

'2012 Commitments' regional events programme 2007



Following a meeting chaired by EMDA of lead RDA construction contacts and Constructing Excellence (CE) regional partners on 15th February a nationwide programme of events, which will include participation by the LGTF, was agreed to:

- Promote awareness and uptake of the '2012 Commitments', the Common Minimum Standards (CMS) and the 2007 CDM Regulations;
- Signpost practical business support services to facilitate this uptake.

A large number of pan-industry organisations have signed up including CE plus regional partners, ODA/CLM (ODA delivery partner), RDA's (construction leads), DCLG, OGC/PSCCF, CIC and their regions, Strategic Forum (2012 Task Group and integration agenda), HSE, OFPAT and CITB Construction Skills avoiding the need for separate campaigns. The first event will be held this Summer in the South West with the majority in the Autumn.

The following key messages are to be confirmed by stakeholders:

- Promoting integration in an integrated way;
- Promote best practice in the industry including the 2012 Construction Commitments;
- Fully consistent with the CMS for public sector procurers (for the local government version of CMS go to the LGTF at www.constructingexcellence.org.uk);
- Promote sources of practical assistance for companies from stakeholder organisations;
- An opportunity to discuss the new CDM legislation.

For more information contact:

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The Carbon Challenge



On 7th February 2007 the UK's Communities Secretary, Ruth Kelly, unveiled a new international challenge for housebuilders to design and build flagship zero-carbon and low carbon communities.



Ruth Kelly,
Secretary of
State for
Communities
and Local
Government

Building on the package of new greener housebuilding measures including the Code for Sustainable Homes announced in December 2006, the Carbon Challenge - to be run by English Partnerships - will ask housebuilders to raise standards of 'design, construction, energy, water use and waste disposal so that these techniques can be used in the future as a benchmark for mainstream development.'

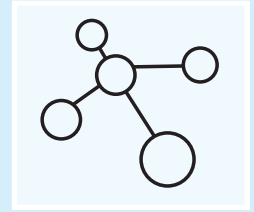
Competition sites will be brought to the market individually over the coming year and be specified as requiring zero

carbon or near zero carbon according to local factors. As well as being environmentally friendly it is important that the communities are able to supply affordable, well-designed and spacious houses. Successful bidders for the first two sites will be announced in Autumn 2007, with work starting on the new communities in Summer 2008.

For more information visit the English Partnerships website at:

W: www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/carbonchallenge

BREW Centre for Local Authorities



Help businesses in your area to become more profitable and resource efficient

The BREW Centre for Local Authorities is a consortium involving Oxfordshire County Council, the National Industrial Symbiosis Programme and the Local Government Association. It is a pilot project funded through DEFRA's Business Resource Efficiency and Waste programme.

The main aim of the project is to be a central support service for local authorities by:

- Developing a network of local authority officers interested in providing resource efficiency services to their local business community;
- Collecting and disseminating best practice on how to support businesses in becoming resource efficient;
- Supporting 10 trailblazer local authorities to deliver business resource efficiency projects that help achieve increased profits through waste minimisation and more efficient use of resources;
- Providing a website where all this information can be shared (currently under development).

Case studies are available in the following areas where you can read more about the variety of ways that other local authorities and organisations are helping to support their business community and get in contact with the officers involved:

- Collection and bring services;
- Business waste & material resource strategies;

- Infrastructure development;
- Buying recycled;
- Business support;
- Sector specific.

As part of the BREW Centre for Local Authorities, the BREW Network is a means by which local authority officers and any other interested parties can communicate and share ideas about supporting local businesses. As a member of the network you will receive the **BREW e-zine**, regularly keeping you up to date with new case studies, resource efficiency and waste minimisation issues and events.

If you would like to become a member of the network please send an e-mail entitled 'Network Subscribe' to brew.centre@oxfordshire.gov.uk or contact:

BREW Centre for Local Authorities
Oxfordshire County Council
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Oxford OX1 1NE
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Code for Sustainable Homes

On 13 December 2006, the long-awaited Code for Sustainable Homes - a new national standard for sustainable design and construction of new homes in the UK - was launched. It was announced as part of a package of measures to help achieve the UK government's proposal that all new homes should be zero carbon by 2016.



The Code, which will replace the current EcoHomes standard, establishes a star rating system for assessing the sustainability of homes: one star is the entry level, and the highest rating available (exemplar standard) is six stars. The Code uses nine design criteria to measure sustainability, many of which are similar to the ones against which the EcoHomes standard is assessed.

All housing built with public funding will be required to meet the three-star rating as a minimum; there will also be incentives available to encourage developments to be designed to higher standards. The detail of these incentives has not yet been announced.

Full Technical Guidance on how to comply with the Code will be published in April 2007. To download a copy of the Code go to www.publicarchitecture.co.uk and it will be found on the publications section of the Sustainability Base.

