



The Benefits of CLAW

1. Extract from the CLAW Business Strategy

Benefits of Membership

CLAW aims to strengthen the bond and common goals for its members. Member authorities have identified the following as key benefits gained through membership which will be consolidated and developed-

- Savings in staff time leading to a value for money approach to the provision of property services.
- Access to CLAW good practice guidance documents and information covering a wide range of professional and site related topics.
- Research and development studies centrally undertaken to avoid duplication of effort by local authorities.
- Seminars by property experts arranged to cover changing legislation in the property field.
- Development of technical specifications and standards, regularly reviewed and updated and available to all members.
- Access to shared information on benchmarking and performance indicators for professional services and costs.
- A central focus for the exchange of ideas and initiatives between property professionals in Wales.
- Unified liaison with and formal representation to Central and Local Government and key stakeholders.
- Exhibitions, conferences and training on property matters, components and legislation.
- Pro-active support for Continuing Professional Development.
- Principality wide communication and circulation.
- Promotion of opportunities for greater collaboration between public sector organisations.
- Cost saving benefits from discounted membership of external support organisations, such as IPF/CPAS and Energy Information Centre.
- Opportunities for joint procurement initiatives for framework agreements with consultants and contractors.

2. A summary of further benefits and what CLAW has been undertaking during the year 2010.

Collaboration – this appears to be the “in” word everywhere these days. In view of budget restrictions, and the forecasted major reductions in the public sector, it is appreciated that there is a need for local authorities to examine more carefully how to prioritise and spend their reduced budgets. Collaboration, innovation and working together become even more important and the benefits and savings in time and costs that local authorities gain from being a member of the Consortium of Local Authorities in Wales in working together, promoting and supporting joint working between member authorities, and promoting excellence and best practice in the management of property assets and delivery of projects will therefore become even more important. Since its formation nearly fifty years ago, CLAW has worked to promote best practice in Local Authority Property Management, to the benefit of its constituent member authorities.

One of the main initiatives introduced by the Welsh Assembly Government recently in collaboration with the Welsh Local Government Association is the 21st Century Schools Programme, which is a long-term major investment Programme for maintained schools. The aim of the Programme is to deliver world-class school environments for all young people in Wales, ensuring the school environment is adaptable, sustainable, inclusive and a resource the whole community can use. School buildings should be places that inspire both learners and teachers, accommodate 21st Century technology and be adaptable to meet the changing needs of learners.

CLAW has been asked to investigate and report upon a number of items for 21st Century Schools. The work that will be undertaken is set out below, including the relevant CLAW lead authority:-

- Sprinkler Systems – Ceredigion - Investigate to what degree sprinkler systems will be required to be designed into new / refurbished school buildings.
- Whole Life Costing – Monmouthshire - To advise the Design process by choosing on a whole life basis – choosing the right materials, taking into account Capital costs and Revenue costs.

At the CLAW Spring Meeting of Elected Members held at Llanelli on 7 May 2010, the 21st Century Schools Programme Director – Martin Lipson, and Programme Manager – Jason Pritchard gave presentations on the Background, Strategic Approach, Aims, Governance, Transitional Funding and Timescale of the Programme.

The Low Carbon Refurbishment Guide was developed jointly by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Wales, Carbon Trust Wales and CLAW. The Guide was developed to assist all Welsh Local Authorities to embed energy efficiency improvements and carbon reduction in our building works programmes. The Official Launch of the Guide took place at the CLAW Elected Members Spring Meeting on 7 May 2010.

CLAW continues to work closely with Constructing Excellence in Wales (CEW) and Milica Kitson, Chief Executive of CEW regularly attends CLAW meetings. At past meetings of CLAW Elected Members, presentations have been given by Constructing Excellence on very important and topical construction issues such as Construction and Demolition Waste Programme - PAS 402 and the Green Compass Scheme.

