



Case Study

Fife Harca

Fife HARCA Ltd was established with the aim of working in close partnership with Fife Council and other agencies to enable regeneration projects within the Fife area. These projects have included the redevelopment of the Lochgelly Miners' Institute and the creation of a brand new and highly energy efficient business incubation centre.

The Co-Operation Award recognises businesses that are working in partnership with companies or organisations in the public, private or voluntary sector for environmental and financial gain. VIBES Judges were impressed with the practical demonstration of their commitment to partnership working - the company saw clear benefits to the development of the partnership. The planning and resource allocation was clearly beneficial to all parties.

The VIBES site visit Judges (representatives from SEPA, Zero Waste Scotland and Scottish Government) felt that Fife HARCA demonstrated their commitment to sustainability which is built into the partnership, including environmental benefits, very strong social benefits, and sound economic planning.

Highlights

- Governance is formalised in the establishment of HARCA as the partner organisation with Fife Council to deliver regeneration initiatives.
- Wide range of sustainable projects that the partnership is involved in which are achieving environmental benefits.
- Commitment to sustainability within the partnership which includes a firm of architects - ECDA (Energy Conscious Design Architects) who are specialists in sustainable design - building sustainability into the design demonstrates the importance of resource efficiency at the early stages of the development.
- HARCA have been able to access around £15 million for regeneration projects in areas of Fife.
- The business centre in Lochgelly has been designed using a number of energy efficiency measures including the use of cladding material to let in diffuse light to the building; optimisation of energy management, heat recovery system.
- The business centre is being tested and monitored to determine the claims made about eco building design and materials.
- Strong partnership working is the key to their success estimate a saving of around £125k to overall project costs.

VIBES Award Category:



Co-operation Award

(Sponsored by NetRegs)

Winner:

Fife Harca

HARCA is a long term partnership established in 2000 as a partnership between Fife Council, the Housing Associations and ECDA (Energy Conscious Design Architects). HARCA has no permanent employees, when projects are identified they draw on the expertise of the partners to supply staff. The aim of the partnership is to work together to tackle issues of decline in many areas of Fife – Lochgelly being identified as a town with major issues and a need for regeneration.

Fife Council have used their influence to ensure that projects are viable – with joint funding of certain projects.

HARCA has been able to access around £15 Million for regeneration projects which have transformed the main street in Lochgelly and have improved the town's image and appearance. This included a project to fill derelict and unused spaces with green spaces, benches and play areas. One large overgrown derelict site has been transformed into a wildflower meadow.

The Business Centre constructed in Lochgelly has been designed using a number of environmental efficiency measures, including the use of cladding material that allows diffuse light into the building, a building management system that optimises energy use and a heat recovery system. The building is being closely monitored as part of a project funded by the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) with the design itself, and the materials used, being scrutinised. This will be part of a wider assessment of eco-building techniques and materials – assessing manufacturer's claims about products in real situations. All aspects of the building's internal environment are being monitored, heat, light, air quality, humidity etc. The results will be made public when the project is completed.

The VIBES Judges were impressed by the future plans of the company including the development of a renewable heat and power initiative that will supply heat to ORE Valley HA housing as well as Fife Council Housing in Cardenden. HARCA are investigating the establishment of a large greenhouse development close to the heat and power plant that will use low grade heat to maintain temperature in the greenhouses. These will be rented to horticultural businesses and social enterprises to grow crops for local and wider consumption and provide employment and training for local people.

The ethos identified by the partnership demonstrates that embedding sustainability into every day operations leads to a positive knock-on effect for the local economy.

“Winning this Co-operation Award is a fantastic achievement”

Andrew McDaniel, chairman, Fife HARCA Ltd. commented: *“Winning this Co-operation Award is a fantastic achievement and highlights that Fife HARCA’s strategic vision of working in partnership with ECD Architects and Fife Council can improve our overall contribution to sustaining communities.”*