Fair Payments - Nearly a Done Deal!

Public Sector Construction Clients Forum (PSCCF)

One of the many issues that has beset the construction industry for years has been that of delayed payments. Whilst some clients take pride in paying promptly, many seek to delay payment for as long as they can get away with it. Done presumably on the principle that "it is better in my bank account than yours", this type of behaviour is reflected right down the supply chain.



Reports of payment periods exceeding 90 days are not uncommon; similarly "pay when paid" arrangements mean that those along the supply chain are often deprived of the cash flow that is vital to the well-being of their companies. Ultimately it is the client that pays - since if companies are to stay in business, either consciously or subconsciously, they have to factor the hidden cost of these delayed payments into their bids. If they didn't they would just go bust. Vexatiously withheld retentions are just as bad, and can have the same consequences.

So, after many years of trying, it is gratifying that all parties in the construction industry have come together to agree the principles of a fair payments process. Undertaken as part of the work of the Public Sector Construction Clients Forum (PSCCF),

agreement has finally been reached on what might be commended as best practice for the entire supply chain. Closely following the principles contained within the Strategic Forum led 2012 Construction Commitments, work is being concluded on a roll-out to promote good payment practice.

The LGTF played a key part in the work of the group, and now following confirmation of continued CLG financial support through 2007/8, will be working closely with OGC, to launch the charter to the public sector over the coming months.

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Joint UK-Sweden Initiative on Sustainable Construction

In 2007, the UK/Sweden initiative is moving into operational mode with a focus on bringing Swedish know-how into the UK's south eastern growth area - including major development areas in Cambridge and Thames Gateway - and further exploring opportunities for UK businesses in Sweden.

The Initiative will be co-ordinated by twin secretariats based in Malmo City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council, while central government departments in Sweden and UK have agreed to move into the background.

Work in 2007 will include the development of site partnerships between the two countries, a series of seminars leading up to a

major conference in September, and the launch of two Swedish sustainable housing concepts in the UK. More details will be available soon.

To receive the UK Sweden sustainability Enews-letter click on:
<http://uksweden.constructingexcellence.org.uk/news/newsletter.jsp>



Collaborative working centre case study



Hillingdon Homes pioneers collaborative partnering

Hillingdon Homes Ltd. (HHL) has been through a period of significant change since they were set up as an ALMO (Arms Length Management Organisation) by the London Borough of Hillingdon in 2003. This enabled HHL to secure an additional £60 million in funding and put in place a major programme which will see their housing stock refurbished to Decent Homes standard by 2008 - two years ahead of the 2010 deadline. The work is mainly focused on delivering new kitchens, bathrooms and replacement windows and doors, to over 8,000 properties.

In 2002 the Collaborative Working Centre (CWC), a provider of collaborative working consultancy and training to the construction industry, was brought in to implement a fundamentally different way of working at HHL involving the creation of an intelligent client and building an integrated team to implement:

- development of a common procurement process to identify the best contractors and supply chain partners;
- setting up cost management processes and systems to measure progress and improvement;
- training and mentoring to help the staff at HHL and the rest of the supply chain make the most out of collaborative working and get the best results from the management systems.

The Decent Homes contracts went live in July 2004 delivering many significant benefits and improvements. This included a platform for continuous improvement to build on successes, in particular the delivery of £13.6 million worth of work compared with what would have been gained in the traditional tendering process. Apart from direct monetary benefits, HHL has been able to generate 44 jobs for local people and record consistently high tenant satisfaction of on average 97%.

After the Decent Homes work had been running for over a year HHL became one of the first ALMOs in the country to adopt a structured programme of continuous improvement. CWC was commissioned to apply its Continuous Improvement Toolkit (C-Cit) methodology to the refurbishments work. The aim of the activity was to identify where better value for money could be delivered by the elimination of waste within the management and delivery process to HHL, but also to uncover new ideas and suggestions for improvements and innovation. From an investment of £50,000 in consultancy fees HHL has identified £4m in potential further savings over the next two years. Finding new ways of working has also delivered savings of 50,000 man hours leading to significant reductions in the programme delivery time.

Tim Price, CEO of HHL, sums it up by saying *"We can focus on what matters most to tenants. We can now look beyond the "front door" to address wider social issues that concern our estates residents. The money saved and the innovation in the way we have been able to undertake building projects will all feed into securing the best possible service for tenants."* HHL is now taking a leading role in the activities of the London ALMO Procurement Network, which has been set up to help achieve economies of scale and increased purchasing power for nine other ALMOs.



Tim Price,
CEO of HHL

Contact the LGTF

- to let us know your views;
- for information, support and resources on procurement issues;
- to change address details or nominate a colleague to receive this newsletter.

Next LGTF Board meeting: 12th June 2007.

See website for a synopsis of meetings.

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