



WARM HOME UPGRADES

Planned Investment Works

Hello...

We're pleased to let you know that your home has been selected for decarbonisation upgrades as part of our Planned Investment scheme. As the UK's leading Social Enterprise, we're committed to supporting our Customers and Communities to thrive.

Through this major investment programme, we're upgrading thousands of homes across the UK to help reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency. These enhancements are designed to make your home more comfortable and affordable to run, helping you save on energy costs while supporting a greener future.

This leaflet contains helpful information about what decarbonisation is, how it can improve your quality of life, and what to expect from the process. If you have any questions or want to discuss anything further, please reach out to your dedicated team member or speak with the on-site team. We're here to ensure this process is as smooth and straightforward as possible.

WHAT IS DECARBONISATION?

Decarbonisation is the process of reducing greenhouse gas emissions put into the atmosphere. 20% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions come from residential buildings, and these can usually be reduced by improving the insulation or the heating system in the home.

The process of upgrading a property to decarbonise is often referred to as 'Retrofit', which simply means installing new energy efficiency measures onto an existing property.

Common energy efficiency measures include:

- Loft insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- External or internal wall insulation
- Double or triple glazing windows
- Air source heat pumps
- Solar photovoltaic panels
- Low energy lighting



Fitting external wall insulation.



WHY IS DECARBONISATION IMPORTANT?

There are multiple reasons why decarbonisation is important. Firstly, it helps to slow the effects of climate change and contribute towards a Net-Zero future. Secondly, Government legislation dictates that all socially rented homes need to achieve an EPC rating of C or above by 2030. This ambition is shared by Places for People, and extended to a Net-Zero goal by 2050. Thirdly, and most importantly, retrofit aims to improve the thermal efficiency of your home, which reduces your energy and fuel consumption as well as the risk of damp and mould occurring.

WHAT IS USUALLY INVOLVED?

All decarbonisation work must meet **PAS2035 standards**, which set out the steps needed to ensure high-quality results for home upgrades.



The typical retrofit process includes:

SURVEY

1

- An appointed Retrofit Assessor will undertake an in-depth survey of your home, measuring and photographing all rooms, windows, heating systems, and existing insulation. This survey can last up to 2 hours and will confirm the existing EPC rating of the property. Results will be sent to a Retrofit Coordinator who will assess what energy efficiency improvements are suitable for your home. A Retrofit Designer will then create a specification for the works.
- A new asbestos survey and sampling will be required before any work starts. Even if a recent asbestos survey has taken place, it is likely a new one will need to be carried out specifically for the retrofit works.
- A pre-installation building inspection will be carried out by the contractor who is due to install the proposed energy efficient measures. This is to confirm the technical viability of any planned works and confirm any work that may be required beforehand.



INSTALLATION

2

- The length of the work depends on the type of upgrades being installed, ranging from a few days to several weeks. Complex upgrades, like external wall insulation, can take longer and may be more disruptive. However, many improvements, such as installing solar panels or loft insulation, usually take only a few days.
- With any measure installed there will likely be associated works required. This could be an upgrade of the ventilation system if adding

insulation, an upgrade of the electrical system if installing solar panels, or an upgrade of the hot water cylinder if changing the central heating system.

Benefits of a retrofit home

- Reduced energy consumption
- Homes are warmer in winter and cooler in summer
- Reduced risk of damp and mould
- Improved indoor air quality



EVALUATION

3

- Once any measures are installed, the contractor will provide instructions on how to operate and care for the new installation. Maintenance will continue to be the responsibility of Places for People. However, you may need to be aware of general care, such as not storing belongings on top of loft insulation.
- A Retrofit Coordinator will carry out a post-work EPC survey and some specialist testing to ensure all improvements we have done are working efficiently.
- Within three months of your installation being completed, a Retrofit Evaluator will send you a survey to check if the upgrades have made the improvements we aimed for. If any issues come up, we'll make sure they're looked into further — this may include a site visit or ongoing monitoring to address your concerns.



WHY IS VENTILATION IMPORTANT?

When insulation or more efficient windows are added to your home, it becomes more airtight. This happens because any cracks, gaps, or spaces around windows that allowed air to flow are sealed up, which is great for keeping the heat in and reducing draughts. However, it also means that air can get trapped inside.

Everyday activities like bathing, cooking, and even breathing produce moisture in the form of water vapour. To keep your home comfortable and healthy, it's important to maintain good airflow, allowing moist air to escape and fresh air to enter. That's why we design a solid ventilation plan as part of the retrofit process.

Improving ventilation might involve installing a new system that extracts moist air from kitchens and bathrooms while bringing fresh air into bedrooms and living spaces. More often, though, it's about small adjustments to enhance your existing system. These could include adding trickle vents to windows or trimming the bottom of internal doors to allow for a 1cm gap, helping fresh air circulate throughout your home.

Jargon buster

A guide to some of the most common terms used during the upgrade of homes.

– **PAS 2035**

A publicly available specification that is designed to reduce the risk of unintended consequences, such as damp and mould, occurring from sub-standard retrofit.

– **PAS 2030**

A publicly available specification that details the technical qualification and competence of any contractor installing retrofit measures.

– **WH:SHF**

Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund. A source of funding made available by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero.

– **Energy efficiency**

How much energy is required to power a property.

– **Thermal efficiency**

How well a property retains heat.

– **Envelope**

The walls, roof, and floor that separate heated rooms from the outside environment.

– **Fabric**

The materials that make up the envelope, such as bricks, timber and insulation.

– **Greenhouses gases / carbon**

Greenhouse gases are gases in the Earth's atmosphere that trap heat from the sun, causing the planet to warm. The term 'Carbon' is interchangeably used with other greenhouse gases as it is the most common emission. Other greenhouse gases include methane and nitrous oxide to name a few. Greenhouse gases can be removed from the atmosphere through trees or man-made technology.

– **Measure**

An individual installation, such as loft insulation or a set of windows.

– **SAP**

Standard Assessment Procedure. This is the methodology used by energy assessors to create the EPC rating of a property.

– **EPC**

Energy Performance Certificate. This is the A-G score given to a property to rate its energy and thermal efficiency.

– **Net-zero**

Net-zero is the point at which the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced is equal to the amount removed from the atmosphere.

