

ACTION CHECKLIST FOR SOCIAL HOUSING ORGANISATIONS and COMMUNITIES FIRST PARTNERSHIPS ARISING FROM COMMUNITIES FIRST SUPPORT NETWORK'S 'MORE THAN BRICKS AND MORTAR'. THE WELSH HOUSING QUALITY STANDARD - IMPLICATIONS AND GUIDANCE FOR COMMUNITIES FIRST

FOR HOUSING ORGANISATIONS:

SCOPING EXERCISE

- ✓ Locate and map Communities First wards or sub-wards across the area of your stock.
- ✓ Make contact with the Communities First Coordinator or the Local CF Programme Manager.
- ✓ Read the Action Plans of the Communities First Partnerships near or within your patch.
- ✓ Consider whether the problem issues identified, and the Action Plan aspirations of the CF Action Plans could be affected by your investment decisions during the period of WHQS.
- ✓ In particular pay careful attention to matters which may concern the external Environments around your stock, and the Training and Jobs, and Social Enterprise parts of the CF Action Plans.

More Than Bricks and Mortar is available at:

The Chartered Institute of Housing in Wales:
http://www.cih.co.uk/your_location/cymru/index.php

Community Housing Cymru: www.chcymru.org.uk

CONTACT AND ENGAGEMENT EXERCISE

- ✓ Check that all CF Coordinators and Managers are familiar with the position of your organisation with respect to stock retention or transfer (if relevant).
- ✓ Ensure that you have met and familiarized CF personnel with your future investment and spending plans.
- ✓ Check that they understand the envisaged phasing and timing of major works contracts.

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- ✓ Find out if the CF Partnership has any Membership organisation or community based group that could assist you in consultation and engagement with WHQS.

organisation could offer to unemployed people in the CF area. Many just need the chance to experience the work place and build their confidence.

MAKING IT A JOINT APPROACH

- ✓ Explain the social inclusion / community benefit clauses you are using within your procurement process.
- ✓ If you are taking on apprentices or encouraging apprenticeships and training outcomes within your contracts, see if the CF Partnership could assist in recruitment or could provide support processes within the recruitment exercise.
- ✓ Ask if there are facilities and community- based information points that you or your contractors could use for recruitment or training, storage, or to publicise your activities.
- ✓ Consider whether there are in-house back-office, or other work opportunities that your

LOOKING FOR WIDER OUTCOMES

- ✓ Think about whether your tenants and residents might benefit from some of the Quality of Life issues that CF have identified.
- ✓ Consider whether you could become a partner in seeking to plan and get funding for improved facilities and activity spaces.
- ✓ Have you got land or buildings that might be suitable for a community activity that the CF Partnership could help develop?

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- ✓ Can you offer any support with your in-house skills and knowledge: eg finance/training/ IT, office and admin.?
envisage new enterprises set up to manage or maintain them?
- ✓ List the areas you think might be worth talking to the CF Partnerships about and check with them whether there is overlap or duplication.

TAKING FORWARD YOUR IDEAS

- ✓ Check out if the Local Authority could support any joint business plans for community enterprises to develop in connection with your shared vision.
- ✓ There may be small works and site processes during and after main contracts that the CF Partnership could work with you to develop.
- ✓ If you are creating new facilities and spaces within your stock, see if the CF contacts could

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**FOR COMMUNITIES FIRST PARTNERSHIPS
EARLY STAGE RESEARCH**

- ✓ Check out page 21 of the WAG/ CFSN Guidance on Outcomes, Objectives and Targets – Model A, about the Welsh Housing Quality Standard
- ✓ If you are not already working on this agenda: - agree which employee or Partnership Member finds out what is happening inside the local social housing body – is stock already

transferred, open to a ballot, or being retained by the Local Authority?

- ✓ Check who are the key decision makers, officers and organisations involved with the WHQS agenda. Who is involved from the local Communities First Programme?

GETTING INVOLVED

- ✓ See if you can arrange to meet and discuss how CF can be more involved and informed, and when you can present your Action Plan to the Board or main Committee.
- ✓ Make sure you can arrange regular meetings and discussions so that your CF work can respond to the WHQS investment programme as it rolls out.
- ✓ Discuss how your local activities, knowledge, contacts, activities and facilities could assist in delivering the WHQS programme in your area.
- ✓ Ensure you help spread local knowledge about contracts, timescales, trades jobs, recruitment and supplies of goods and services.

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- ✓ When work starts will you be clear that all local opportunities will have been thoroughly explored by the Housing body?
- ✓ Consider whether your Partnership could be developing projects which increase people's chances of employment with these contracts, such a CV preparation, self confidence, job readiness and work experience.

DEVELOPING LOCAL PROJECTS AROUND WHQS

- ✓ When you have worked out some areas of mutual interest between WHQS and CF, there may be projects that you can get funding to develop further.
- ✓ Main contractors may well want to meet you to explain their work programme or ask you to help with publicity, recruitment, support....
- ✓ Remember that WHQS spending will not all be about manual trades and there could well be other training and skills links to be explored.

- ✓ There could also be social enterprise outcomes worth considering, and the Local Authority could advise here about potential grants to develop your ideas.
- ✓ Think about whether there are facilities and external spaces that you consider might be improved during the WHQS process.
- ✓ There might be ways in which you could manage or help set up an organisation to manage and maintain new facilities etc..
- ✓ There are many organisations that could help you to ensure that Communities First really delivers community benefits from WHQS.

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