

Trent & Dove Housing Limited East Staffordshire, England



Organisation description

Registered Social Landlord in East Staffordshire, England with a housing stock of 5,700 rural and town properties.

Contact details

01283 528528

<http://www.trentanddove.org>

Strategy

T&D use the computer software 'Environmental Matrix for Housing' reported through their 'Affordable Warmth and Fuel Poverty Strategy / Action Plan' as a means to target, monitor and review its activities to alleviate fuel poverty in its housing stock. Whilst they have a clear understanding of how they are progressing with their stock they recognise that they have not addressed the 'people-related' aspects of the strategy.

A copy of their strategy can be seen through the public information exchange website 'EcoReports.co.uk'

Future Perspective

They are identifying possible pilot projects and grants for renewable energy technologies, e.g. solar energy initiatives

Identifying and reaching energy poor

Detection focussed on building feature

- Desk top study of building types, fuel type, running costs benefit receipt levels

Detection focussed on occupants situation

- Investigate where tenants are living in under-occupied dwellings

Detection which includes both 'buildings' and 'occupants'

- Aspiration to implement a full affordable warmth and environmental management system using the software 'Environmental Matrix for Housing' which measures existing levels of performance and then constructs a plan to deliver higher levels of performance against 12 areas under 4 key themes - Tenants, Housing Stock, External Relations & Management
- The wardens in sheltered accommodation are trained by 'Warm Front' to provide energy advice

Communications, awareness and advice

Awareness focussed on 'occupants' involved

- T&D implement several tenant information and advice activities including 'Ten Energy Saving Tips
- General needs tenants receive advice from engineers at handover or at the start of a new tenancy
- Tenants receive newsletters and specific information leaflets. T&D also provides tenants with a link to 'Customer Focus' on its website, to help tenants compare tariffs, gain information on energy supplier conditions and grants
- Tenants are provided with information and advice on fuel debt, disconnection and benefits. T&D propose to include targeted advice e.g. for vulnerable tenants
- T&D propose to include enhanced consultation to include usability of all equipment installed as part of a three-yearly 'status' survey'
- T&D see tenancy involvement in decision making as key to providing tenants with affordable housing. Tenants can get involved through; telephone/postal/email surveys, review groups, customer panel, telephone panel, residents associations, as a board member, and as part of the 'Staffordshire Tenants Forum'. With regards to becoming a Board Member, tenants who are interested are able to take part in intensive training in order to join
- T&D also have a floating support team to support tenants who have any queries or concerns
- T&D employ Customer Liaison Officers (CLO) who consults tenants before, during, and after maintenance and energy efficiency works are carried out. CLOs attend contract monitoring meetings to ensure that customer needs are being met as part of energy efficiency works
- Encourage tenants in under-occupied dwellings to move into smaller properties

Choice of retrofit technologies

Choice focussed on 'building' features

- A housing survey initiated the creation of a stock database which is annually updated alongside SAP software. A data collection structure ('Lifespan' Asset Management software) has been established which

includes specific Decent Homes and Energy modules which will be used by all maintenance staff. Data will be fed into the assessment of homes at risk of fuel poverty

Choice focussed on 'building' features

- Measures have been implemented on the basis of what is the simplest to install as opposed to which households are most at need
- Investigate 'Best Practice' case studies for refurbishment of similar properties by similar landlords
- Significant investment has been directed towards improving the association's non-traditional, 'hard to treat' stock which was generally the least energy efficient; this stock was difficult to heat and generates problems of dampness and condensation

Finance

- T&D is working in partnership with other organisations to fund the necessary works to eradicate fuel poverty. The main source of funding would be the energy supplier grants such as CERT. Such funding has been implemented in a cavity wall insulation (CWI) programme and also towards external insulation, condensing boilers and radiator valves. The partnership with an energy supplier has thus been an important step towards generating additional funding towards energy works
- Up until 2008, a single Building Society was the sole funder who lent money for maintenance improvements to T&D properties. Since 2008, new funders have been engaged

Skills and training

- T&D have appointed selected, specialist contractors to undertake the fitting and upgrade to efficient central heating systems
- Works undertaken in partnership with an energy provider (for example CERT) would use pre tendered specialist (insulation/heating) contractors

Monitoring and evaluation

- T&D encourages tenants to give feedback on the quality of their services. Tenants can provide feedback through contacting head office via contact details given on website
- T&D provide all tenants with a satisfaction survey to fill in, after works have been carried out, in which they receive a high level of returns, with overall satisfaction of works carried out at an impressive 99 percent
- From tenant feedback, T&D aims to identify improvements made to the way in which work is planned and carried out and the way information is used