

SPECTRUM matters

Winter/Spring 2008

Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of Spectrum Matters. The aim of this publication is to keep you informed of the activities of the Group. Inside this edition you can read about our development aspirations over the next three years, our activities regarding stock management in Cornwall and Devon and our partnership approach to maintenance.

Already we have seen many positive outcomes arising from the merger and are very pleased with progress to date. Key areas underpinning the reasons for merger, i.e. improving services to residents, growth and efficiency savings, continue to be the key focus for the Group.

Wayne Morris
Chief Executive, Spectrum Housing Group (pictured)



Pictured: the East End Community Village

Awarding Sustainability & Regeneration

Two schemes in which Spectrum are involved – PAN on the Isle of Wight and the East End Community Village in Plymouth – have been short listed for three awards under the National Awards for Local Government 2008 and the Health Service Journal (HSJ) Sustainable Communities Awards 2008.

Continues inside this edition....

Spectrum
housing group 

Awarding Sustainability and Regeneration....(Continued)

Both schemes were nominated by the Local Authorities – Isle of Wight Council and Plymouth City Council. The summary for the Local Government Award states, “The regeneration of communities is crucial for Councils if they are to keep up with the times, minimise social exclusion and engage with their citizens.”

The final results will be announced in spring 2008. Both schemes reflect the importance of community sustainability – PAN on the Isle of Wight is a 23 hectare site which has been sold to provide quality housing offered on a variety of tenures, through Spectrum Housing Group and Miller Homes. 240 homes are affordable housing – a mix of rent and shared ownership. The scheme forms part of an existing community and residents have been consulted throughout the process. Its low carbon footprint, thanks to the level 4+ construction, contributes to the concept of the Isle of Wight becoming a green beacon for the South and the UK as a whole. The East End Community Village

is led by Plymouth City Council and is a £14 million investment aimed at providing excellent new facilities and services for the East End community of Plymouth. The Community Village comprises a resource centre, shops, GP surgery, five business units, affordable housing and extra care sheltered

housing provided by Signpost Housing Association and a new park. These facilities are housed in four new buildings that link the green space of Astor Park with the Community Village to create a new piece of Plymouth’s built and community fabric.



Partnership for Progress

Nearly 12 months ago Signpost Services, the maintenance division of Spectrum, signed up to a supply-chain partnering agreement with Jewson, builders merchants. Since that time the company has realised significant cost savings on the procurement of building materials, not only in the prices themselves but in the time saved by operatives and on administration.

Mark Batchelor, Divisional Director of New Build and Planned Maintenance for Signpost Services, said “Our 200 operatives carry out 90,000 repairs a year across the South West and we really needed to find ways of working smarter.

The arrangement with Jewson means that our vans have become a mobile store with each repair report acting to create a

purchasing or replenishment order which Jewson then delivers to the closest Signpost Depot. In the longer term Signpost Services will be integrating the technology with its appointment system – OptiTime – which in itself has enabled a more efficient way of working through a diarised and van tracking system.

We work with a number of external clients and satisfaction rates have increased on average by 5% with the implementation of the partnering agreement and the technology. We are definitely more responsive and our aim is to be able to put things right first time rather than to return to a property because the right stock has not been on board a van. Monthly invoices are also now being raised (as opposed to the previous system of an invoice per repair) which has made a huge difference to administration time and costs.” Signpost Services will soon be extending its remit within the Group to carry out the responsive and planned maintenance for Western Challenge.



Pictured: Adam Kent from Jewson and Mark Batchelor

Over 1,000 Homes to be Developed

Despite a challenging environment for new development, Spectrum's commitment to providing homes for local people continues with a bid to the Housing Corporation on behalf of Source Development Partnership to provide over 1,000 homes over the next three years.

It is hoped that Source will be able to maximise its bids through the Housing Corporation's Regular Market Engagement which was introduced during this bid round.

The split between Local Authority Areas is shown in the chart (right)

Local Authority	No of homes 2008-11
Bath & NE Somerset	8
Bournemouth	63
Christchurch	9
East Devon	10
East Dorset	5
Exeter	18
Isle of Wight	317
North Dorset	233
Plymouth	81
Sedgmoor	33
South Hams	33
South Somerset	6
Southampton	206
Teignbridge	4
Torbay	33
West Dorset	9
Weymouth	24

Signposting the Way to Quality

Signpost Services has achieved three international quality standards making it the first contracting company in the South of England to have done so.

