

Case Study:

Decorating and External Repairs to Housing Stock, Manchester

Introduction:

Willow Park is a housing association operating primarily in Wythenshawe, South Manchester. Responsible for over 9,000 residential properties, it has invested in excess of £220m in improving people's homes and the local environment.

As part of its continuing efforts to enhance residents' quality of life and to promote neighbourhood renewal, Willow Park has been working with Sustainable Building Services (UK) for several years on two separate framework agreements – one was a three year concessionary decorating scheme, and the other is a cyclical painting and maintenance programme involving more than 7,000 properties.

The Project:

The housing stock on which Sustainable Building Services has been working has been fully occupied throughout the years of the two frameworks. Delivering the work on schedule and to the prescribed budget has therefore meant maintaining good communication with residents and excellent community relations.

Intelligent scheduling and materials ordering, together with flexible working practices have enabled the company to deliver the required outputs despite potential setbacks such as adverse weather conditions and occasional access restrictions. The period of the two contracts has seen works continuing despite two of the coldest winters and one of the wettest summers on record.

Another key reason for the successful delivery of the scheme has been a clear, systematic and properly enforced programme of effective communications with residents. The use of periodic letters, leaflets and reminder cards, together with the appointment of on-site tenant liaison officers has enabled the company to keep residents well informed and fully supportive of the works, and has played a vital role in keeping property access problems to an absolute minimum.

Sustainable Building Services has also sought to make efficiency savings wherever possible so as to deliver the best possible value for money in all its operations. To this end, the company has always worked in a collaborative manner with Willow Park to ensure that all its targets are met and, wherever possible, surpassed.

Client:

Willow Park Housing Trust



Results:

By adopting a flexible approach, Sustainable Building Services has been able to amend the programme of works based on the client's cashflow expenditure requirements, delivering all the required results with the minimum of disruption to all partners.

The work is ongoing and feedback from both residents and the client continues to be very positive.

Client Verdict:

"I have had the pleasure of working with Sustainable Building Services for the last two years on two frameworks - a concessionary decorating scheme and a cyclical external and associated repairs programme to approximately 7,200 of our housing stock. Throughout this time I have found all members of staff within the company to be proactive with regards to the communication process, liaising with both client and residents to ensure that the schemes are delivered with the minimum of disruption to the end users.

"Sustainable Building Services has consistently demonstrated its ability to deliver works within the appropriate time scales and to the required specification standards. Feedback from our residents has been consistently positive and this reinforces the contractor's "can do" attitude."

Pat Cahill (Principal Surveyor), Willow Park Housing Trust

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