

HomeWorks

Domestic Energy Efficiency

Information pack for homeowners



What is energy efficiency retrofit and why should I care?

The fight to protect our planet by reducing the impact of climate change is one of the most important issues of our time.

In recent months, the UK Government has committed to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. This is a challenge that needs all of us to play our part.

Housing represents 27% of the UK's carbon emissions. Achieving net zero will not be possible unless we make significant efforts to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings we live in.

However, undertaking measures to improve the energy efficiency of our homes – or energy efficiency retrofit – produces a range of benefits that go far beyond the environmental impacts. These include:

Lower energy bills

Energy efficiency retrofit can significantly reduce the amount of energy you use to stay comfortable in your home. Depending on your home and the measures that you undertake, this could reduce your energy bills by hundreds of pounds every year.

Correctly designed and installed retrofit measures will make your home more comfortable in the winter and in the summer. This will make your home a more enjoyable place to be throughout the year.

Potentially higher rental or resale value for the property

A home with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of A (the highest rating) sells for, on average, 14% more than a similar home with a G rating (the lowest rating)¹. Landlords could also command higher rents if bills are likely to be lower, helping to offset the costs of undertaking measures.

A more comfortable living environment

Reduced carbon emissions

Reduced maintenance

Making our homes warmer, reducing draughts and improving the indoor air quality has a proven positive impact on physical and mental health, reducing the risks posed by cold, damp and mould, and the stress of large energy bills.

Properties in EPC bands E, F and G require, on average, 48% more damp and mould related repairs than A – D properties².

As the UK moves towards net zero, the government may need to consider measures to incentivise energy efficiency retrofits, such as raising the minimum EPC standard required for a sale. Whilst this is only speculative at this stage, undertaking work when it is most convenient will avoid the need to undertake potentially more expensive and disruptive work in the future. Often, that means factoring in energy efficiency measures to work you are already doing or considering for your property.

A healthier living environment

'Future proofing' homes so that they are in line with more stringent energy performance requirements

What sort of measures count as energy efficiency retrofits?

Common energy efficiency retrofit works include:

- Solid wall insulation – internal or external
- Cavity wall insulation
- Loft insulation
- Flat roof insulation
- Room in roof insulation (all elements)
- Floor insulation (solid or suspended)
- Hot water cylinder insulation
- Primary pipework insulation
- Draught-proofing/ airtightness measures
- New or replacement windows
- New or replacement external doors
- Boiler replacement or upgrade
- Upgraded replacement central heating system
- Biomass boiler
- Micro combined heat and power (CHP)
- Air source or ground source heat pump
- District/communal heating connection
- Heating and hot water controls
- Radiator reflector panels
- Ventilation and heat recovery systems
- Solar PV panels
- Micro wind generation
- Battery storage
- Solar water heating
- Energy efficient lighting (LED)
- Energy efficient appliances
- Park home insulation

How can I be confident that work will be carried out properly?

In order to ensure that appropriate retrofit measures are delivered in the correct order and to the highest standard possible, the government has introduced a new role into the retrofit process – the Retrofit Coordinator. The Retrofit Coordinator is a qualified retrofit professional who has oversight of retrofit works taking place in a property, is able to advise on the best order for works to progress and provides quality assurance on the whole process.

Retrofit Coordinators are also TrustMark registered, ensuring that they provide a government endorsed quality service and will only ever recommend TrustMark registered tradespeople to install the measures to your property.

The HomeWorks team will be able to put you in touch with a local Retrofit Coordinator – please contact us to find out more on hello@homeworksretrofit.com.

How much does it cost, and how much will I save?

The cost and resultant benefits of any retrofit works, including energy savings, depends entirely upon the level of ambition and available budget.

A Retrofit Coordinator will be able to provide you with a detailed 'Whole House Plan' for your property, including an estimate of costs, and websites such as Energy Saving Trust will allow you to obtain general information about the costs and savings associated with different measures.

Are there any financing options available?

Lower income households and/or those in receipt of benefits may be eligible to have some works paid in part via the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). To find out more about that visit: <https://www.which.co.uk/reviews/home-grants/article/home-grants/energy-company-obligation-eco>

In some other circumstances, those who do not qualify for ECO may be able to access grants or preferential loans to help to pay for the cost of measures. The Simple Energy Advice website contains more information on this: <https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/grants>

What is HomeWorks?

HomeWorks

HomeWorks is a government-backed initiative to help you, the homeowner, to understand more about the benefits of undertaking energy efficiency improvements to your property.

Launching in Cornwall, HomeWorks provides local tradespeople with information, skills and incentives to become Low Carbon Ambassadors. This means they are able to give an overview of the retrofit measures that might be appropriate for your home.

In addition, HomeWorks provides further information and advice to homeowners, to help you understand the options available to you and the next steps in the process. In practice, this means giving you free advice about energy efficiency retrofit and putting you in touch with a TrustMark registered Retrofit Coordinator. The Retrofit Coordinator will then discuss some of the appropriate retrofit measures for your home and the cost of providing you a Medium Term Retrofit Plan. This will include an energy assessment and will provide you with detailed information on the best measures for your home, the optimal order in which to do them, how much it is likely to cost, and the local people who are qualified to undertake the work.

The idea behind HomeWorks is to encourage conversations about undertaking energy efficiency measures at the optimal time; when work is already taking place or being considered in your home, since this is when the cost and disruption of additional measures will be minimised.

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Where can I find out more?

The following resources will provide you with additional information, which may be useful:

- www.homeworksretrofit.com
- energysavingtrust.org.uk
- www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk
- www.cep.org.uk
- www.trustmark.org.uk

What happens next?

If you are getting work done on your home, and want to learn about how you could benefit from undertaking energy efficiency measures, please get in touch with us at HomeWorks. We can help to answer many of your queries, and can connect you with a TrustMark registered Retrofit Coordinator who will be able to put in place a 'Whole House Plan' for your property (for more information on the Retrofit Coordinator see page 5).

Please email us on hello@homeworksretrofit.com with your name and contact number, and someone will be in touch.

We hope to help you take the next steps towards a greener, warmer, healthier home.



References

- 1 Department of Energy & Climate Change, 2013. An investigation of the effect of EPC ratings on house prices.
- 2 Sustainable Homes, 2016. Touching the Voids- The impact of energy efficiency on social landlord income and business plans.

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