

Three new framework contract agreements signed

Three new framework contract agreements have been secured by United House over the summer.

Poplar HARCA has appointed United House as its framework contractor for a programme of works stretching over the next four years. Poplar HARCA is a registered social landlord which owns and manages around 8,500 homes in East London. We have been selected to bid for over 30 projects to deliver Poplar's aim, to meet the need for good quality affordable housing for the district.

We have also been selected to tender for various future projects for vulnerable people housing provider Housing 21 across three of its regions.

Housing 21's schemes involve refurbishment and construction work for a range of retirement housing for people with mental health needs and the elderly. We were chosen due to our breadth of experience in delivering the different tenure requirements required and flexible approach.

To complete the hat trick of frameworks, we have also been invited to bid for contracts from One Housing Group. The Group currently manages over 12,000 homes across London and adjacent counties. All schemes are designed to encourage balanced and sustainable communities and include a mix of tenures including affordable rent, shared ownership, intermediate rent, private sale, supported housing and extra care housing.

The signing of these new framework agreements is very promising for the future expansion and financial success of United House going forward into 2011. It demonstrates our versatile reputation for excellence in delivering high quality refurbishment and new build social housing across a variety of different tenures.



Joseph Hadlum Court, built last year for Housing 21

United House Developments sales update

Since launching [Arundel Square](#) almost a year ago, United House Developments and Londonewcastle have sold 99 apartments out of a total of 115 units.

The award winning development is being well received by new occupiers and local residents in the surrounding areas who see it as a welcome addition to the local streetscape, and are delighted with the new park which will be open soon.



Arundel Square

With construction nearing completion at [Frobisher Crescent](#), United House is relaunching in September with local and national advertising and targeted direct marketing. Since launching off-plan 44 apartments have sold, with the remaining 25 expected to be eagerly snapped up during the autumn.

Again residents are delighted with their new homes, and the Barbican estate is pleased that life has been brought into the previously neglected Frobisher Crescent and Sculpture Court area.

Four Courts soil stack removal

Our project at Four Courts, Hastings, for client Amicus Horizon involves the refurbishment of four 17 storey tower blocks, each with 98 one and two bedroom homes, originally constructed in 1967.

The works comprise elements such as: insulated cladding to the external walls, new ventilation systems, asbestos removal, new roofs and general refurbishment.

The main challenge has been the removal of the entire above ground soil and waste system whilst residents remain in occupation. The team achieved what is believed to be an industry first by removing one old stack and completely reinstating the new one to all 17 storeys in one day.

Many discussions were held to find the best solution for carrying out such a huge task. The options available to us all had downfalls such as lots of visits needed to the properties and residents not being able to use their WC's, space restrictions, leaking existing pipework and being very labour intensive.

Following a meeting with one of our suppliers, we

discussed the option of replacing the stacks using a push-fit cast pipe. This meant there was no need for nuts and bolts and allowed the pipes to be quickly installed.

Before starting works, we erected a full-scale three storey scaffold mock-up to help finalise the solution, parts needed and the time each replacement would take. This method needed extensive planning but meant we were able to replace the entire soil stack in one day. Site Manager, John Ryan, explained "There are six stacks in each block. We have completed the first block on schedule and we are now moving onto the second. The aim is to cause as little disruption to residents as possible."



Carbon reduction programme continues

United House is committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 90% by 2012 and, in recognition of our achievements in addressing the challenges of carbon reduction, we were delighted to be awarded Platinum status in the London Green500 Awards earlier in the year.

Our Swanley head office is currently undergoing a boiler replacement programme which will further reduce our gas consumption, energy costs and CO2 emissions by 121 tonnes per annum ... as well as making staff much warmer in the coming winter months.

Being some 25 years old, the existing boilers had a poor energy rating and were operating at well below optimum efficiency levels. In addition, the pipework had not been thoroughly cleaned in that time. It was time to upgrade.

Several alternative systems were considered including Biomass, a single boiler for each block, a central plant, and air source heat pumps before the one-for-one replacement option was agreed.

The Company was able to apply for tax benefits through the Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) scheme, part of the Government's programme to manage climate change. This enables businesses to claim 100% first-year capital allowances on their spending on qualifying plant and machinery.

The programme is on schedule to complete by mid-October and has been designed to keep inconvenience and disruption to the very minimum.

As well as the boiler replacement programme, we are also installing a voltage optimisation unit in Swanley that will 'smooth out' our electrical supply from the National Grid. This not only benefits us by reduced energy consumption (and bills), it also reduces our CO2 emissions by a further 31.5 tonnes a year and prolongs the life of electrical equipment, light bulbs, etc.

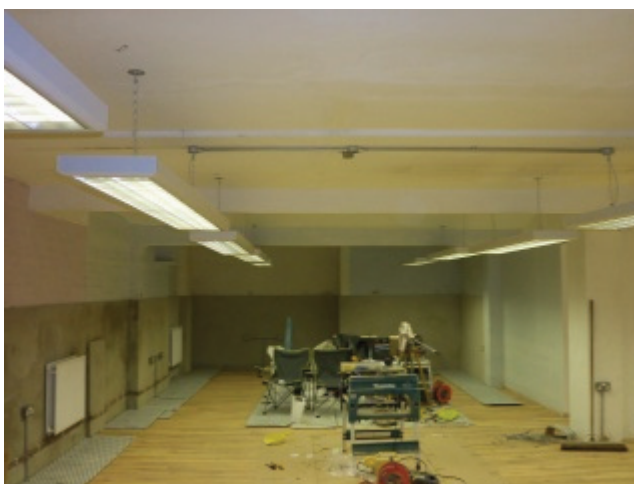
Corporate Social Responsibility: Providing help for the homeless

United House has supported London homelessness charity [Broadway](#) for a number of years and is now making a real difference to the lives of homeless people in the capital through its work with [Real Lettings](#), the housing management arm of the charity.

We have embarked on a programme of works to refurbish void properties across London for Broadway's tenants, providing labour and materials free of charge. So far this year, we have refurbished two flats and one office and we are about to start on a fourth property.

Broadway is delighted with the work we have done for them. It is critical that voids are turned round speedily to minimise timescales and make properties available to tenants as quickly as possible. What it has given Broadway is the ability to take the sums put aside for this work and reinvest it in the support element and getting new properties.

Lesley Janda, Customer Service Manager for United House and her team are managing this programme, she recently received a thank you card from one grateful tenant with the following message: "I'd like to thank you so much for the work that you have done in the flat. The place looks great and you saved me lots of work that I wasn't able to do at this time of my moving. Thanks to the whole team at United House, but especially to Gary Ball and Michael Walton."



Corporate Social Responsibility: Engaging with young people in Barking & Dagenham

Throughout August, United House has been sponsoring football coaching and street dance courses at Colne and Mersea Houses on Harts Lane Estate in Barking. The youth worker on the estate explained that because of budget cuts, the local council was unable to provide any free activities for the children during the summer holidays. After speaking to a group of children on the basketball courts and asking what they would like, the unanimous decision was playing football.

The two hour coaching sessions arranged by



United House were free and open to all young people on the estate aged 7-16 yrs. The sessions were held on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the basketball court. The street dance courses started on Thursdays in the community centre.

The football coaching was a huge success with between 25-35 young people attending each session. Although the street dance got off to a slow start, the attendance was into double figures on the last Thursday.

The coaching finished on Friday 27 August with a five-a-side tournament and a short dance display. The tournament was also supported by our partner sub-contractors, EA Electrical and

Masher Brothers, who put together a United House team to play the over 12's team. It was a very close game with the over 12's coming out on top beating the United House team 3-2!

What the papers are saying

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