

NHMF
Best Client

A window to the future

ENSURING QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN OUR HOMES AND THE SOCIAL HEALTH OF OUR WIDER COMMUNITY



INNOVATIVE



Lower Moor Crittal Windows

Bournville Village Trust has historically been proud of providing services that are tailored to the needs of our own community. The contract that will be detailed in this submission will demonstrate how BVT has gone beyond listening and responding to our customer's needs, to supporting our customers in setting their own priorities for how BVT delivers services.

A significant part of the Bournville Village Trust estate forms part of a conservation area, providing a number of additional hurdles that have to be negotiated when providing a comprehensive maintenance service. Such hurdles include the necessity to ensure that any work to the exterior of BVT properties must be done sympathetically, utilising original materials, methods and finishes.

A small development of 8 bungalows on "Lower Moor" in Bournville were due for new windows but subject to local authority conservation regulation. Although the existing original windows were impractical metal frames, the Conservation Department insisted that the original material and design must be replicated. BVT's Asset Management team established that the original manufacturer, Crittal, was still in existence. Working closely with the residents, the manufacturer and the Conservation Dept, a sympathetic yet energy efficient specification that all stakeholders were happy with was established and the windows fitted. And what a superb result they were!

BVT regularly consults its residents through a range of consultative forums. From small scale focus groups providing anecdotal and qualitative evidence, through to the large scale quantitative exercises such as our resident census, the message from our customers was unequivocal – the desire for new double glazing was the highest priority concern bar none.

Further research into this area made clear the driver for such desire, and it wasn't exactly a surprise! – rocketing energy prices. Previous generations of BVT tenants were happy to live with the original, single glazed windows as they formed part of the unique character & popular aesthetic of BVT homes. But this was a time when energy costs were a relatively small proportion of our total income. Now that energy prices are regularly usurping 10% or more of many household incomes, the luxury of the aesthetic is a price many of our tenants cannot afford.



With individually designed properties every unit requires bespoke windows.



BVT Asset Management consults with customers at our Better Living Annual Maintenance Exhibition.



Focus Groups & Consultation exercises drive contract considerations.



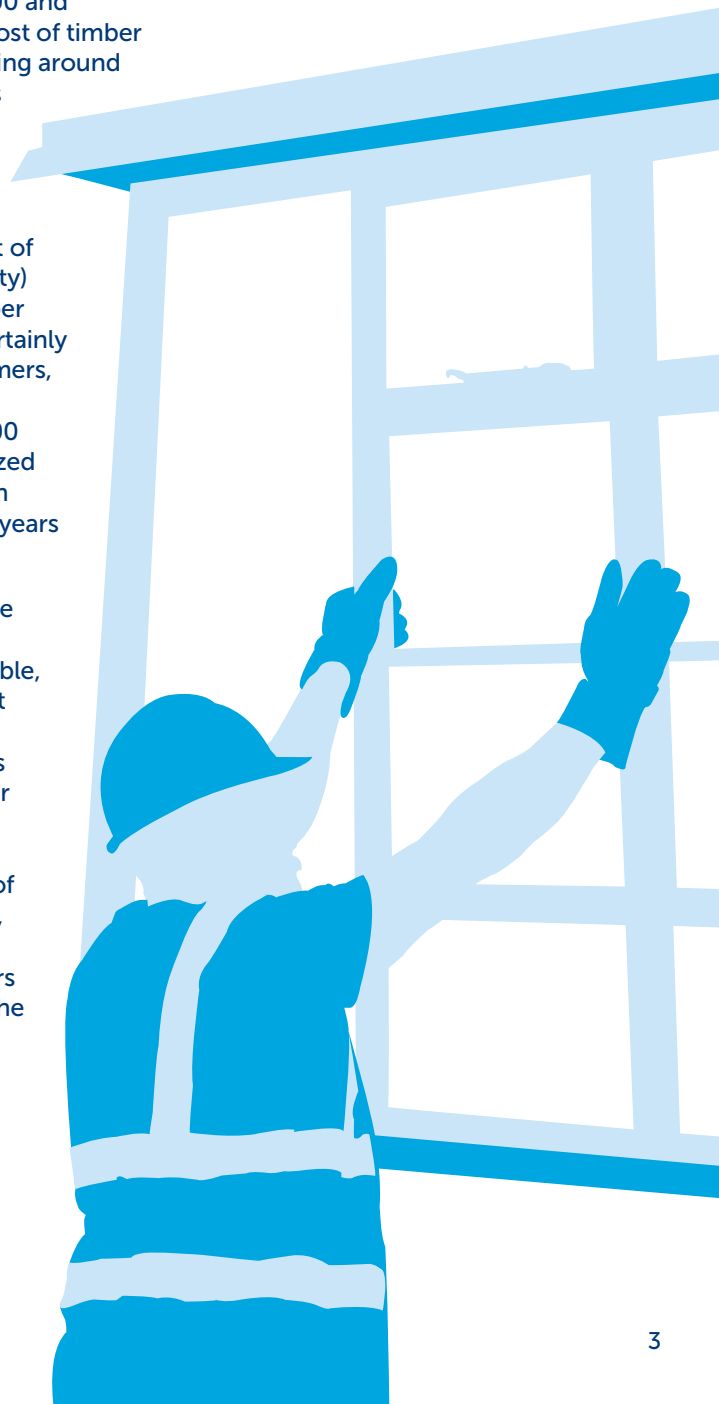
Our popular 'OpenView' event allows our residents to give BVT their thoughts in their own words on the 'comments wall!'

