Warmer, healthier homes

Resident information booklet – Improving energy efficiency in your home



Housing Our Greenwich

ROYAL borough of GREENWICH

Contents

1. Our promise to you 4
2. What is retrofit? 5
3. What works will we do? 6
4. Your Resident Liaison Officers 10
5. Health and safety 12
6. Before the works 14
7. During the works 16
8. After the works 18
9. Who to contact 18
10. Your feedback 19
11. Frequently Asked Questions 20
12. Your responsibilities 21
13. Code of Conduct 22
14. Equality and diversity 23



1. Our promise to you

We will work with you and your household in a way that suits you, taking the time to understand your routines and preferences so the process is as smooth as possible.

Your Royal Borough of Greenwich Resident Liaison Officer (RBG RLO) will support you throughout the whole journey, and the Contractor RLO will keep you updated on day-to-day activity and appointments.

We will...

- Keep in touch at every stage and let you know of any changes as soon as we can.
- Provide additional help if you need any extra support during the works.
- Respond and resolve any issues you may have as quickly as possible.
- Respect your home, your privacy and treat information given to us in confidence.

This booklet explains the type of work that may take place in your individual flat and the wider building, and the service you can expect from the Royal Borough of Greenwich and our appointed contractors, who will be carrying out these energy-efficiency improvements.

If you have any questions or would like to raise any concerns, please contact:

Name:

Role:

Contact details:

2. What is retrofit?

Retrofitting is the process of making improvements to existing homes which can reduce energy bills and carbon emissions. These changes can have the benefit of making your home more comfortable.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich has successfully secured government funding to carry out improvements to homes to make them more energy efficient. The Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (WH: SHF) Wave 3 is part of the government's wider strategy to achieve its zero carbon goals by 2050. The great news is that these works will be arranged and carried out by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and our trusted contractors at no cost to you.



Why is it important and what are the benefits to me?

Reduction in bills

By improving your home's insulation and energy efficiency, less heat is lost through the walls, roof and windows. This means your home stays warmer for longer, helping to lower your heating costs and depending on your usage, a reduction in energy bills over time.

Reduced damp and mould

Improved ventilation and insulation reduce condensation, which helps prevent damp and mould from forming. This makes your home a healthier environment and can improve indoor air quality.

Reduced energy consumption

With better insulation, windows and ventilation, your home will use less energy to stay warm. This lowers your carbon footprint and helps the environment by cutting greenhouse gas emissions.



3. What works will we do to your home?

We will let you know what work your home will get after we complete a survey. We may do all, or some of the following measures of work to your flat or the wider building:

New windows and/or doors

What this involves	Replacing existing windows and doors to new, energy-efficient ones that reduce draughts and improve warmth.
Why do this?	Reduces heat loss, improves comfort in your home and should lower energy bills.
What this means for you?	We will need to access the inside and outside of your home. There may be some noise and dust while works take place.
What do I have to do?	Allow access to the inside of your home.

Cavity wall insulation

What this involves	Insulation material is injected into the gap between your external and internal walls. There are no visible changes to your building's appearance.
Why do this?	To keep your home warmer for longer and reduce heating costs.
What this means for you?	Access to external walls only. Drilling and filling from the outside, minimal disturbance indoors.
What do I have to do?	Typically you do not need to do anything. Access to the outside of your building will be arranged with your building management team. We will contact you if we need access to your home.

External wall insulation

What this involves	Insulation is fixed to the outside of your walls and covered with a protective finish.
Why do this?	To keep your home warmer for longer and reduce heating costs.
What this means for you?	Work takes place outside. Scaffolding may be required.
What do I have to do?	Typically you do not need to do anything. Access to the outside of your building will be arranged with your building management team. We will contact you if we need access to your home.



Loft or roof insulation

What this involves	Adding or topping up insulation in your loft or roof space.
Why do this?	To reduce heat escaping through the roof and reduce heating costs.
What this means for you?	If the roof space in your block is only accessible through a hatch inside a top floor flat, contractors might need to enter those homes so they can install the insulation. This depends on type of insulation being installed. If the building has a separate communal access point, or you do not live in a top-floor flat, then no one will need to come into your flat at all. There may be some noise while the works are carried out.
What do I have to do?	If you are in a top-floor flat with a hatch, you might have to allow access to your flat. Otherwise, you do not need to do anything.

Ventilation

Good ventilation helps fresh air circulate around your home and removes polluted air. This helps prevent damp and condensation, creating a healthier, warmer home.

