



SHARE Social Housing Forum 6

Friday 14th September

*Gloucester City Homes, Atlantic Suite
Southgate Street, Southgate House, Gloucester*

Attendance

Ken Bellis, Fosseway Housing Association
Debbie Hewitt, Stroud District Council
John Mann, Gloucester City Homes
Colin Coopey, Gloucester City Homes
Julie Sherman, Cam Parish Council
Roger Sparks, Housing Enabling Officer, Cheltenham Borough Council
Ruth Kirkup, Stroud District Council
Kaye Welfare, Severn Wye Energy Agency
Pete West, Severn Wye Energy Agency
Shirley Goodey, Powergen EON
Martin Harris, Fosseway Housing Association
Joanna Nicholson, Severn Wye Energy Agency

1. Welcome and introductions

John Mann welcomed everyone to the Forum. All attending introduced themselves and their organisation. John stated that there is some parking at the rear of GCH which can be booked in advance via reception if needed.

2. Progress updates and notes from last meeting.

- *Notes from last meeting* – There were no actions to follow up
- The group discussed the problem of hard to treat houses, in particular pre-fab, which they have in stock.
- **Action: JN to arrange a speaker on this topic for a future forum**
- The question of top up grants was raised and whether there was currently any funding for this. SG advised there is not under Cert but possibly through Powergen.
- **Action: Anyone requiring funding should get in touch with SG as soon as possible**
- Progress update – SHARE comes to an end in early 2008 so this is technically the last forum. It was agreed that SWEA will continue to run the forums beyond this as they are beneficial.
- The European project is entering its dissemination phase. This will mean there will be a good deal of press and publicity for all SHARE forum members.
- The training programmes will continue as part of SWEAs SLA and all are welcome to attend.
- Information will be sought from other European partners and an update will be scheduled for a future forum.

3. Training

The SHARE training really needs a push by all. JN circulated the dates of the forthcoming training sessions. All staff and residents from *any* RSL are welcome at any venue, not just those from the hosting organisation.

In addition to the SHARE training there is training on offer by the Energy Saving Trust focusing on low carbon solutions for Social Housing Providers. The sessions will include presentations on:

- Energy efficiency including legislative drivers, energy performance certificates, developing a strategic approach to energy efficiency and funding.
- Part L1B of the Building Regulations.
- Hard to treat homes and affordable warmth.
- Best Practice refurbishment solutions.
- Introduction to renewable technologies, including planning and funding.

This will be followed by a workshop on Best Practice solutions which will include taking a look at case studies. The two most local venues are Birmingham on 6th November and Bristol on the 7th. If you are interested, please contact the Practical help team on 0870 241 2089.

Also NEA has secured funding from the Housing Corporation to deliver the City and Guilds 6176 in Energy Awareness to around 30 Social Housing staff across the South West. This will be with a view to creating 'energy champions' within social housing organisations who will receive mentoring support from NEA in Newcastle and will be encouraged to look at the structures within their organisation to see how energy efficiency and affordable warmth fit in. The first 12 trainees have already taken the course and will sit their exams on the 26th September. This will be followed by a launch event in Exeter on the 27th where the trainees will have an opportunity to flex their newly acquired energy awareness skills in workshop style sessions. JN will be attending this event to give a presentation on SHARE.

Action: JN to find out how many spaces are available on the forthcoming City and Guilds courses and where they will be held.

4. Renewable Energy opportunities for Social Housing Providers

Pete West gave a presentation focusing on sustainable construction and renewable energy in social housing.

There followed a discussion about the cost of designing new homes with such high specifications, and also the difficulties in finding developers willing to change the design or technique they are familiar with.

The group discussed funding for renewable energy and the Low Carbon Buildings Programme phase 2, which can be used for renewable technologies in social housing.

- ***Action: JN to send info with notes***
- ***- Update: Please visit <http://www.lowcarbonbuildingsphase2.org.uk/> for info on Phase 2 and details of how to apply.***

The limit placed on applications to LCBP for heat (biomass etc) is 45kW and it was discussed that this would not be enough for a large heating scheme. SG suggested that if it is a big project which requires funding the housing providers would be better going to the fuel suppliers as they will often sponsor large projects.

