



# value

for money

**Creating Thriving  
Rural Communities**

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For Berwickshire Housing Association value for money is about spending wisely and making the best use of our resources.

Join us on our journey to see how we are achieving this.



# Community Wind Farm

***"The wind farm will provide BHA with a reliable, predictable, low maintenance source of income that will allow us to build a steady stream of new affordable homes at a time when services are all too often being cut."***

**Helen Forsyth,  
Chief Executive BHA**

The Hoprigshiels community windfarm "The Fishermen Three" is located near Cockburnspath in the Scottish Borders and is a joint venture between Berwickshire Housing Association (BHA) and Community Energy Scotland.

£20 million revenue for BHA over the next 25 years, enough to build 500 new homes

£10 million to support other communities across the country

Community benefit payments, totalling £37,500, have now been made to two local organisations



# Being a friend

Loneliness is one of the biggest public health concerns. Causing stress and ultimately leading to poor physical and mental health.

BeFriend is a Big Lottery funded voluntary befriending project for people over 55 living in both the Berwickshire and Kelso areas.

Both the people we visit and our volunteers tell us that they really feel the benefit of the visits, both in their mental and physical wellbeing.

*Our volunteers visit older people who are lonely and isolated. They provide someone to chat to, someone to go out for a coffee with, or someone to walk round the park with.*

*As well as one-to-one befriending, BeFriend also offers a limited number of places in befriending groups, in Kelso, Coldstream and Duns.*

*The groups meet to chat, take part in a variety of activities, and eat cake! There will also be a new group for older people who identify as LGBTQ+ starting this year.*

# Competitive tendering and community benefits

BHA's procurement strategy allows them to make savings whenever possible through its tendering process and these savings can in turn benefit the local community.

The Association is always looking to give something back to the community, especially through its contracts with suppliers. As part of its current contract with BHA, paintwork contractor Novus Property Solutions is offering to paint community facilities free of charge, with paint donated by Dulux.

Duns Junior Football Club was one of the first clubs to score by having their changing facilities upgraded with new paintwork throughout.

Groups such as Scouts or Guides, sports groups, clubs, societies and voluntary organisations throughout the Berwickshire area can apply for help.

It is good practice for any contracts over a certain value to include a community benefit clause. Community benefit clauses are requirements which deliver wider benefits in addition to the main purpose of a contract. These clauses can provide a range of economic, social or environmental benefits to the local area, which is great news for community groups.



*Formally adding a community benefit clause to their supplier contracts is something BHA is currently looking at introducing for every contract over £50,000.*

*BHA is also looking for more suggestions for community benefits that contractors and suppliers could offer to local groups in the future.*

*In the past year competitive tendering has saved BHA over*

**£432,000**





## Keeping it local!

### Berwickshire Housing Association supports local employers!

This ensures small local contractors don't miss out on opportunities against some of the bigger national companies.

BHA strives to show fairness and transparency whilst not deterring locally based companies from tendering for work through the Scottish Procurement Alliance.

*In this instance local electrician Robert Markby Ltd was successful in securing a contract to fit AICO fire detection systems in our properties over a period of three years.*

*Winning this contract has enabled Bob Markby to employ local tradesmen to assist in carrying out the work involved.*



# Next Steps Course

The BHA Next Steps Course is designed to show young people what it may be like to have their own home and takes them through some of the day to day responsibilities that come with running a home. It targets S4 pupils and above who the schools themselves identify may benefit from the course. Topics include:

- Money management
- Home furnishing
- Assistance & support
- 'Next Steps in adult life' advice

On completion of the four week course pupils receive a certificate of attendance which they can keep in a portfolio with other achievements that they receive during their time at High School.

*All of those involved in the course, both pupils and the BHA staff, find it a rewarding and fulfilling exercise. Many of the young people who attend the course go on to further education, work experience or full time employment.*

*The number of pupils benefitting from the course is*

# 103



# Working Smarter

## Our Digital Journey

We are currently looking at ways to make life easier for our tenants and staff alike using digital technology which would allow tenants to access information more quickly and ensure simple transactions could be carried out online.

Our digital journey has already begun with the change to electronic payslips creating a saving of £1,000 per year and upgrades to our finance systems enable our staff to work more efficiently for our tenants.

***Working more  
efficiently for  
our tenants***

***Savings per year***

**£1000**





# Pet champion initiative helps create happier tenants

***The idea of having a 'Pet Champion' was the brainchild of BHA's Innovation Project Team which is made up entirely of staff members.***

***BHA have now committed to continuing the initiative following a positive response from tenants and will continue to work closely with BARK and the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) and any other agencies to promote neutering, chipping etc with key partners.***

Investigating reports of noise nuisance from barking dogs, dealing with reports of dog fouling and helping tenants with pet welfare are all part of the job for Berwickshire Housing Association's 'Pet Champion'.

It's all about working with tenants to help them sustain their tenancies, reduce anti-social behaviour and, of course, looking out for the welfare of pets.

Intervention can help avoid neighbour disputes, save staff time and result in less damage to homes. All this leads to happier tenants.



# Skip and Scrap

BHA continues to deliver the ever popular Skip and Scrap events across our communities.

The idea of Skip and Scrap is to help keep estates looking tidy and to give an opportunity to those who find it difficult to access the local recycling centres the chance to have a clear out.

