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Hackbridge Green Business Network – Workshop 4 – Winning local building work

19th May 2011, facilitated by Bob Beaumont, Affinity Sutton (www.affinitysutton.com)

This is a summary from a workshop delivered by social housing provider Affinity Sutton on procurement to local housing projects to the Hackbridge Green Business Network.

Whilst it was recognised that most of the businesses in attendance were a size that would unlikely be a direct supplier to Affinity Sutton (more likely to be a second tier supplier), we discussed the process, opportunities and barriers to local businesses winning this work.

Who are Affinity Sutton?

- An affordable housing provider with more than 55,000 homes, building around 1,000 new homes per year and turning over £240 million
- Main operations are in London and the home counties
- Procurement contact at Affinity Sutton is Kirsty Bower (Kirsty.bower@affinitysutton.com)
- Current local developments close to Hackbridge include an 800 home makeover of Durand Close Estate in Carshalton and a number of 1/2 bedroom apartments in Carshalton (The Lavenders).
- Working on a low-carbon retrofit project Futurefit (<http://www.affinitysutton.com/news/article/futurefit-1.aspx>)

Useful websites and information

Large contracts: Public sector contracts worth over around £100,000 are advertised on OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union). This is published every day with approximately 14,000 invitations to tender published each year from the UK. The invitations can be found at: <http://www.tendersdirect.co.uk/?source=OJEU&lgid=OJEU>

Housing contracts: <http://www.procurementforhousing.co.uk>

Business Link's free contract finder: <http://www.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/>

Other insights from Affinity Sutton

- Unfortunately, it does come down to price – try and be as competitive as you can
- A strong environmental policy or corporate social responsibility (CSR) will stand you in good stead
- Adequate insurance cover is required for all tenders, and you need to ensure you have sufficient Public Liability Insurance policy

How the Hackbridge Green Business Network can help?

- We can help you improve your CSR or write a sustainability policy to improve your chances
- We may be able to help you with an application if you are struggling to use the website or need help 'selling yourself'.