

The latest appointments in Welsh business

Housing association United Welsh has appointed Richard Mann as its new group chief executive.

Caerphilly-based United Welsh currently provides more than 6,300 homes across south Wales and plans to build 1,300 more in the next five years.

Mr Mann, currently the housing association's deputy chief executive and group director of operations, will take over the post from Lynda Sagona next month. Ms Sagona is standing down after five years in the role and working for the organisation since 2009.



Richard Mann

Mr Mann said: "I am very proud to be appointed group chief executive to lead United Welsh into its next chapter."

“Everything that United Welsh does stems from our social purpose. While we are a housing organisation that builds and provides high-quality homes, we are driven by making a positive difference to the people who live in those homes and communities.

“Everyone at United Welsh is passionate about the impact of our work and building on the organisation’s successful outcomes under Lynda’s leadership, we remain committed to making a major contribution in ending homelessness, tackling poverty and improving wellbeing.

“I am excited to continue our collaborations with government and the housing and health sectors to create a better, greener future for people in Wales.”

Mr Mann, who has worked in the housing sector as a development specialist for over 20 years, joining United Welsh as a director in 2005. He has overseen a significant expansion in the number of homes delivered and led on major regeneration programmes, including the transformation of well-loved community buildings such as the Caerphilly Miners Hospital and Bargoed’s Hanbury Chapel.

Grahame Sturges, chairman of the board for the United Welsh Group, said: “Following a rigorous recruitment process, I am delighted that Richard has been appointed to lead United Welsh.

“Richard has extensive knowledge of the group and the sector, and he is committed to leading with the strong values of United Welsh firmly in mind.

“Lynda’s retirement from the business after a long and successful career leaves the group in a strong position to grow and develop. We look forward to working closely with Richard to fulfil our ambitions of providing much-needed homes and supporting people to live the best lives they can.”

Bouygues UK

Stephen Davies has been promoted to operations director for Wales at Bouygues UK.

Mr Davies joined Bouygues UK as technical director in 2018, having previously enjoyed over 30 years' experience in the construction industry working in the UK, Canada and the UAE in various technical, operational and leadership roles.

During his varied career he has delivered major and multi-disciplined projects including the GCHQ headquarters in Cheltenham, Southmead General Hospital in Bristol, Dubai Festival City and the first phase of the Battersea Power Station residential development in London.

Most recently, he has supported the Bouygues UK project team in delivering the Cardiff Innovation Centre for Cardiff University and helped secure Bouygues UK's flagship project in Swansea at 71/72 The Kingsway.

Mr Davies said: "I am thrilled to be promoted to operations director for Wales and look forward to working with our teams to promote business improvement and deliver fully integrated solutions that serve to underpin the success of our projects and promote our reputation within Wales. I originally joined Bouygues UK because of its great reputation and ambition to improve and deliver quality projects for its clients.

"Bouygues UK is very highly regarded in Wales, particularly for its education projects, such as Cardiff Innovation Campus and Pencoedtre High School. I'm looking forward to building on this even further."

Rob Bradley, chief executive of Bouygues UK, said: "Stephen is a much-valued member of the Bouygues UK team, and this promotion is testament to his brilliant work and leadership. He has a wealth of experience in the construction industry. I look forward to working even closer with him in his new role

to further ensure Bouygues UK's continued success."

Ogi



Giles Phelps

(Image: NANETTE HEPBURN)

Chief strategy officer of Cardiff-based broadband network provider Ogi, Giles Phelps, is stepping back from his role in the new year to focus on developing new business ventures, including renewable energy company Tewdric Energy.

He will retain a close interest in Ogi, as an investor, as the business continues to rapidly expand its full-fibre network in south Wales.

Mr Phelps initially set up Net Support UK – a network and IT consultancy and precursor to Ogi – in 1998, securing leading business clients in Wales and beyond. Sister company Spectrum Internet followed in 2011, to bring better broadband to

underserved villages and rural homes.

In 2020, Mr Phelps was part of the team that helped secure landmark investment from leading infrastructure investors, Infracapital, in the Spectrum Fibre portfolio of companies. The investment is one of the largest secured by a Welsh tech business in recent years and will deliver an ambitious plan to bring full-fibre connectivity to communities across south Wales. Through the funding, the aim is to grow the business into one of Wales' leading broadband providers and help accelerate Wales' digital transformation.

A new senior management team was put in place last year to deliver the plan, and in the last 12 months the company has grown from a team of 20 to over 100 staff members, been rebranded as Ogi and started to connect new customers from Pembrokeshire to Monmouthshire.