The main aims of the events are to:

- Provide a skip in our communities and especially in our more rural areas where access to recycling centres is more difficult.
- Provide an uplift service to tenants from our handymen for most items.
- Give those people who don't have the ability to take their rubbish to the local recycling centre an opportunity to declutter and keep areas tidy.
- Help prevent fly tipping.

***Scottish Borders Council provides an uplift service for residents in Berwickshire whereby they will uplift up to five items for the cost of £32. For some BHA tenants this can be half a week's rent.***

***The Skip and Scrap days take a lot of organisation and staff time to deliver but by the positive feedback we receive we know it's worth it.***

***Skip and Scrap is a service that BHA hope they can continue to provide to our tenants in the future and help maintain thriving rural communities.***

# Tackling fuel poverty



We have started work on some of our worst performing houses bringing them up to the EESSH standard. These works, which are being carried out by Everwarm Ltd, include the installation of cavity wall insulation, external wall insulation, gas combi boiler installations, air source heat pump systems as well as low energy lighting and the fitting of photovoltaic panels.

This year we will install around 150 Sunamp Heat Batteries to some of our properties.

These can be charged using any energy source. You can off-set peak energy costs by charging your Heat Battery with cheaper off-peak electricity, or divert energy from your solar PV, heat pumps or other renewable sources. Once charged, the heat can be released instantly when needed, delivering hot water and space heating during peak times.

\*EESC = Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing

## £702

*Saving Per Annum*

*During trials we were able to identify and evidence a saving on average of £702 pa or around 46% of previous bills from the old heating system.*

*The financial savings are fantastic for our tenants and allow them far greater control over their heating and hot water system.*



# Creating social value

## Cooking on a budget

As more and more Borderers are turning to Food Banks to put food on the table Financial Inclusion Project Borders (FIPB) is joining forces with social enterprise organisation You Can Cook to help people feed their families by 'Cooking on a Budget'.

FIPB is a free and confidential money advice service funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and delivered by Berwickshire Housing Association (BHA), Scottish Borders Housing Association (SBHA) and Waverley Housing.

***'Cooking on a Budget' workshops will take place throughout the Borders.***

***Being able to budget and organise properly will give participants the tools allowing them to differentiate the cost of 'ready meals/takeaways' and cooking from scratch.***

***Workshops will prove that cooking your own food is not only healthy but will save money.***

## Berwickshire Housing

# Keep in Touch

There are many ways to contact us:

Pop into one of local offices at 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU,  
or 38 Church Street, Eyemouth, TD14 5DH



Find us on Facebook/BHAThrivingCommunities



Follow us on Twitter @BHACommunities



Write to us at BHA, 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU



Email us at [info@berwickshirehousing.org.uk](mailto:info@berwickshirehousing.org.uk)



Visit our website at [www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk](http://www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk)

### OUT OF HOURS AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY EMERGENCY REPAIRS

If you have an emergency please contact the following numbers:

- If you need to report an emergency repair call our repairs hotline on **0800 652 8104**
- If you have problems with your gas or solid fuel heating system call Dalex on 0800 038 5599
- To report a power cut call Scottish Power on **105**
- If you smell gas in your home call Transco for help and advice on **0800 111 999**



# Being part of the Community

We are part of our local community

It's really important to us that staff and tenant volunteers attend local community events throughout the year.

Teapot on Tour and Tenant Information Events are an opportunity for us to meet and chat with our communities.

MEETING OF MINDS - A CHEQUE FOR £500



CHIRNSIDE SPORTS CLUB - A CHEQUE FOR £350



SEA THE CHANGE - A CHEQUE FOR £5,000



## Supporting the local Community

Berwickshire Housing Association supports a broad range of community initiatives to help create happier, healthier and more sustainable communities.

Some of the initiatives supported have been:

**Sea the Change** - A cheque for £5,000 from Berwickshire Housing Association (BHA) helped a new Eyemouth-based social enterprise get up and running.

**Chirnside Sports Clubs** - Two Chirnside sports clubs received a welcome cash boost to help develop their young sports stars.

**Meeting of Minds** - The sum of £500 was presented to the Coldstream-based Meeting of Minds charity, a parent led support group which gives parents and care givers the opportunity to connect with key professionals in a relaxed and friendly environment.

**Pop-up policemen** - BHA provided the local community policing team with two pop-up police officers 'Bob and Jim'.

POP-UP POLICEMAN - TWO POP-UP OFFICERS, BOB & JIM





# Tenant Volunteers Community Fund

The BHA Tenant Volunteers are a dedicated group of tenants who aim to represent the voice of all BHA tenants.

Throughout this time they have provided a crucial first hand tenant base in which to feed back directly to staff of all levels any tenant praises or concerns.

The Tenant Volunteers also oversee the Community Grant Fund for BHA. They have the responsibility of awarding an annual budget of £5000 to applicants who apply for a maximum of £500 toward community projects and initiatives that benefit the local community.

Below is a table listing the number of applicants and the total awarded for the year since 2014:

Year	Total Applications received	Total Amount Granted
2014/15	17	£4250.00
2015/16	7	£2980.00
2016/17	17	£5000.00
2017/18	11	£4350.00
2018/19 to date	13	£4305.00
<b>TOTAL GRANT FUNDING AWARDED TO DATE</b>		<b>£20885.00</b>