

## **Excellent news for pioneering project**

A pioneering recycling scheme in North Wales is in line to win a national award for excellence.

The project, masterminded by the housing association, Cartrefi Conwy, is being hailed as a UK first.

Now, their partnership with the social enterprise, Crest, and contractors G Purchase has reached the finals of the Constructing Excellence in Wales Awards.

The glittering ceremony will be held in Cardiff on Friday, July 2, when the partnership will find out if they have won the Waste Minimisation category.

The project has also been nominated for the Conwy Regeneration Award in the Pride of Conwy Awards 2010.

As part of Cartrefi Conwy's £30 million housing improvement programme, nearly 4,000 kitchens and bathrooms are being salvaged instead of being dumped in a landfill site.

The team from Crest is made up of "socially excluded" people who would otherwise find it difficult to get a job.

The project is on course to create a more than 200 training and job opportunities over the next three years.

It's the first recycling partnership of its kind in the UK and it's already attracting a huge amount of interest across the country.

Andrew Bowden, the Chief Executive of Cartrefi Conwy, said: "We are absolutely thrilled to be nominated for this prestigious award.

"This is an innovative project and to receive this recognition for us and our partners is a dream ticket for Cartrefi Conwy and it's putting us on the map.

"One of the things we have learned is that tenants want peace and quiet on their estates – they don't want skips full of rubbish which can cause fly tipping or health and safety problems.

“This project enables the materials from the old kitchens and bathrooms to be taken away with as little disturbance to their properties as possible.

“As a result, the estates don’t look like a building site – it’s a win-win.”

Rod Williams, the Operations Manager at Crest, which is based in Llandudno Junction, was equally delighted.

He said: “For a social enterprise like Crest, being shortlisted is a massive pat on the back and a huge incentive for us to keep on doing what we’re doing.

“G Purchase and Andrew Bowden, the Chief Executive of Cartrefi Conwy, have given us glowing testimonials which have helped us with other contracts.

“Normally, all the waste goes straight into a skip which is parked outside on the street in these communities. They’re not pretty and they don’t create a good picture.

“Our guys from Crest strip out the waste carefully, we don’t rip it out which would make a lot of the materials unsalvageable.

“Whatever is salvageable, we will re-use through our community store – everything is reprocessed and recycled including the worktops, the carcasses, the tiles and the baths

“In a sense this is a pilot scheme and we’re hoping that all the other housing associations, across North Wales initially and then nationally, will copy us.

“We’ve shown that it works and that it is cost-effective – it’s not only good in terms of saving the earth but it’s also good for the local community.”

Jeff Bell, Group Commercial Manager for G Purchase Construction Ltd, added “This partnership with Cartrefi Conwy and Crest is unique in the British Isles.

“The recycling is superb and is way above the benchmarks anywhere else.

“With this type of work, we usually look at 60-65 per cent recycling – here we’re up at 90 per cent recycling. It’s off the scale compared to the national averages.

“It’s also very competitive and self-funding so there’s no extra money having to be thrown at the green agenda – so it ticks all the boxes.

“It’s fantastic because we can hold this up as an exemplar of excellence.”