Window trickle vents

What this involves	Installation of trickle vents - small built-in openings at the top of the frame that allow a small, controlled amount of fresh air into the home - to improve overall airflow in your home.
Why do this?	Improves overall air flow in your home. The trickle vents are key in reducing damp and mould and will help with ventilation, reduce condensation and support good indoor air quality.
What this means for you?	Access to the inside of your home.
What do I have to do?	Allow access to your home and keep vents open continuously after the work is completed.

Electrical fans and vents

What this involves	Installation of vents
Why do this?	To reduce the risk of damp, mould and condensation and improve air quality.
What this means for you?	Access to the inside of your home.
What do I have to do?	Allow access to your home and ensure fans are left on continuously after the work is completed.

Door undercuts

What this involves	Creating a small gap at the bottom of internal doors to improve airflow between rooms.
Why do this?	If your doors sit flat against the floor, air cannot circulate between rooms meaning some spaces can suffer the effects of damp and mould. Door undercuts allow free movement and healthy air flow.
What this means for you?	Access to the inside of your home. Please note that door undercuts can be disruptive, but we will do what we can to keep this to a minimum
What do I have to do?	Allow access to your home and ensure that nothing is blocking the doors so air can circulate freely after the work is completed.

Communal heating

What this involves	Communal heating is a centralised heating system that provides heating and hot water to multiple properties. Instead of having a boiler inside your flat, heat is generated at a central location and distributed throughout the building through a network of insulated pipes carrying hot water.
Why do this?	• Communal heating systems are often more energy-efficient and can help reduce environmental impact • Maintenance and repairs will be managed centrally. This means faults can usually be dealt with without disrupting you, and you will not need to arrange your own repairs. • Communal heating systems are often more reliable, reducing the risk of breakdowns and less time waiting for repairs. • Fair and transparent billing. You'll only pay for the heat you use, rather than sharing the cost of everyone's consumption. • By reducing gas combustion in the area, we're improving air quality around your block.
What this means for you?	Inside your flat, the heating system will be upgraded with new radiators and pipework. A new unit called a Heat Interface Unit (HIU) will also be installed. This unit separates your flat from the rest of the system to keep it working reliably and allows us to accurately measure your individual heating use. You can still control when your heating is on or off and your flat's internal temperature.
What do I have to do?	Allow access to your home. During the work, there may be short-term disruption including heating and hot water may be turned off for parts of the day.

Improvements you are to receive are confirmed below

- New windows and/or door(s)
- Cavity wall insulation
- External wall insulation
- Loft or roof insulation
- Ventilation measures
- Window trickle vents
- Electrical fans and vents
- Door undercuts
- Communal heating system upgrade

These are all tried-and-tested technologies which will help to make your home more energy-efficient, with the aim of lowering fuel bills.

Once we decide what measures have been identified for your home, all elements must be completed.. Each home is individually designed to achieve the best possible thermal performance. Each of the measures will be explained in more detail on the enclosed inserts and will give you useful and practical information about how the work will be carried out as well as advice on the things that you need to do to help us complete our work.

The estimated timescale for each of these improvements will be explained at a later date by our contractors.

4. Your Resident Liaison Officers (RLOs)

A Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) is a person responsible for ensuring you receive first-class customer service throughout the works.



They will:

- Be your point of contact before, during and after the work is finished.
- Explain what work is to be carried out in your home and how it will affect you and your family.
- Depending on the work to be carried out, go through any colour choices that are available for you to choose from.
- Provide safety advice to ensure you, your family and any pets are safe while work is being carried out in your home.
- Ensure that you, your family and your home are treated with respect while the work is being carried out.
- Advise what you must do to make sure as little disruption as possible is caused to you and your home.
- Respond quickly and efficiently to any questions, concerns, or problems you may have before, during and after the work.



Who to contact

You will have two Resident Liaison Officers (RLO):

1. **Council RLO**
   This person is your primary point of contact for day-to-day activity and appointments. They will help you with getting ready for the work by explaining the process, answering questions, and addressing any concerns you might have before and during the work. The RBG RLO will ensure that you and your home are prepared for the works and will be there to support you through the entire process.

2. **Contractor RLO**
   This person is your primary contact for all issues directly related to the work being carried out. Please contact the contractor RLO first if you have any concerns or questions about the work, the timeline, or anything else specific to the contractor's responsibilities during the project.

Your Resident Liaison Officer from the council is:

- Name:
- Contact details:

Your Resident Liaison Officer from your contractor is:

- Name:
- Contact details:

5. Health and safety

Help us keep you safe

Your health and safety is important to us, so please make sure that you and your family are aware of the following health and safety issues.

