



SOPO Awards – FEATURE

Where quality counts

In the last in a series of articles, **Jed Turner** from 4 South Yorkshire Efficiency Consortium speaks to *GO* about how it felt to win in the Others category of last year's SOPO Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Procurement.



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The 4 South Yorkshire Efficiency Consortium was established by four local authorities and their Arm's Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and is tasked with improving social housing in the region. The members are Sheffield City Council, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, along with their respective ALMOs Sheffield Homes, Rotherham 2010 Ltd, St Leger Homes and Berneslai Homes Ltd.

The key purpose of the consortium is to pursue a region-wide strategy that enables sustainable efficiencies to be achieved in the long term, in line with Government targets. The £1.4 billion combined purchasing power of the consortium represents significant opportunity to realise a potential £58 million in efficiency savings.

To support its objectives, the consortium identified the following key actions:

- continuous review of the individual members' capital work programmes with consideration given to the interrelationships, timing and respective volumes of investment, to highlight largest areas for potential efficiency gains
- alignment of specifications and standards across the consortium
- conducting an e-auction, initially for the supply of

- sanitary fittings, vinyl floor coverings and heating systems
- involvement of existing contractors and key suppliers in setting efficiency targets
- establishing efficiency benchmarks, including costs and quality standards
- reviewing existing supply chain arrangements and limitations and establishing future demand market capacity
- increasing the pool of skilled labour through regional employment and training opportunities

Thousands of homes in South Yorkshire are receiving new kitchens, bathrooms and heating systems under the programme. By combining purchasing strengths, and in so doing rationalising the supply chain and reducing project costs, the consortium aims to deliver efficiency savings across the region.


In 2006 the 4 South Yorkshire Efficiency Consortium won an Award for Outstanding Achievement in Procurement at the Society of Procurement Officers in Local Government (SOPO) annual national conference.

It was good to see our groundbreaking partnership with the four local authorities and their ALMOs being recognised on a national level, and is testimony to the enormous commitment of everyone involved in the consortium.

We are very proud of the track record so far delivered by 4 South Yorkshire Efficiency Consortium. Without the degree of collaboration across the four local authorities and their ALMOs in the region it is hard to imagine we would have achieved the level and scale of efficiency savings so far attained. The power of joint working, stronger client, challenge, debate, changing attitudes, support for each other, is the key to a successful and vibrant alliance.

It is of particular satisfaction that the savings that will be generated directly benefit our tenants on council estates, and we are now in a position to reinvest these savings in our housing stock and carry out much needed work on their refurbishment and upgrade.

Our success has come by way of innovative, joined-up thinking and teamwork achieved through value engineering, benchmarking and a procurement strategy that has established an effective and sustainable supply chain, fully engaging our construction partners and their supply chains in the process.

One aspect of our work worthy of mention is the innovative e-auction we held with the potential to save up to £4.6 million for the Decent Homes programme across South Yorkshire, by finding the best suppliers for a range of materials used to modernise homes. The money saved will be returned to improve tenants' homes. 



Jed Turner

Lead Officer, 4 South Yorkshire Efficiency Consortium

Further information

This year's SOPO Annual Conference and Exhibition takes place on 7-8 November at the Novotel London West. For further details, please email: events@bipsolutions.com

What's your view?

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