As sustainability has always been a fundamental founding principle of BVT, The Trust has always favoured sustainable building materials wherever possible. Timber therefore has always been the preferred material when windows were to be replaced. The economic collapse in 2007 and subsequently inflating energy prices signalled to The Trust that this ideal of maintaining single glazed windows and utilising timber when replacements are necessary may not be a sustainable approach for the future. A new strategy was required if BVT was to continue to listen and adapt to the evolving needs of our customers.

Following a variety of reports commissioned via the BRE and extensive consultation with our residents, The Trust was reassured that the environmental impact of modern plastics has largely been mitigated. This enabled Trustees to effectively repeal the "timber only" policy in relation to replacement window frames. This effectively allows UPVC double glazed windows to be fitted in areas of the Trust that fall outside of the conservation area.

The financial impact of this was immense. For example, with an annual budget of £250,000 and assuming an average of cost of timber replacement windows being around £8500, this budget allows 29 to 30 properties to be completed per year. Just by fitting UPVC windows instead of timber (at an average cost of around £3000 per property) allows 83-84 properties per year to be completed. Certainly good news for our customers, but even with this three fold acceleration, our 2000 properties with single glazed windows to be replaced in UPVC, would still take 24 years to complete!

In order to try and manage expectations and ensure satisfaction as far as possible, Maintenance Panel tenant reps who work closely with maintenance officers were asked to canvas their local areas with regard to maintenance expenditure priority. Utilising a range of communication methods, our reps engaged with individuals from all corners of our estate and across the demographic spectrum.





'The Planned Maintenance Challenge Game' allows us to test our communities opinions as to where investment should be targeted.

From twitter conversations, web based discussion forums, to open fundays and traditional committee meetings, BVT ensured that any member of our community that had a view to express on how BVT should approach window replacements was encouraged to make their feelings known.

Surprisingly, although the demand for double glazed windows was exceptional, works intended to promote safety in homes, such as gas and electrical maintenance also figured highly as investment priorities. It was clear though, that as far as improvement works are concerned, only those that already had double glazing did not score windows as number one priority.

This exercise resulted in real and significant change. Firstly, as an Asset Management Team, we were persuaded that priorities should change, so subsequently tabled a proposal to our board of Trustees to reflect this priority in budget allocations.