The group also discussed other social housing developments that had successfully used renewable energy technologies, in particular the development at Penwith Housing Association in Cornwall where heat pumps were retrofitted to an estate of bungalows. For more information on this project see <http://www.clear-skies.org/casestudies/Documents/Penwith%20Housing%20Association.pdf>

5. Energy Performance Certificates – Open Discussion

The group discussed how Energy Performance Certificate are and will be affecting Social Housing Providers.

JN advised an organisation called Energy for Sustainable Development (ESD) is developing guidance on the EPC for Social Housing Providers in association with the Housing Corporation, under a project called 'Certs for Success'. This project is awaiting decisions from the CLG before publications are made but information can be found on <http://www.esd.co.uk/HAs/CFS.html>

Fossway have had draft EPCs done on 12 year old properties. These came out with a mid range rating but the recommendations for improvement were expensive measures which gave very little improvement in rating.

Wydean are part of a pilot project for EPCs. It was suggested that a representative be invited to discuss the outcomes.

The big questions facing social housing providers are:

- Should they train people internally to issue EPCs?
- When should they be done... during a void, as part of the House Condition Survey, as part of the Gas Safety Check or at another time?
- How do you increase your rating?

The group agreed it would be useful to find out the results of the pilot project and focus on EPCs at the forum after next when the CLG has made clear the criteria for RSLs.

6. Round Table

Powergen – SG

Powergen have produced a booklet of energy saving lightbulbs and other gadgets available at a reduced price. They have also negotiated to sell Carbon Monoxide detectors to HA's for £11.

Action: JN to send details with notes – Please see attachment

Also there is still funding for social housing / energy efficiency projects available as well as lots of energy saving lightbulbs. Please get in touch as soon as possible and pass on this information to the relevant people in your organisation.

Fosseway – MH

Fosseway are looking at air source heat pumps for a building and are currently undertaking a feasibility study to see how the cost compares with oil. Unfortunately they need to upgrade all the radiators to accommodate this system which is putting a strain on the budget.

Gloucester City Homes – CC

GCH are currently doing a feasibility study of 168 flats which have a district heating scheme and are considering changing this.

Also they had 2 properties done last year under LCBP with 10 more planned for next year. There is a case study available on their website.

Stroud District Council – RK

SDC have recently done a massive lightbulb giveaway. They managed to supply 5200 properties with either 2 or 4 bulbs in just a fortnight. This was achieved through setting up drop in points where visitors could also enter a prize draw and also through delivering the bulbs door to door. Lots of volunteers and councillors assisted with the deliveries.

The initiative was warmly received by residents although not a high proportion came out to the pick up points, you need to take the bulbs to them.

The tenants energy network (TENS) has no driver at the moment but there may be funding available soon.

70 – 80% of SDCs sheltered housing scheme has night storage heaters. A recent satisfaction survey showed 65% of the residents found it adequate. SDC are working with SWEA to deliver training workshops on how to use NSH.

The group discussed cavity wall insulation which is over 20 years old and has deteriorated; what can be done?

Action – JN to contact S McD to see if infra red camera is available for loan.

Cheltenham – RS

Two new resource centres are being opened soon in SACS and Oakely and events are being planned for the openings of these.

Action – RS to contact KW to discuss possible SWEA / EEAC displays at these events.

Fosseway - KB

Have also been distributing Powerdowns and lightbulbs. Trying to make people think about their energy use more.

Further discussions took place on how to measure 'green' and on the various carbon calculation tools available.

RK advised a tool from BRE could be very good and will be researching this in the near future. More info on the tool available at:

<http://www.breeam.org/page.jsp?id=25>

7. Date of next meeting

Please see table below for proposed dates for 2008 meetings:

Forum 7	Friday 11 th January 2008
Forum 8	Friday 11 th April 2008
Forum 9	Friday 11 th July 2008
Forum 10	Friday 10 th October 2008