Hazards associated with the works

- Special care should be taken when work is carried out to the outside of your home.
- Look out for uneven ground outside and around your home.
- Do not disturb stacked materials as these may become unstable.
- Be aware of possible hazards due to the removal of fences and stay clear of temporary barriers and scaffolding.
- Please make sure children or visitors to your home know that work is taking place and stay out of working areas.



Security procedures

- All genuine visitors to your home will carry an identification (ID) card or badge.
- Please ask to see their ID before allowing anyone into your home.
- Works will be suspended if a worker is verbally/physically abused or threatened by you, a family member or visitor. Work will only start again once the contractor's management believe it is safe to do so.

Gardens

- Our contractors will clear your path on a regular basis. Gardens will be cleared once scaffolding has been removed.
- Unfortunately, our contractors cannot avoid mess while carrying out the works but will aim to keep mess and debris to a minimum.



6. Before the works

To see if you are eligible for the works, there are a number of surveys and steps we need to complete to prepare your home for the start of any works.

Below are some of the steps we may need to take in your flat and building, along with how you can help us make sure the process is smooth.

Access to your home

Before we begin any works, we'll need to carry out a few technical surveys in your flat and building to make sure everything is planned and completed properly. You may have already had a Retrofit Assessor visit your flat to carry out the 'retrofit survey', which is used to decide what is needed to create a warmer living environment for you.

To keep the project on track, it is important that we can access your flat when required. If you're unable to be there due to work or other commitments, alternative arrangements can be made. For example, you may choose to provide a key temporarily, which will be stored securely and only used for agreed visits.

We really appreciate your cooperation in helping us carry out the works smoothly and on schedule.

Asbestos

To begin work in your home we will need to conduct an asbestos survey. This does not necessarily mean that your home contains asbestos, but the information is needed to comply with current regulations. If this is needed for your home, we will contact you to arrange a suitable appointment time.

Energy bill request

To help us assess whether the improvements installed in your home have achieved the intended positive impact, we kindly ask that you provide copies of your energy bills from both before and after the works are completed.

This information will allow us to monitor the performance of the improvements and evaluate their effect on your home's energy efficiency.

All information you provide will be used solely for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the impact of works, and will be stored securely and treated as confidential.

Notice to start works

Before any work starts, we will aim to provide you with at least two weeks' notice, especially if we require access to your flat. We will visit you a few days before the works start to ensure you are well prepared.

What happens next?

Before we can start any work, you will receive a call, or a visit from your council RLO who will:

- Book appointments for the retrofit survey, and any additional surveys which may be needed.
- Confirm whether your home is eligible for works.
- Confirm what works will be done to your home once all design surveys are completed.
- Explain what you will need to do to prepare for the work.
- Visit you to explain the work and survey your home. With your permission, photographs will be taken of all rooms that may be affected during the works. This is to safeguard both yourself and us, against any accidents or damages that may occur during the works.
- Arrange any additional support you may require.
- Discuss proposed timescales. Once the work begins, you can expect to see operatives, your RLOs, and a site manager (assigned by the contractor) in your home. They will also be taking photos of the working areas.



7. During the works

Once work begins, we need your help in maintaining a safe and secure environment for everyone. It is your responsibility to remove personal belongings from the areas of work before we start and provide access for our contractors. Please make sure you carry out the following preparations:

Clear access

- Ensure your balcony is clean and clear before work begins. Please note: Your contractors cannot be held responsible for any accidental damage that may occur during the process of the works if any belongings or valuables are not removed. They will do their best to work as safely and considerately as possible.
- Remove any plants or shrubs growing near or up against the walls of your home and remove any hanging baskets or pots.
- Remove any CCTV cameras or equipment installed on the external walls, or sign a disclaimer form if you do not wish to remove these items from the external walls.
- Please tell us if you need any special arrangements or support during the improvements. These can include sudden changes in your plans, such as ill health or holidays

Scaffolding

- Scaffolding will need to be put up outside your building so that most of the exterior works can be completed. The appointment date for putting up the scaffolding will be confirmed with you by your RLO. Thank you for your cooperation and flexibility in helping us to complete these improvements to your home.
- We may need to temporarily reposition satellite dishes and garden fencing.
- There will be some noise and dust during these works, and you may also be prevented from entering your building through certain entrances when works are being carried out directly above or around that entrance.
- We will ensure that scaffolding is left secure overnight and during weekends/public holidays.
- If you're a leaseholder, you should contact your alarm and home insurance company to explain that scaffolding is being put up. Your insurance could be invalid if you do not notify them.
- Scaffolding will remain in position until a final inspection of the completed works is carried out, and we are happy with the quality.
- Do not tamper with scaffolding, alter it or climb up or onto it.
- Scaffolding is for use by authorised staff only. If you see anyone other than authorised staff climbing on or dismantling the scaffold, please contact your RLO or site manager immediately. If this happens out of working hours, please phone the police and tell them what is happening.
- Please avoid walking under the scaffolding and take extra care when entering and leaving your home as there may be falling debris. Where possible, get the attention of an operative before leaving and entering your building.

