

Penwith Housing Association Penwith, Cornwall, England



Organisation description

Penwith Housing Association is a Registered Social Landlord formed in 1994 as a voluntary transfer from the local authority and is responsible for managing some 6,000 houses in the Cornwall area of England. They are a member of a consortium of social housing providers in the Devon and Cornwall area.

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Strategy

The links from the 'Environmental & Energy Policy' to the rest of the corporate strategies are clear as are the targets and activities in the Action Plan and the methods for monitoring (NHER stock profiling) and review. Cross sector partnership working is recognised in its importance which has resulted in capital and revenue funding being made available.

Communications, awareness and advice

- Penwith operate an 'Energy Advisor' hotline using a freephone telephone number where a tenant can arrange a home visit

- Residents are provided awards for their 'green living' achievements presented to individuals, families and communities
- Tenants are engaged and encouraged to get involved with the organisation at many levels including: involvement register, newsletter, resident suggestion scheme, residents groups, shareholder membership and tenants committees
- The main tenants committee meets 5 times a year and provides an opportunity for tenants to give their views about how policy and governance issues may affect them and the other organisations and agencies they are involved with. From the main committee there are several sub-groups involving tenants including: Technical Partnership, Constitution & Management, Customer Services, Tenants Conference and Media Groups.
- Tenants are members of the 'Environmental Working Party' (since 1994)
- Tenants are fully consulted on refurbishment projects, particularly using new renewable energy technologies and policy
- The Technical Partnerships Group involved in design and management of the 'Decent Homes Programme' is led by tenants
- Residents and groups are encouraged to undertake formal training along-side organisation staff by the Chartered Institute of Housing including: Level 2: Community Action; Level 3: Tenant Participation; Level 4: Governance
- Programmes of modernisation works are fully accessible through the organisation website
- The organisation produces an energy advice leaflet which contains information on savings on water consumption, making best use of heating systems and using thermostats and controls

Choice of retrofit technologies

- Stock condition programme leads to a 5-year programme of works which following consultation directly with the tenants it was decided that the works should be grouped together i.e. dwellings will be refurbished in one go rather than over several different stages. Prioritisation is given to neighbourhoods which require the most modernisation

Finance

- Penwith Housing Association is a member of the Advantage South West (ASW) consortium with other social housing providers which operates a group procurement strategy that provides a framework where purchasing of all products, services and activities takes account of price, quality, time and sustainability. The procurement processes are based on the concepts of programme partnering, strategic framework agreements and negotiated contracts and take into account geographical and environmental characteristics of the area

Skills and training

- Main contractors have been appointed based on a 5-year contract
- General advice is available to all tenants to promote energy efficiency and learn from feedback on the most effective ways of delivering advice

Monitoring and evaluation

- A display unit is used on the PV panels installed to show residents how much energy has been captured by the system
- 'Good News' is promoted through tenants newsletters and the various awards received by the organisation of their achievements
- Consult with tenants on energy standards and costs and use the feedback to inform policy and procedures, including design
- Strong resident involvement through a specific strategy and action plan provides links (via all different methods and mediums) for evaluation and feedback