

COUNCIL HOME IMPROVEMENTS CUT RESIDENTS' FUEL BILLS AND CARBON EMISSIONS



Rotherham Council has made homes at The Lanes cheaper to heat - and reduced carbon emissions - by fitting new triple glazing and external doors, improving insulation, and replacing old boilers.

It is estimated that these improvements will, on average per household, cut fuel bills by of £323 per year (a saving of more than 30 per cent) and eliminate approximately 1.5 tonnes of CO2 emissions annually.

Properties at The Lanes, East Dene have become progressively more difficult and expensive to heat since they were built in the 1950s and 60s. They were built without roof insulation, making them incompatible with today's fuel prices, energy efficiency requirements or standards of comfort.

The programme of work – which was completed in just six months by the Council's partner EQUANS, part of the ENGIE Group – retro-fitted more than 215 homes with triple-glazing and insulated external doors as well as re-sealing and insulating all flat roofs; pitched roof and cavity wall insulation was topped up where necessary. In the 48 homes that still had old central heating boilers, AA-rated, energy-efficient boilers with flue-heat recovery systems were also installed.

Before these improvements almost all of The Lanes' homes had an energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of D or below, with 98 homes being in band E or F. With this work completed, of the 175 homes reassessed to date, 73 per cent now have an EPC rating of band B or C.

Pam Walker, who has lived in The Lanes for more than 10 years, said: "I can already tell that it's a lot warmer in here. My sitting room and bedrooms used to be freezing. I needed to have the electric fire and the central heating on to get warm. Now I only need a little bit of central heating for part of the day and the rooms heat up fast – and they stay warm."

The improvements were made possible by a £4.2 million investment – including £1.14 million that the Council secured from the Government's Green Homes scheme.

Rotherham Council's Cabinet Member for Housing, Cllr Amy Brookes, said: "I'm glad we have been able to make this investment in The Lanes for its residents - the

improvements will have a real impact in making their homes more comfortable and cutting heating bills. Given the recent increase in energy prices, this will be even more vital this coming winter.

“It’s good news in terms of meeting our borough’s environmental targets as heating homes is one of the biggest sources to domestic carbon emissions.

“The Council has recently applied to the Government’s Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund in a bid to improve the energy performance of more council homes. We recognise that making all Council properties energy efficient is a huge task and we hope the Government will support this work by releasing further funds without delay.”

Sean Corcoran, Regional Director at EQUANS, said: “With energy costs rising, it’s more important than ever that the public and private sectors come together to make the UK’s homes warmer and more energy efficient.

“Using EQUANS experience to support Rotherham Council’s zero-carbon ambitions has been great.

"Our site team worked incredibly hard to ensure the project was completed in time for the Government funding deadline, so we’re delighted to get such great feedback from residents."

As part of its commitment to giving back to the communities in which it works, EQUANS also installed a boiler in The Lanes Community Centre, with staff also carrying out redecorating work to the building.

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