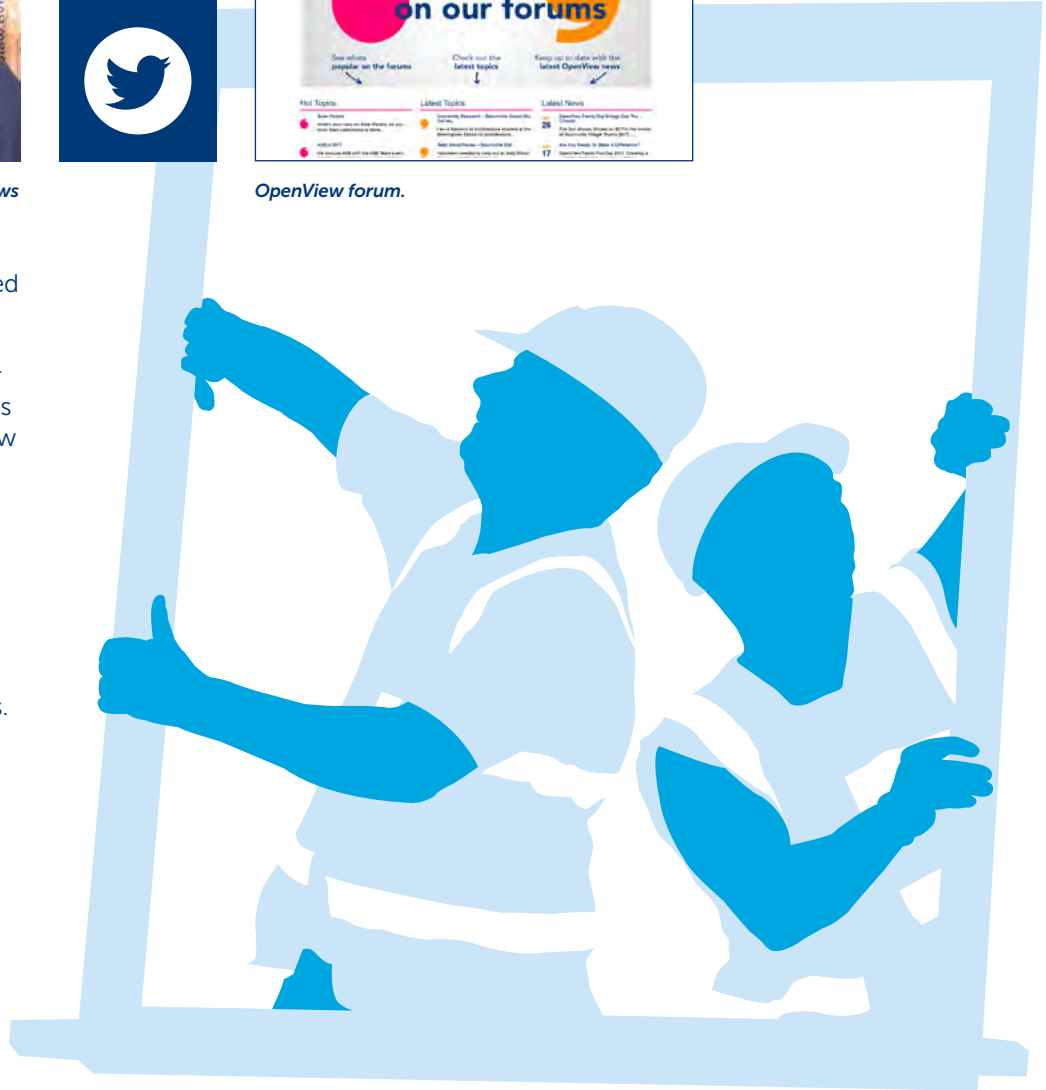
With empirical evidence to support a proposal that the overall budget should be reviewed to allow the for an accelerated window replacement program, a strong and persuasive case was made, and accepted.

This has resulted in BVT Trustees granting 9 years worth of investment at previous levels in the last 3!

It is with great pride that the BVT Asset Management team has been able to oversee such a comprehensive



OpenView forum.

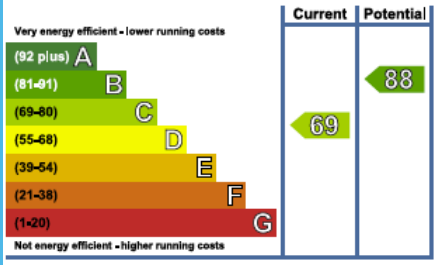


change to the way in which services in this area have been delivered that is of such benefit to our customers.

This debate is particularly interesting because it required BVT to consider the fundamental & philosophical principles of what type of organisation we are; are we primarily a provider of housing to individuals & families in housing need or are we here to conserve the heritage & unique nature of our buildings, for future generations, despite renting the properties out?

Of course the reality is both, but BVT's new Window Replacement Strategy, born out of this dilemma, makes fundamentally clear that BVT's primary concern is about ensuring the best quality of life for the people who live in our homes & the social health of our wider community.

