

Green Communities Case Study

Newmore House Group



Local communities taking action: Newmore House Group

When 40 local people looked to take on the management of a residential care home, they knew it would be a challenge. They didn't bank on energy saving being a priority, as well as the welfare of the residents.

The Newmore House Group was set up when Newmore House, a residential home for people with mental health difficulties, was under threat of closure. The managers of the home, in Invergordon, north of Inverness, were retiring.

But instead of allowing the home to close, staff, residents and local people with mental health problems or affected by them, decided to try to take on the home themselves.

They quickly found high bills would be a key challenge. The solution? To organise a feasibility study on how to make the house more energy efficient.

The Newmore House Group and the Energy Saving Trust

The Energy Saving Trust was on hand to help the Newmore House Group look into making the house greener and more energy efficient. Through their community programme, the group received the advice

and support they needed to put together their feasibility study.

The Newmore House Group's achievements

The Energy Saving Trust advised the group on what energy saving measures they should consider and how much they would cost. This included in-depth information on solar energy and ground source heat pumps, which draw warmth from the ground to use to heat water or in radiators.

Marion Rhind, the project organiser, says: 'The Energy Saving Trust was a one stop shop where you knew you would get the right sort of information, instead of sourcing information from people locally.

'You can go around looking for quotes from different sources but you're not 100% sure how ethically sound some of the businesses are. However, you trust Energy Saving Trust to give you accurate information and you know they'll have a watchful eye over what's being produced.'

The group won £3,000 from the Highlands and Islands Community Energy Company to do their feasibility study. They put together a bid for funding for the whole project from the Big Lottery's Growing Community Assets fund. This was

unsuccessful, and the project has unfortunately come to a halt.

The future for the Newmore House Group

All the information on the group's proposal to take over Newmore House, along with the feasibility study, are available to anyone interested. Marion Rhind hopes that this information will be used in the future for a similar project, at Newmore House or elsewhere.

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