

Summary of the project/activity

The SEACS project aims to test and experiment with new ways of engaging and raising people's awareness regarding saving energy.

Since 2008, the Conseil Général des Côtes d'Armor has made financial contributions to the construction of energy efficient buildings that meet the requirements of the Effinergie label, as a minimum, as part of the PREBAT (*Programme de Recherche et d'expérimentation sur l'Energie dans le Bâtiment - Research and Testing Programme on Energy in Buildings*) programme. In this context, nine social housing schemes have been financed. The numerous experiences associated with monitoring the new energy efficient housing have shown that these buildings are less efficient than planned.

As a consequence, Conseil Général decided to work with the tenants on how to use the building and ensure that the expected energy efficiency levels are achieved and, conversely, to assess the quality of the housing to ensure that it meets the expectations of tenants and landlords.

It was decided to conduct awareness raising campaigns in late 2012 and early 2013 and test out various approaches with tenants living in energy efficient social housing.

Lannion-Trégor Communauté, the Lannion *Centre Communal d'Action Sociale (CCAS)* [Communal Social Action Centre (CSAC)] and Côtes d'Armor Habitat (social landlord), due to their shared concerns, agreed to take action with tenants jointly, as part of the urban renewal programme in Lannion. The partners agreed to organise actions on prevention and raising awareness so as to enable the tenant/householders to better understand and manage electricity, heating and water consumption in their homes.

A tri-party agreement was also drawn up to conduct energy saving awareness campaigns in five neighbourhoods that were newly built as part of the Kerhuel regeneration project (**114 homes** managed by Côtes d'Armor Habitat). The aim of this project was to create local competition between neighbours in

relation to energy efficiency, making use of word of mouth and closeness and friendliness between neighbours. Therefore, the operation had both a social and an environmental impact.

Project objectives

- To understand how energy efficient social housing is used and obtain energy consumption data of these homes when occupied by tenants
- To support tenants in managing their energy at home
- To promote long-term changes in behaviour and use so as to reduce household energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

Methodology/approach

On the whole, the principle behind the action was the same for the different sites and followed the same schedule, with an exception for the project in Lannion:



- A friendly "launch" meeting to explain the initiative and "recruit" households interested in participating - Autumn 2012
- Individual meetings with households for an initial assessment phase, including Forum Theatre - October - November 2012

- Raising household awareness of behaviour changes - December 2012 - February 2013
- Providing small pieces of energy saving equipment (aerators, multi-socket adapters with switches, thermo-hygrometers, etc.)
- Conducting an evaluation - April 2013

The tools used

The Conseil Général used different external "providers": the *Agence Locale de l'Énergie du pays de Saint Brieuc* [Pays de Saint Brieuc Local Energy Agency] (ALE) and an association: the ABIEG.

The ALE is an association that was created by the elected representatives of the Pays de Saint Brieuc, the aim of which is to promote activities focused on energy management and the development of local renewable energy resources. To raise awareness among households, in addition to the personalised monitoring, the ALE proposed three workshops covering various issues associated with saving energy: heating, appliances and domestic hot water. The ALE used wattmeters for the personalised monitoring and monitored three housing schemes representing 26 households.

The ABIEG first raised awareness with the tenants, second inspected the boiler, and finally introduced environmentally friendly actions to the tenants.

In Lannion, the ALTER-EGO acting troupe, which specialises in interactive drama, led the group meetings using the "Forum Theatre" tool. The aim was to successfully raise awareness among a greater number of tenants. Thermo-hygrometers were handed out to the participants after the meetings. This opportunity was also taken to give out advice on analysing bills and/or using heating system timers. A group session on reading bills and programming heating systems was requested and organised for one of the neighbourhoods.

How was the project managed?

The Climate and Energy Ambassador of the Conseil Général managed the project, the ALE and the ABIEG managed actions with the tenants: organising meetings, monitoring consumption, etc.

In Lannion, the action was also managed by the Climate and Energy Ambassador, together with the relevant people from the CSAC and Côtes d'Armor Habitat.

What have we learned from this project?

Action by the Conseil Général

Of the 129 households concerned, 39% attended the first information meeting and 28% volunteered for support by either the ALE or the ABIEG, representing 35 households.

On the whole, the residents are happy with their new home but they feel overwhelmed by the technology within the property (boiler, solar panels, ventilation, etc.):

- Boilers that have not been programmed; lack of knowledge of how the boilers, thermostats and timers work.
- Energy contracts that are unsuitable to the levels of consumption. Of the 26 gas bills submitted to the ALE, 19 households (46%) needed a lower tariff for their gas contract.
- Gas consumption (heating and domestic hot water) 20 to 35% greater than expected

Action by the Lannion-Trégor Communauté

It remains difficult to get households involved, even though 24% of the households participated, which is quite a positive figure in comparison with the 10% usually seen by the social landlord when meetings are proposed. Comments about the method used have been very positive. People were happy to have the opportunity to meet their new neighbours. The forum theatre tool is suitable for when the aim is to create cohesion within a neighbourhood and encourage people to help each other. **Precise, individually tailored technical advice is also required, particularly with regard to using and programming the heating system.**

The CSAC bolstered its individual monitoring activities following the action. The social landlord wants to make raising awareness among tenants part of a thermal renovation project concerning 100 houses within the area of the Lannion-Trégor Communauté.

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