Important safety information

We may need to temporarily restrict access to external areas of your building for the health and safety of you, our contractors and members of the public whilst the work takes place. This will be clearly signposted, and barriers may be in place.

If you suffer from any health conditions which may be affected by dust particles or noise, we recommend that windows and doors, are kept closed for the duration of the work. Whilst it will not prevent all dust or noise, it will help to minimise the impact.

Working around gas

If you have a gas supply or a vertical flue and we are working within 400mm, we will arrange for a Gas Safe engineer to have daily access to your flat once the work begins. At times, it may be necessary to temporarily turn off your gas while working around live flues. We may also coordinate a gas safety test with your neighbour. Please tell us about any specific needs you may have during this period.

Feedback and concerns

We want you to feel comfortable and confident while the works are taking place.

If something worries you or doesn't feel quite right, please speak to your contractor RLO on site. They're there to help and can usually sort things out quickly.

If you feel you need further support, our project team is also here to assist. And if you're still unhappy after that, you can use our formal complaints process.



8. After the works

All work will be inspected by a member of our staff. This will ensure that the work has been completed to the required specification, designs and to the appropriate standard of workmanship. This is called a handover. You may be asked to sign the handover form.

We will show you how to use any new equipment installed so you can benefit as much as possible from these works. An aftercare information pack will be issued to you at the end of the works to keep and refer to any time you need information on how to make the most of the installed improvements in your home.

9. Who to contact

What if something goes wrong?

We can sort out most concerns quickly. However, there may be times when you are not satisfied with the outcome. In these instances, your RLO will let you know the formal complaint procedure. The complaints procedure may have either two or three stages and we are confident that any complaints can be dealt with and lessons learnt for future improvement.

All work carried out to your home will have a minimum 12-month defect liability period.

This means that if there are any faults with the work carried out within a year of it finishing, the contractor will be responsible for the repair. If you have any problems during this time, please report them to your RLO who will offer support to resolve.

Please note – Any damage caused by vandalism or for example, a break in, will not be covered by the 12-month defect period. If this happens, please contact the council to discuss.

Questions or concerns

We understand that this can be a daunting experience for you and want to make it as easy as possible. If you have any questions or doubts about the works, please contact your RLO. They will do their best to support you.

10. Your feedback

Your feedback

We value your opinion and so, at the end of the work, we will ask you to fill in a customer satisfaction questionnaire or take part in a phone survey to help us improve our service. As part of the aftercare service,

you may be called and asked how you are finding the improvements. We can then address any problems that you raise with us.

Compliments, comments and complaints

We always aim to offer a great service but like any organisation we can make mistakes. We are always pleased to hear when we do a great job and welcome your compliments, comments and complaints. We welcome your feedback so we can learn from our mistakes and improve our service to you.

When we go the extra mile

If a member of staff has offered great customer service and was particularly helpful or supportive or did something that made things easier – we would love to hear about it. We'll make sure that member of staff is recognised.

If we get it wrong

If you're unhappy with any part of the service or the work being carried out, please start by speaking to the contractor RLO or the site team. They'll work with you to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

Your council RLO is also available to support you and make sure your concerns are looked into fairly and promptly.

If the issue isn't resolved or you're still not satisfied, your council RLO can support you in raising a formal complaint with our Complaints Team.



11. Frequently Asked Questions

How much notice will I get?

We will give you as much notice as possible before we carry out any work to your flat. You will also receive a start date letter before work begins.

Will the contractor visit me before the work starts?

Some things are unique to particular flats, so the contractor will need to visit you beforehand. They will make an appointment with you to come and look at the proposed work and discuss any concerns you may have.

Will I have to move out?

No, we will carry out the work while you are still in your home. We will ensure that your water and electricity work each evening, when we leave.

Should I notify my home insurance company that building work is going to take place?

You should notify your home insurer of the proposed building works.

What are the contractor's working hours?

Our contractors work from 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday, and Friday 8.00am to 4.30pm. Exceptionally noisy work will be done between 9.00am to 5.00pm, wherever possible. If there is any need to work outside of these hours you will be consulted beforehand.

