



TAMPERE SUPPORTS ACTIONS TO MAKE ITS HERITAGE HOUSING MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT WHILE ASSISTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO GAIN THE TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED TO CARRY OUT THESE WORKS. THROUGH SHOWING THE RESIDENTS THAT THESE BUILDINGS CAN BE MADE MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT, IT CREATES EMPLOYMENT FOR THESE TRAINED YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEANS THAT OLDER RESIDENTS CAN REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES LONGER.



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MAKING HERITAGE HOUSING MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

CONTEXT

Finnish national regulation states that any large refurbishments of a house must be accompanied by making it more energy efficient. This creates difficulties for elderly people who live in Tampere's heritage housing. To continue living independently in these houses they often need to make them more accessible and easier to maintain, for example increasing the size of a bathroom or toilet. Yet, these additional energy efficiency measures are difficult to fulfil because of the shortage of skilled labour and because modern materials are not always compatible with heritage houses. It is also difficult to get information on how to make these old buildings more energy efficient whilst preserving their value.

In addition to the issue faced by the elderly, all residents of heritage housing experience high energy costs and energy inefficient buildings negatively affect the environment. Younger Tampere residents prefer to live in newer houses; yet building new homes creates more waste than refurbishing old ones.

These trends threaten the city's built heritage as it suffers from under investment and could face demolition. There are only about 150,000 buildings in the whole country built before 1920, so it is very important to preserve them for future generations.

SOLUTION

Initially, a 'Tampere Region Building Heritage' project was set up. It brought together organisations, schools, training centres, professionals and enterprises to find new ideas on how to repair the heritage buildings, whilst preserving their value. The project was managed by Ekokumppanit Oy (EcoFellows Ltd), a non-profit enterprise co-owned by the city of Tampere.

The project activities included:

- exhibitions and workshops to encourage people to maintain the heritage buildings; showing a range of solutions and raising awareness on the value of the old houses,
- running an online database on different methods for making heritage housing more energy efficient, and
- teaching people to carry out some small scale repairs by themselves, such as sealing the windows.

In order to make the project's result sustainable the 'Tampere Region Built Heritage Association' was founded, which brings together public education organisations, private enterprises and NGOs. The association acquired an old Timber Floater's house in the Pispala district, which is being renovated with the aim to create an exhibition centre of heritage housing to demonstrate renovation techniques. As an association it can provide services paid for by the city but can also apply for other sources of funding to carry out actions and initiatives. This ensures project continuity despite the limited resources of the city administration.

The association trains unemployed young people in energy efficiency improvements as part of these renovation works. They gain practical skills in repairs and making houses more energy efficient. Some use the opportunity to get their diploma, which can be done with practical work and a short report in Finland.



The idea is that these young people will be able to find employment following the training as residents of heritage houses realise that it is possible to make their homes more energy efficient. This in turn creates jobs for the people who have the specialist skills. An online forum will soon be set up to link people who have the expert skills with potential clients.

IMPACT

In 2013, 1,262 people attended various meetings and events and the online database had around 1,000 visits per month. As a result of this programme residents of the heritage houses are better informed about how to carry out repairs and are able to find skilled labourers. This empowers them to remain in their homes instead of moving to care homes. Improving their quality of life and saving on government institutional care costs.



More than 10 young people have been involved in the renovation works of the old Timber Floater's house. One young person started an enterprise, which provides consultations and repair works for heritage housing. More women than men studied these repair methods for the heritage housing in this programme. The project helps preserve the old heritage housing of the city for future generations and the repairs do not affect the environment as much as building new houses. Making the buildings more energy efficient is positive for the environment and decreases people's energy bills.



FUNDING

The 'Tampere Region Building Heritage' project was funded by ERDF and the Finnish government (69,3%), the city of Tampere (27,7%), and Ekokumppanit Oy (EcoFellows Ltd.) (3%).

The association gets funding from a range of sources and its revenues fluctuate. In addition to the services paid for by the city, the association gets funding from various grants, membership fees, ticketed events and the sale of booklets and cards. The Finnish National Board of Antiquities provided €30,000 towards the renovation of the old Timber Floater's house.