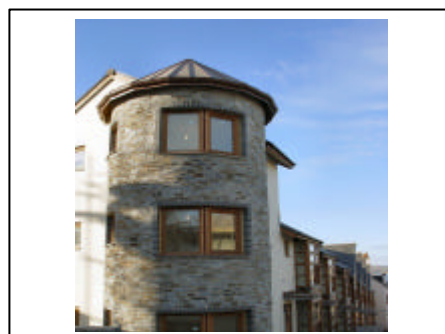


Gun Wharf



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY POSITIVELY

Located in Devonport, a resident-led exemplar mixed-tenure regeneration scheme of 99 residential units, including 35 for outright sale, 46 for general needs rent and 18 for shared ownership. Held out as a best practice example of collaborative working to produce high quality design through robust consultation, resident involvement and effective partnership working where resident involvement was the key driver.

Partners include:

Midas Homes Ltd
Plymouth City Council
Housing Corporation
The Princes Trust
South West Regional Development Agency
Lacey Hickie Caley
Randall & Simmonds
Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership
Ministry of Defence
Claire Foxford (Landscape Architect)
Dick Watson
Scott Wilson (Highways Engineers)
Parsons Brinckerhoff
The Willocks Practice

Gun Wharf

The site formed part of Plymouth City Council's landholdings and included 150 flats built between 1938 and 1952, which were suffering from a declining sense of community due to unfit housing resulting in long void periods and anti-social behaviour. The once vibrant community was showing signs of disintegration and apathy whilst the incidence of crime, drug use and unemployment had escalated dramatically. However, elements of the close-knit community remained intact and local champions remained committed to working towards improving the environment through the strong residents' association. The community demanded radical action and DCHA, who are one of the two preferred partners for Plymouth City Council in the Devonport area, embraced the challenge of working with the community to assist with the regeneration of this scheme.

Following a design competition involving residents, the successful architects, Lacey Hickie Caley, worked with the residents through 'planning for real' sessions, to agree the layout and appearance of the dwellings. In addition, SWRDA, The Prince's Trust and Plymouth City Council contributed to the design and consultation process.

The site was technically challenging and with the decanting process required, delays with the scheme began to lead to apathy within the community. It was recognised that intervention was needed to maintain the engagement of the community. DCHA therefore applied and successfully received a Community Training and Enabling grant from the Housing Corporation to fund two workers for a period of three years. Their brief was to support and coordinate community activity in the design of the built environment, community facilities and resident management. One of these posts was ring-fenced for a local resident living on the development.

Outcomes

- Gun Wharf has been awarded a CABE Building for Life gold standard. This award recognises commitment to design quality and sustainable development and is the national benchmark for well-designed housing and neighbourhoods in England
- capacity building has resulted in resident training, employment and volunteer opportunities. In addition, the residents have also established the North Corner Management Company, with the intention to deliver local services on the estate
- with demand outstripping supply, DCHA have acquired the adjacent site for Phase 2. Work is due to commence on this scheme shortly
- the scheme was catalyst for the wider regeneration of Devonport with English Partnerships holding out Gun Wharf as the new benchmark for design.

Lessons learnt

The success of this scheme is the result of a collaborative approach to produce high quality design through robust consultation, resident involvement and effective partnership working. Resident involvement in determining the way forward, both in the design and management terms, has been a priority driver.