Who can I contact about this?

Your RLO will speak to you regularly during the improvements. You will be kept informed about access, choices and anything else you need to know to make sure that the work goes smoothly. Your RLO will be happy to discuss any concerns with you and answer any questions you may have.

How will I know the person at my door is one of the contractors?

All contractors' employees will carry identification. If you are at all worried, please call your RLO. They will be able to confirm that the person at your door has been sent by one of our contractors.

What happens at a post-completion inspection/sign off?

These will be carried out jointly with a representative from our consultants and the council to ensure everyone is completely happy with the work carried out.

What happens if I have a problem after the work is finished?

After the work in your home is finished, if you have any problems in the first 12 months please contact:

Email .....

.....

Contact number .....

.....

12. Your responsibilities

- Please allow us access as requested and so we can start and complete the works to your home without delay.
- Please give us 24 hours' notice if you have to cancel an appointment to avoid delays in the works for you and your neighbours.
- Please treat all our staff and contractors with respect and consideration.
- Please keep children and pets away from the work area for their own safety and to allow our contractors to work effectively.
- Please do not leave children under the age of 18 alone in your home without adult supervision while we are working there*
- Please let us know immediately if you have special health or medical problems that may be affected by the proposed work.
- Please keep all work areas clear and free of anything that might get in the way.

** Our contractors will not continue to work in your home if children are left unaccompanied as this may void our public liability insurance*



13. Code of Conduct

We expect all our staff and contractors to:

- Treat you and your home with respect.
- Always show a photographic identification card and ask permission to enter your home.
- Work in a safe manner and ensure the safety of you and your family.
- Be polite, courteous and compassionate at all times.
- Provide you with a list of contacts should you have any queries or concerns.
- Keep customers informed of their actions.
- Ensure equality and fairness by being sensitive to different cultural needs and the needs of vulnerable groups such as the elderly or disabled.
- Use appropriate covers and screening in work areas and clean up at the end of each day.
- Treating your information as confidential, ensuring your safety and privacy is a priority.
- Behave as they would expect others to behave in their own house.
- Explain what they have come to do, approximately how long it will take and how it will affect you.
- Ensure all services are restored at the end of each working day.
- Inform the residents when they are leaving the property.
- Always maintain a safe means of exit.
- We will always try to keep our appointments but if we are unable to attend we will give you 24 hours' notice and then arrange a new appointment.

And not to:

- Work before 8am and finish after 5pm or work at weekends unless you agree otherwise.
- Use or move your belongings without express permission at any time.
- Smoke in your home.
- Use radios or personal stereos on site.
- Use your toilet or washing facilities (unless arrangements have been made).
- Use (or ask to use) your telephone.
- Leave tools, loose materials or gas bottles in a property overnight.
- Use your home for lunch or tea breaks.
- Use your gas or electricity without your permission.

Zero tolerance

We have a zero tolerance to any form of violence, aggression or discrimination towards our staff. Please treat us with the same kindness we show you when we're doing our jobs.

We'll take action against residents or members of the public who display violent or abusive behaviour. This may include:

- reporting to the police
- taking legal action, including tenancy
- enforcement taken
- withdrawing or changing services you can access We consider unacceptable behaviour to be any instance which causes or threatens physical injury or distress.
- Verbal or written aggression such as offensive language, swearing, unwanted or abusive remarks.
- Assault or attempted assault on others, including members of an individual's family.
- Brandishing of objects, weapons or threats of risk or injury to staff, service users or visitors.
- Anti-social behaviour such as stalking, invasion of personal space, offensive gestures, spitting, alcohol or drug-fuelled abuse.

14. Equality and diversity

Equality and diversity

We are firmly committed to tackling discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good community relations.

We believe that the diversity of Royal Greenwich is one of our greatest assets and should be celebrated and valued.

We are required by the general public sector duty of the Equality Act 2010 to "have due regard" in respect of someone's:

- age
- disability
- race
- sex
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership (employment only)

Please also respect the diverse and multicultural workforce who visit you or carry out work in your home whether they are directly-employed by us or working on our behalf as contractors.

Supporting residents with additional needs

- If you or anyone in your household has any additional needs that you would like us to be aware of, please let us know. We will do our very best to take these into account, while work is carried out in your home.
- If you or anyone in your household is vulnerable, or has a disability, we will be able to offer you:
  - One-to-one support
  - Help with removing items from your loft
  - Regular RLO visits
  - Language or translation support





Housing
Our Greenwich

ROYAL borough of
GREENWICH