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**PRESS RELEASE**

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## **PROCURE PLUS STRENGTHENS LOCAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP**

Cumbria Cohesion has launched the single largest insulation retrofit scheme of hard to treat and solid walled properties in Cumbria with the help from North West social housing procurement consortium, Procure Plus.

The Cumbria Cohesion Partnership, which includes Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Housing Partners, Westfield Housing, Home Group Housing, Impact Housing, and South Lakes Housing, is investing over £7m of funding during the next three years to improve efficiency, and reduce fuel bills to over 850 homes throughout the county.



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The programme, which has been part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), will include fitting external and internal wall insulation to low income households. What's more, the project aims to stimulate growth in small and medium sized enterprises in Cumbria and the North West of England.

From the outset, the partnership of housing providers was keen to engage local companies to be involved in the works. By utilising the Procure Plus merchant framework, Wolseley Group was selected to supply the materials for the scheme. By opening a new store in Workington, Cumbria, Wolseley will ensure a local workforce is employed.

Procure Plus also helped Cumbria Cohesion to select a main supplier and installer for the project. After going through a rigorous tendering process, Parex won the contract for supplying the insulated render and contractor, Seddon Construction, was selected to install the insulation solutions. To bring investment to the local community, Seddon Construction will further appoint local subcontractors and apprentices from the area.

Lesley Dixon, project manager at Cumbria Housing Partners, said: "The aim of the programme is to reduce fuel poverty and lower carbon emissions for over 800 households. In addition, we also aim to boost the local economy by creating jobs and training opportunities for organisations in the area. By creating a market for environmental solutions and an expertise in installing these solutions, the local community will benefit greatly and we hope to provide local companies with the confidence they need to invest in this type of work."

The work will commence in early October and once the solutions have been installed, The University of Cumbria will closely monitor the scheme in order to publish detailed information on the results achieved.

Matt Jarratt, operations manager at Procure Plus, said: "Cumbria Cohesion is an excellent example of a successful collaboration at its best. By combining the resources of several housing organisations in Cumbria, the local community is set to benefit greatly from the sustainability and regeneration improvements."



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Concluding Harry Drennan, procurement manager at Home Group, said: “The Cumbria Cohesion team have really gone that extra mile in order to ensure that we achieve maximum benefit to North West Cumbria. We all look forward to the delivery of the project, and the training and employment opportunities that it will create and support over the next two years.”

For more information on Procure Plus, visit [www.procure-plus.com](http://www.procure-plus.com).

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