

## **Massive housing scheme creates jobs and rescues two apprentices**

A housing association is helping to create new jobs and training opportunities so that Conwy can bounce back from the economic slump.

Cartrefi Conwy has launched a £30 million housing improvement programme to upgrade all its 3,800 properties.

As part of their agreements, the three preferred contractors have pledged to employ local labour.

One of those contractors, PH Jones, has just completed a pilot project installing new heating systems in 28 properties in Glan Conwy and Mochdre. They're now in the process of recruiting four fitters and a second Tenant Liaison Officer to work on the scheme.

The company has also offered to come to the rescue of two apprentices who had been left high and dry when they were made redundant.

According to John Madigan, the Project Manager for PH Jones, they will be doing at least 10 properties a week, installing or upgrading boilers, central heating systems and electric fires with a choice of surrounds.

Mr Madigan said: "We have advertised for two teams of fitters as part of our pledge to employ local labour.

"We spoke to Llandrillo College and they have two mature apprentices who have been made redundant by the companies they were working for.

"They had both got to the last year of their apprenticeship and we have offered to take them so they can complete their work experience to get themselves fully qualified."

The work done during the pilot project has gone down well with the tenants concerned at two of the older ones in Maes Hyfryd, Glan Conwy, were presented with bouquets of flowers by PH Jones.

Mrs Eryl Roberts, 94, said: "They have done a good job, I am very happy with what they've done. It's going to make a difference to me and I am very happy with Cartrefi Conwy."

Neighbour Mrs Gwladys Davies, 93, was equally happy and her son, Eifion Davies, added: "My mother has had a new grate and a new electric fire because that's easier for her. This is ideal. There's also a new boiler in the kitchen so the water is a lot hotter than before.

"We are very happy and everybody has been very courteous. They have done everything we have asked. You can't ask for better than that."

As part of the scheme, the programme of work will also involve, where necessary, internal refits including the installation of new bathrooms and kitchens and rewiring as well as new doors and windows.

Andrew Bowden, the Chief Executive of Cartrefi Conwy, was delighted that the pilot project had gone so well and that the reaction from tenants had been so positive.

He said: "This programme underlines our commitment to all our tenants and boosting the local economy.

"An improvement programme on this scale would not have been possible had the tenants not voted in favour of us taking over responsibility for the 3,800 properties from Conwy County Borough Council.

"It's meant that we have been able to access funding that would not otherwise have been available to invest in improving the homes of our tenants.

"Creating training opportunities has been an integral part of our strategy from the outset so that the programme also leaves a tangible and positive legacy for the county of Conwy as a whole."

**For more information about the job vacancies you should ring 0800 1114688 or email [john.madigan@phjones.co.uk](mailto:john.madigan@phjones.co.uk)**