CLAW also continues to work closely with Value Wales and Nick Sullivan of Value Wales regularly attends CLAW meetings. Jane Wade of the Vale of Glamorgan County Council has represented CLAW at the Value Wales Barriers Project Board Meetings during the last year. The purpose is to remove "Barriers" in the public sector procurement process. A document has been prepared containing the questions that will be used for the Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQuID) and the guidance that will be available to buyers on the selection and use of the questions. The document includes a catalogue of standard Pre Qualification Questionnaire questions and provides guidance to public-sector buyers on how to select and tailor the qualification and evaluation questions for a pre-qualification questionnaire.

A Joint SCALA / SCEME / CLAW Study Day entitled "Are we ready for the challenge of a new decade" was held on 10 and 11 June 2010. On the 10th June delegates visited Powys County Council's Canolfan Hyddgen, in Machynlleth, a post-16 training and education centre which was the first public sector building in the UK to be certified by the Passivhaus Institute. Afterwards, delegates visited the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), Machynlleth to attend the closing stages of the official opening of the new Wales Institute for Sustainable Education (WISE) centre, On Friday 11th June the Study Day was held at the WISE Conference Centre, Machynlleth with an opening Keynote Address by Jane Davidson A.M., Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing at the Welsh Assembly Government. The morning continued with a series of presentations, followed, after lunch, by break-out workshops, which delegates could elect to attend from a choice of subjects and speakers.

CLAW member authorities are offered two free places to attend training events arranged through IPF Property – Strategic Asset Management Planning (AMP) Network. The cost of attending these Training events for each authority would be 3 x 2 x £250 = £1500.

CLAW has continued to work with the Local Government Data Unit (LGDU) Wales in relation to the Welsh Assembly Government's new Core Set Asset Management Performance Indicators and CLAW's own benchmarking indicators. An informative overview of the returns for 2008 / 09 was given to the Board of Nominated Officers by the LGDU on 26 February of this year. The statutory indicators, including the benchmarking data are available on the CLAW website. The information is also available on the LGDU website which can be accessed via a link from the CLAW website. Completed Benchmarking Questionnaires for 2009/10 have been returned to the LGDU and the results will be announced in the near future.

In order to ensure that the CLAW Design and Maintenance Mechanical and Electrical Specifications are kept up to date for member authorities, Regular Reviews of all Specifications are undertaken and the updated Mechanical and Electrical Specification Modules are then uploaded to the CLAW website. Examples of updated Modules include Alarm Monitoring, CCTV Maintenance, Intruder Alarm Maintenance, Chimney Inspections, Maintenance Goods and Passenger Lift Maintenance Servicing, Stair Lifts, Luminaire & Lamp Maintenance, Legionella & Water Hygiene, Water Saving Controls Maintenance, and General Ventilation Systems Maintenance.

The CLAW Working Groups have also been busy during the last twelve months. Various technical and topical presentations have been given at the CLAW Group Meetings during the past year including:-

- Asset Management Group – An AMP for All Seasons, and AMPLification and IFRS Implications.
- Energy Group – Micro Wind Turbines, Lighting Technology, and Renewable Technology.
- Mechanical and Electrical Group – Geothermal Systems, Legionella Control, and Fire Risk Assessments.
- Design Group – Collaboration, and Low Carbon Design Guide.
- Building Maintenance Group – Safety of Glazing, and Legal Responsibilities for Legionella Duty Holders and Managers.
- Estates and Land Management Group - Town Centre Development, and Research into Housing Valuation methodology.

During the Spring Meeting and Annual General Meeting of Elected Members, we visit various projects / buildings constructed by the host authority. These visits provide an excellent opportunity to learn from good practice of other authorities for example, the visit to the Quays Offices, Baglan Energy Park and the Discovery Centre, Margam Park at Neath Port Talbot in November 2009 were the winners of the CLAW Building of the Year Award 2008 and 2009 respectively, the visit to Ysgol y Graig, Llangefnï at Anglesey in May 2009 was the winner of the CLAW Sustainability Award 2009 and the visit to the Canolfan Rheidol Offices – Carbon Neutral Energy Centre (Biomass Unit), Aberystwyth was the winner of the CLAW Sustainability Award 2010.

Attendance at CLAW Meetings also offer excellent value Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Officers.

The cost of CLAW membership is £1,500 per annum per authority.

From the above it can be seen that CLAW provides numerous benefits and that membership is excellent value for money.

KM
12 November 2010