BENEFITS



Recommended measures	Indicative cost	Typical savings per year	Rating after improvement	Green Mark Potential
Floor insulation	£800 - £1,200	£36	67	✓
Draught proofing	£90 - £120	£14	67	✓
Replace boiler with new condensing boiler	£2,200 - £3,000	£49	67	✓
Solar water heating	£4,000 - £5,000	£74	67	✓
Replace single glazed windows with low-E double glazing	£3,200 - £5,500	£56	67	✓
Solar photovoltaic panels, 2.5 kWp	£9,000 - £14,000	£219	68	✓

This approach has seen a wide range of benefits to all parties involved. Benefits to the resident are the clearest to observe. Aesthetically, their home has visibly improved from the outside as well as the inside. As our window replacement specification includes re-pointing externally where required, fitting of new sills and new combination back doors, feedback from customers has noted this range of visual improvements. In fact, the trust has received numerous comments that the BVT properties are consistently better maintained than equivalent privately owned properties! Moreover, our residents have been thrilled with the savings on their fuel bills and are extremely happy that their curtains don't move when the wind blows!

Security is another area where our residents experience tangible benefits. With all windows being "secured by design", it will be interesting to observe if reported burglary incidences reduce over time – but given that our customers have already reported to us that they feel more secure in their homes as a result of the new windows, the security benefit is already being felt.

This benefit does not stop at individual households. Ensuring our residents are comfortable & safe in their homes, coupled with empowering representative groups to have real and significant influence over how key services are delivered, has been shown to increase a real sense of belonging

within our community. Forums where our residents meet to discuss how their asset management team should operate are truly a galvanizing experience. Many strong friendships have been born out of such forums and at very least, a strong network of interconnections between households has been established, that did not exist previously.

Bournville Village Trust has benefited significantly from this approach also. Aside from the direct cashable benefits, this approach has demonstrated that our Asset Management Team considers and upholds our company mission - TO CREATE AND SUSTAIN FLOURISHING COMMUNITIES WHERE PEOPLE CHOOSE TO LIVE.



Long-standing BVT Tenant and Chair of the Maintenance Tenant Panel Paul Billingham.

Formal committee structures are supplemented with a range of less formal resident engagement opportunities.



According to "satisfaction survey" responses from customers who have had the work carried out, our window replacement strategy directly upholds this mission. Overwhelmingly positive overall (99% satisfaction on KPIs), many comments included gratitude for BVT's change of policy, enabling the windows to be replaced so many years sooner.

"Had new windows fitted which are fab!! Workmen were fast, efficient + very tidy"

"As we have a new baby in the house, the workmen were happy to start a bit later, this was much appreciated, thank you!"

"Possibly the best environment in Birmingham to live and a pleasure to be a BVT resident"

"Everyone was considerate of my age, efficient and thoughtful"

"The team that put the new windows in were a credit to BVT, they were spotlessly clean after the work was complete they did all necessary cleaning"

"BVT arranged for me to go to Christopher Taylor Court while my windows were fitted as I couldn't cope with the thought of having the workmen in."

Best practice in our sector includes strong emphasis on resident co-regulation. This window replacement strategy is excellent example of co-regulation in practice and as the client function of BVT, is a source of great pride.

The way in which the window replacement programme is now structured also benefits our contractor, as well as the client. As budgets were enhanced by two, three, and subsequently four times our standard annual budget in advance of the programme year, provided us the opportunity to tender larger contracts from the outset.

Having an enhanced contract value enabled our contractor to employ more direct operatives, (reducing the need for less reliable and less well drilled sub contractors) and invest more in infrastructure from the outset. For example, with the enhanced budgets,

the contractor was able to afford to fund a container on site to store the windows required for that week's installs. This cut down significantly on wasted time waiting for deliveries (especially if late or worse!). As a result, the contractor margin was increased, while delivering an enhanced service. Such has been the success of this strategy, the winning contractor has enjoyed extremely good press as result - another example of benefits from an intelligent client working with a committed contractor.



Although many of the key benefits of our strategy are qualitative in nature and are concerned with delivering an outstanding service to our customers, there are also significant cashable benefits.