Mr Phelps said: "A year on from our landmark investment, I am confident that Ogi is in a very strong position for the future. The business has solid backing, firm foundations and fresh ambition. I'm excited to watch Ogi's continued growth, as I shift my focus to building up a new venture, in a new sector."

Ben Allwright, Ogi's chief executive, said: "We are grateful to Giles for his role in establishing this business and securing its future. His role in helping to secure so much funding to improve south Wales' digital infrastructure will enable us to make a big difference to local communities. It's a legacy he can rightly be proud of. Good luck from everyone at Ogi."

Lovell



Paul Norman

(Image: Chris Fairweather/Huw Evans Agency)

Housing developer Lovell has appointed a new regional operations director to its growing team in south Wales and the south west of England.

Paul Norman joins Lovell with more than 30 years of experience in the construction industry.

Before joining Lovell, Mr Norman worked as construction director for Vinci Construction's division for Wales and south west of England. Prior to this, his career highlights include the construction of both the Principality and Cardiff City Stadiums, numerous student accommodation schemes and education facilities, including the Coleg Y Cymoedd scheme.

James Duffett, regional managing director at Lovell, said: "I am delighted to welcome Paul to our senior leadership team. He is a very valuable addition to the company, and will help to drive our expansion across south Wales and the south west.

Paul brings with him an expansive wealth of knowledge and expertise gained throughout his varied career, and we're thrilled to have him on board. I wish Paul the best of luck in his new role."

Gambit



Sam Forman

Gambit Corporate Finance has promoted Sam Forman to director.

Mr Forman joined the Cardiff-based firm as an analyst in 2015 and becomes its youngest-ever director. He has completed more than 30 transactions during his career, advising on landmark deals such as the sale of Premier Forest Group's Irish subsidiary to Murdock Group, Veezu's multi-million fundraising from MML Capital and the £63m sale of Orangebox to NYSE listed Steelcase.

Frank Holmes, partner, said: "To witness the journey from where Sam began as an analyst to where he is now is a testament to the skill set, work ethic and ambition that he possesses, and the quality of service he provides the firm's clients. This promotion is thoroughly deserved, and we are confident that Sam will thrive in his new role. Sam's career at Gambit is a great advertisement for the pathway of success which a career in Corporate Finance can bring."

The Wales Co-operative Centre



Adam Cox, Sarah Evans and Marc Davies.

The Wales Co-operative Centre has created a new consultancy team.

Dr Sarah Evans has been appointed commercial director, Marc Davies as digital lead consultant and Adam Cox as commercial consultant on social value. The consultancy team is designed to strengthen the strategic direction of the organisation's commercial operations. The team are offering strategic business support, digital transformation and community impact consultancy to clients across Wales and the UK.

Dr Evans has been a consultant for Wales Co-operative Centre on several Welsh Government and public-sector contracts. Previously a senior lecturer at North Wales University Business School, she brings a wealth of experience in leadership, social enterprise research, public service transformation, alternative models of delivery and stakeholder engagement.

Mr Davies brings over 21 years' experience of working in digital inclusion and enterprise support. After 15 years with Wales Co-operative Centre, he joins the consultancy team to lead the organisation's strategic and development approach to the Welsh Government's digital agenda. Mr Cox joins the Wales Co-operative Centre as a commercial consultant with over 15 years' experience in delivering community benefit and social value support for local authorities and the construction industry. Working with businesses across different sectors, Mr Cox will guide organisations to help understand, measure and maximise social value within organisations and contracts alike.

Derek Walker, chief executive of the Wales Co-operative Centre, said: "We are an agency that believes that the economy and society should work differently, in a way that puts people and planet first. It is fantastic to see other organisations increasingly taking the same view."

Wendy Hopkins Family Law Practice



Georgia Rundle, Fay Jones and Alex Lewis.

Specialist family law firm Wendy Hopkins Family Law Practice has confirmed two internal promotions and a new appointment.

Fay Jones has been promoted to a solicitor and Alex Lewis has been promoted to a paralegal, while Georgia Rundle joins the firm as a paralegal.

Ms Jones joined the Cardiff firm in 2019 as a paralegal before being promoted to a trainee solicitor, and now a solicitor. Ms Lewis is part of the firm's private client team which specialises in wills, probate, and estate matters.

Founding director Melanie Hamer said: "The promotions of Fay Jones and Alex Lewis are testament to their hard work, dedication, and loyalty enabling them to excel and achieve their ambitions. We are delighted to welcome Georgia as she has an excellent academic record and exceptional organisational and people skills. The dual promotion and the appointment of a new paralegal will support the growth and

development of the firm.”

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