

ECO TERRACE SCHEME:

As a considerable stakeholder in the community of Penrhiwcieber, Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group has been working with Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the Heads of the Valleys Initiative on plans for the regeneration of the local community. Part of the group's work involves a pilot project for renewing a number of houses in Tyrfelin Street.

The scheme offers a new way of looking at terraced housing, a property layout that is more commonly associated with 19th than 21st century living. In so doing, the project demonstrates how retaining the historic character of the en-

vironment does not have to mean compromising on design vision, on providing modern, attractive and functional housing, or on good performance against sustainability criteria. Primary objectives are to



significantly enhance the energy performance of existing housing stock and create a

new benchmark for sustainable refurbishment that can be repeated. In accordance with good and sustainable design practice this scheme aims to reduce the carbon footprint of the buildings by thermally upgrading the existing fabric and providing more efficient fixed fittings and services. The new central heating system will include the integration of solar hot water systems.

The Group has secured funding from the Heads of the Valleys Initiative with match funding from the Association's own resources. The scheme will start on site in early summer 2009.

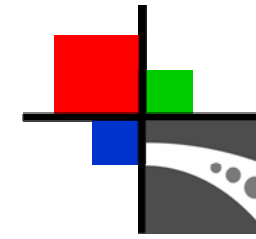
EXTRA HOMES PROVIDED FOR RCT

In December 2008 WAG announced plans to make additional capital money available for property purchases. The additional money was intended to be targeted mainly at completed off-the-shelf new build units, or those under construction to a fairly advanced stage. Invitations were made to Local Authorities and Housing Association Consortia to put bids together

and the final allocations were made on 19 January 2009.

As a result of this initiative, Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group has been able to Acquire twelve much needed properties on newly built private sector developments. The overall social housing grant for this extra programme was £859k, which together with the Associa-

tion's additional private funding has resulted in a total capital costs of about £1.440 million. The additional properties have been acquired at Regent Court, Barry Road, Pontypridd, Cwrt yr Ysgol, Mary Street, Mountain Ash and Maes y Ffynnon, Ynysyborth, Abercynon



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Welcome to the second bulletin from the Programmes and Initiatives Team at Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group.

This is a twice yearly update about our capital projects, to complement our tenants' newsletter, *Through the Keyhole*, that covers developments in service delivery.

If you would like information about any of the projects covered here, or discuss anything about our work, please contact **Antonia Forte, Deputy Chief Executive at the address opposite.**

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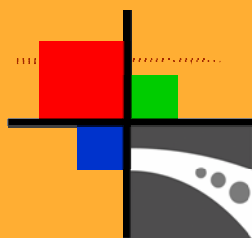
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Cynon Tâf Community

Housing Group

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“working with partners”



Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group has been working in partnership with a national charity called **Aspire**, a support agency which works with people who have spinal cord injuries, in order to provide a suitable living environment for those patients who live in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

Using social housing grant, the Association has been able to purchase a bungalow in Hirwaun which will be fully adapted for wheelchair accessibility, promoting maximum independence and enabling the person to experience independent living either with their family or near to their community, whilst awaiting full return to home.

The property will provide accommodation for patients from the Welsh Spinal Injury Unit at Rookwood Hospital who have suffered a spinal injury. This facility will help discharge from hospi-

tal to suitable accommodation whilst awaiting appropriate home adaptation or rehoming. This will reduce the time someone stays in hospital or in a residential or nursing setting (which may not have accessible/adequate facilities) reducing costs as well as promoting independent living.

The bungalow will provide an essential support to those people who have experienced the life changing event that spinal injury can bring, enabling them to return to their communities to lead independent lives.

INVOLVING TENANTS IN DEVELOPING THE ASSOCIATION'S WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD

The project to involve our tenants in setting the priorities for our work in implementing the Welsh Housing Quality Standard has now been completed.

This was an invaluable exercise for staff and tenants alike, and has provided considerable help in finalising the Association's strategy.

To have such an exciting work placement opportunity and to be able to work in Partnership with Cynon Taf Community Housing Group will be an enormous benefit, I believe not only to our young people but also to the organisation itself. The vision shown by the Association is both heartening and commendable and I hope that following the pilot it will provide a model for similar projects across Wales”

Peter Jenkins Head of Ferndale Comprehensive Community School



HELPING TO DEVELOP LOCAL TRADES

Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group is involved in a scheme to help a number of students from Ferndale Community Comprehensive School gain NVQ level 1 in general maintenance.

Since February, five young men have been shadowing our small repairs and handymen

employed both at the Association our subsidiary, the Rhondda Cynon Taf Care and Repair Agency.

This is working well with students confirming that arrangements are fulfilling their expectations of gaining practical skills and knowledge of the workplace.

EPC TRAINING

As part of our commitment to the continued professional development of staff, all of Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group's repairs officers are receiving training to become qualified Domestic Energy Assessors.

They will be attending courses at Ystrad Mynach College. In addition to providing additional training, this move will ensure that technical services are provided in house to maintain consistency and knowledge.

CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES

Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group is building its first housing development designed to achieve Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The scheme will provide two purpose built bungalows for local people with physi-

cal disabilities, one supported-living house and three properties for local families. The current requirement for housing association developments is to achieve level 3 of the Code, but Cynon Tâf Community Housing Group has

taken the challenge to be one of the first in Wales to develop new housing to Level 4. The scheme was approved in February 2009 by the Assembly and work started on site in March: completion is anticipated in January 2010.