ISO 9001:2000 – Quality Assurance System, ISO 14001:2004 – Environmental Management System and OSHAS 18001:1999 – Occupational Safety Health Assurance System were all achieved by the company indicating that it has a robust management system in place and strives for continuous improvement.

Paul Bryan, Managing Director of Signpost Services, said " We are very proud to have achieved all three quality standards. It is a true reflection of the importance we place on making sure that effective systems are in place to deliver an excellent service to our customers."

The ISOQAR auditor's report stated "There is much greater awareness of all requirements in all offices and with operatives, the new management system is effective and provides a good support to the business, it is a great step forward."

New Chair for Medina

Dr Howard Rose (pictured) has been appointed as Chair of Medina Housing Association. He replaces Richard Priest who is standing down after four years in post. Dr Rose has a distinguished academic background, more latterly as Dean of Faculty at Southampton Solent University and operates currently as an independent coach in the public and voluntary sectors.

He has experience of housing associations through membership of the Hyde Board and was previously a Southampton City Councillor. As a result, he brings significant experience of regeneration and community development. This is a key appointment for Medina and promises to bring considerable additional

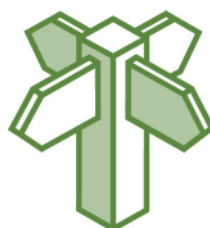
strength to the Board and the organisation as a whole.



Transfers in Devon

Plans to transfer the day to day management of Western Challenge homes in Devon to Signpost Housing Association are moving closer to completion. Consultations with Residents are taking

place to agree the final details. When this transfer takes place, Western Challenge will close its office in Exeter and staff will transfer to Signpost's regional office at Exeter Business Park.



SIGNPOST
HOUSING ASSOCIATION
Part of Spectrum Housing Group Ltd

Western Challenge Chooses Ocean for Cornwall

After a full consultation and tendering process, Western Challenge has selected Ocean Housing Ltd as the preferred partner for the management of 160 homes in Cornwall.

The selection process followed a decision by Western Challenge to rationalise its stock holding in Cornwall arising from an internal asset management review.

Rob Webber, Managing Director of Western Challenge explains,

“Our review highlighted that whilst we deliver a good service in Cornwall, we have no plans for any further development in the county.

As a consequence, the long term viability of our operation there was in question. We conducted an exhaustive consultation with our customers in the area. It was clear from the feedback that, although they were happy with our service, they recognised that a more local

presence would be advantageous to them.

The selection process used an assessment that included three core factors: service quality, viability and value.



The original list of 13 interested registered social landlords was trimmed down to three for the final selection process.

The deciding factors were the views of our customers (based on the returns to the questionnaires that they had helped develop) and the direct interviews with the shortlisted candidates. In the end, Ocean came out narrowly ahead even though they were not the highest bidder.”

Chris Blackbeard, Managing Director at Ocean added:

“Ocean is delighted to have been selected as the successful partner to work with Western Challenge and their Cornwall residents in this management transfer. It was clear to us from the start of the process that quality was the key to a successful bid.

The residents involved have an excellent landlord in Western Challenge and it was always going to be important to them that no reduction in service would accompany the transfer.

Ocean takes pride in the excellent customer satisfaction results it achieves and, being based in Cornwall, we can also offer a locally focused service. We are looking forward to working in partnership with Western Challenge and their residents in Cornwall, to ensure a smooth transfer takes place”.

New Funding Deal for Signpost Homes

A new funding deal has been agreed between Signpost Homes, the commercial housing arm of Spectrum, and Bank of Scotland. The new loan facility is for £85million and it replaces the previous £57million agreement signed in 2004.

The new money will be used to finance Signpost Homes’ student housing development programme, which will see over 1,200 accommodation units built over the next five years. This will bring the number of units owned by Signpost Homes to 1,700 units by 2012 with a balance sheet value of over £120million.

Signpost Homes is now established as a UK top 20 student housing provider.



Pictured: Upper Quay Street, Gloucester

Head/Area offices and contact telephone numbers

Spinnaker House, Grange Road, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 4GE Tel: 01425 283600 Fax: 01425 283555 DX: 51130 Christchurch
Signpost House, Sunrise Business Park, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8SA Tel: 01258 484800 Fax: 01258 484840

info@spectrumhousing.co.uk
www.spectrumhousing.co.uk