back to the board on this.

4. Continued with its recent annual stakeholder survey to key external stakeholders and partners, ensuring the board sees all relevant feedback on the breadth of its work and service provision.

5. Finally, the board undergoes sector relevant training and has recently refreshed its Board Training plan to ensure new and existing members remain current on sector trends and issues. This ensures a culture of continuous improvement at board level, aligned to the culture within the wider association.

Demonstrate that the process of evaluation has been robust

Below is a list of dates that show the engagement of board members from board meetings and sub committees from the YMCAs last submission in March 2024. Copies of all sub committee and board minutes are available on request.

Board Meetings	Finance, Risk & Property	Governance & People	Front Line Services	Development Committee (New)	Fundraising & Marketing committee (New)	Meetings with WG Regulation Team
21 May 2024	12 March 2024	06 March 2024	15 April 2024	17 February 2025	16 October 2024	14 May 2024
16 July 2024	14 May 2024	30 April 2024	8 July 2024	15 April 2025	15 January 2025	17 September 2024
31 July 2024- AGM	6 August 2024	19 June 2024	21 October 2024	9 June 2025	12 March 2025	14 January 2025
10 September 2024	6 November 2024	20 August 2024	14 January 2025		21 May 2025	29 April 2025
12 November 2024	6 December 2024	29 October 2024	4 March 2025			
29 January 2025	12 February 2025	16 January 2025	29 April 2025			

30 April 2025	6 May 2025	13 March 2025	1 July 2025			
13 May 2025		8 May 2025				
8 July 2025		26 June 2025				
Board Away Day- 26 April 2024				<i>Please note development issues were picked up in 2024 in the finance sub committee.</i>		

Explain how the needs and views of the tenants have been understood and considered as part of the self evaluation

Under the revised HSG Contract with the local authority that the YMCA now holds, the majority of our service users move on from hostel accommodation within 6 months of entering the YMCA. As a result, previous methods of consultation have not been as successful leading to a focus on one to one methods that can ensure individual needs are considered and understood alongside group meetings/consultations when needed. In the past 12 months, the YMCA has:

- Evaluated all satisfaction survey results which led to one-to-one sessions with tenants to truly understand their changing needs. Anyone who stated they were dissatisfied with the service were approached on a one-to-one basis to discuss their individual needs and concerns. These were then addressed by the individual Housing Support Officer
- Continued to deliver the Tenancy ready programme and reinstated partnership working with the Welsh Refugee Council who have again been attending regularly to support us with cultural and language barriers – ensuring that we fully understand and consider the needs of a diverse tenant group
- Continued to complete surveys as well as workshops to ensure our service users get a say in what happens at the YMCA and what activities are carried out - Surveys have ranged from type of activities and workshops, times the service should run, 100-80-100 alongside our general surveys – 28 day satisfaction survey, Move on satisfaction survey and Resettlements satisfaction survey – the results of these are reviewed via KPI's and fed back to funders on a quarterly basis

- Ran workshops on the lead up to the general election to register people to vote and to gain the correct identification
- Held a hustings event with local MP's to help our service users have a voice not only to shape their community but the UK
- Revamped the cafeteria at The Walk in line with our strategic priority of 'Excellent spaces'. The new provision Café 180 gave service users a more ambient, modern and comfortable area to relax and engage socially.
- Consulted with tenants about the building works/new building (now Adref) and gave them the opportunity to suggest names for the new building
- Held weekly support sessions with all tenants
- Continued to encourage completion of consultation forms offering the opportunity for tenants to make suggestions, comments, complaints, or praise – an example of this: a few service users completed Consultation forms requesting to take more than 2 nights out a week, as a result of this, they were authorised to take a longer period away
- Held drop in coffee mornings in Café 180
- Consulted on changes to the laundry service that resulted in additional service being implemented at both or hostel sites/
- Made changes to the new kitchen provision: After a service user raised concerns about the mess and noise in the communal kitchen, a new system was implemented to address these issues. Following this, a few months later, due to Ramadan and fasting hours, many service users asked if we could extend the communal kitchen opening hours. We spoke with residents with rooms surrounding the kitchen to let them know, and we were able to keep the kitchen open 24/7 during Ramadan – this will now stay open 24/7 and is reviewed regularly
- Ran 6 community meal events for the local communities that included residents, in an attempt to address the continued cost of living crisis. These events also served to build community cohesion
- Given choice of Support Environment: Service users have been given the option to choose the location of their support sessions, whether in a more formal meeting room or in the café. Additionally, some residents prefer more frequent, informal engagement and are encouraged to 'drop in' with any queries or concerns. This flexibility ensures that support is accessible, empowering residents to be proactive in sourcing support.
- Given choice over Communication Preferences: Service users choose whether they to be contacted via email instead of traditional letters. This allowed them to choose a communication method that best suits their needs and preferences.
- Made changes to payments of Service Charge: After a service user raised concerns about forgetting to pay service charge on time, she asked if we could do a direct debit – this was implemented
- Delivered Online/Remote Support Sessions: A resident requested an online support session – this was completed via Microsoft Teams!
- Reviewed car park rules – following a consultation form completed by a service user requesting use of the car park during working hours, this was discussed and approved

- Carried out mid tenancy inspections on properties, reported issues to ensure adherence to legislation and fed back to tenants
- Ambassador residents informed us of issues with the service and it not reaching some areas of the hostel. The Wi-Fi is now being upgraded
- Developed a safe space for UASC tenants to meet informally following a request from a young person – this has led to a growing regular youth group session and has meant that partnership work has increased in this area

All of this information is collated and presented to the Front-line Sub Committee in the first instance, where progress is reported on and checked against KPIs. This, in turn, is then reported back to the board, along with any key recommendations for changes requested by our service users.

Identify strategic risks and associated controls or signpost to other documentation where key risks are articulated

The Board Assurance Framework (BAF) remains the key document that articulates the key organisational risks to the YMCA and the control measures and assurance frameworks identified for the board.

Since the last statement, as described above, the board has approved a revamp of the current process to allow the board more time to consider the most pressing risks at board meetings. This review is currently underway and will be completed by September 2025.

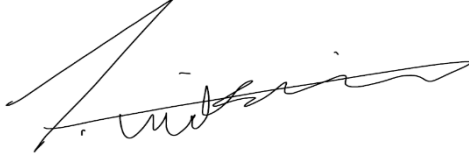
An ongoing remains the successful completion of the merger of both YMCAs in Cardiff. This was delayed in March 2025 due to incomplete legal papers supplied by Blake Morgan. This issue is currently being corrected by the lawyers and it is anticipated the merger will complete in September this year.

The YMCA has kept the regulatory team updated on this delay throughout and updates have been provided during the regular catch up sessions with our Regulation Manager.

Furthermore, a further risk identified this year has been the emergence of a developmental arm to the YMCA main operations. As a result of this, the newly formed and separate Development Sub committee was created and chaired by our recently recruited board member, who is an expert in capital development schemes. The committee also includes the Chair of the Finance sub committee and a board member specialising in the housing sector. The committee meets regularly with the CEO and helps craft any future developments, providing expert guidance in place of a recognised development department within the YMCA. Minutes are shared with the board as standard, and the ultimate decision as to whether to advance a development, remains with the main board.



Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Wilkinson', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tom Wilkinson
Chair
Cardiff YMCA Housing Association
Date: 08 July 2025