The acceleration of the window replacement program of course required significant levels of additional funding. Rather than spreading already efficient budgets ever more thinly, the additional monies were funded entirely by capital injection. As the client function of BVT, we were not prepared to allow for a drop in specification for other investment programs to facilitate more window fitments. Instead, this capital injection was found in a range of other ways. Examples include ring fencing income from privately sold professional services (such as providing EPCs for private clients, and a range of consultancy services). The rest of the additional finance was acquired from BVT's asset disposal policy, selling individual properties that are remote from our main operation centre.

A cashable benefit that gives us most pride was achieved in 2013 and enabled us to fully double glaze our 44 bed nursing home, at effectively zero cost. Such is the committed nature of our Asset management Team, the proportion of the

£1,000,000 that would have been allocated to consultancy, was saved by members of the team taking on these additional professional duties and providing their expertise free of charge. This saving, in the region of £50,000, allowed for Sellywood House to receive all new double glazing (on site Nov 2013).

Our tenants who have received the new double glazing have enjoyed a range of cashable benefits too.

Aside from the peace of mind householders enjoy with new high spec double glazing being secured by design, contents insurance premiums are also reduced as a result. With too many households in our sector opting to prioritise spends away from home insurance, any angle in which BVT can promote contents insurance is an opportunity to be exploited. As a result, when members of our Asset Management team visit customers to ensure satisfaction at the end of the job, we always remind customers of the benefits to this saving.



BVT's 44 Bed Nursing home, before receiving new windows.

RELEVANT?

Depending on the size and type of organisation in question, there may be aspects of our approach that could be replicated and the same benefits enjoyed. For Housing Associations that own properties that are subject to full conservation restriction, patience and forward planning are essential prerequisites!

Any asset management function benefits from meaningful stakeholder involvement. Aside from the benefits already detailed, there is a public relations bonus in devolving some decisions & responsibility to those who receive the services. BVT has proven that by breaking down the ivory towers and empowering tenants to make decisions that directly impact their quality of life, the elusive "sense of belonging to a community" can be nurtured. Our regular open & fun days are essential tools in achieving this as they give opportunities for our residents to engage with each other as well as the teams who work for BVT.

Taking an innovative approach to the methods in which we communicate with our customers is also a key strategic decision. Limiting discourse to one method, (historically the committee structure) limits the demographics of those that engage

with us. Embracing social media has opened BVT up to the whole community, and allows overlap with wider corporate objectives, such as those around digital inclusion.

In relation to the components to be used in modernisations, our Better Living Maintenance exhibition is an excellent way to ensure that customers understand not only the functionality of the component, but gives the Asset Management Team the opportunity to positively sell the benefits & features. Customers who attend the exhibition and learn about the products are far more likely to receive works positively and maximise customer satisfaction as a result.





'A recent local news item'

Jervoise Joy as Hole Farm is Updated for 21st Century!

BVT's Hole Farm development has always been a popular corner of the estate. And in and around Jervoise Drive, with its excellent range of properties – from individual flats to four bedroom houses – community spirit thrives!

Even though the area is modern in design and layout, exterior elements of its homes had begun to become a little dated. So, in conjunction with residents groups, BVT's Asset Management team set about giving local homes not just an aesthetic facelift but an energy efficiency makeover that would help residents save significantly on their energy bills.

Firstly, key to improving the overall look of the area was the elimination of the flat roofs on the front of the houses with large bay windows. Providing the area with some architectural variation, its new pitched bay roofs add character. And, with no more leaky flat roofs in heavy rain, they're practical too.

Secondly, the area has benefited from a range of energy efficiency measures intended to help residents use precious fuel as sparingly

as possible. These include cavity wall insulation and loft lagging - which have dramatically reduced heat loss.

Finally, the problematic old single-glazed metal windows have now all been replaced with uPVC double-glazed units now with 'low E' glass, which reduces the amount of heat loss through the window. The durable new windows are a significant improvement and, with integral locking mechanisms, they're also 'Secured by Design'.

Bayliss Close resident, Mrs. McCarthy, said; "Quickly fitted, with no mess, our new windows have made a huge difference. Easy to open and good to look at, their energy efficiency is already saving us money!"

And our investment hasn't stopped! Watch this space to learn about our replacement flat canopies over front doors.

