

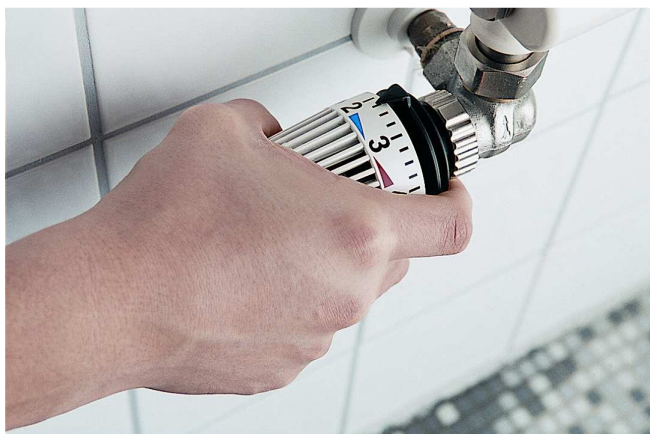


SHARE

Social Housing Action to
Reduce Energy Consumption



Case Study 12



Upgrading central heating specifications in social housing

Under the SHARE project, Severn Wye Energy Agency have been assisting local social housing provider, Gloucester City Homes, with their specifications for central heating improvements.

Gloucester City Homes are spending millions of Euros, in upgrading central heating in the majority of its stock of over 3,000 homes. This is to meet the Decent Homes standard, set by the UK Government to make all homes safe and comfortable for its residents by 2010.

Experts from Severn Wye Energy Agency gave advice on a number of issues including:

- Appropriate sizing of the heating system after insulation improvements have been made at the property.
- The suitability of combination and conventional cylinder systems for different property types.

- The use of controls, including central heating programmer, thermostats and timers to suit the needs of the residents including especially modified for the elderly.

A number of important improvements were made to the specification as a result of this advice. As a result of this advice Gloucester City Homes is now providing tenants with affordable and easier to use heating systems.

Following discussion in the SHARE social housing forums, Gloucester City Homes have also committed to install 10 solar hot water systems.

SHARE is an Intelligent Energy Europe Project working in Eight European areas to develop energy efficiency and low carbon technologies in social housing. For more information about the SHARE project and for other case studies see the project website:

www.socialhousingaction.com

If these installations go well then it is likely that more will follow in the future.

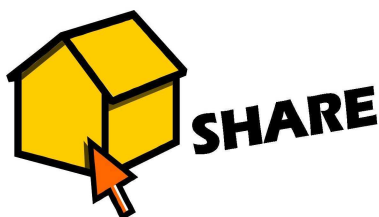
John Mann Director of Asset Management & Regeneration Gloucester City Homes, said, "The experiences and the lessons learnt will help inform our future stock



improvement plan. It will also be shared with other social housing providers in the SHARE forum. This has been one of the main benefits of being involved in the Forum, all the social housing providers in Gloucestershire have been able to benefit from sharing their experience and knowledge on a number of issues. In doing so we have inspired each other to become more involved in sustainable energy".

The SHARE forums have also been investigating other sources of renewable energy, such as ground source heat pumps.

As well as training sessions on renewables a useful set of briefing notes have been produced for social housing professionals. These briefing notes include updates on all the funding options that are currently available.



The Decent Homes Standard

The Decent Homes Standard was set up in 2000 by the UK government. It aims to bring all social housing to a suitable level by 2010. A decent home is one that is "wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities".

The properties must be safe, in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

In practice, providing a reasonable degree of comfort means making sure the property has controllable central heating systems and that they have cavity wall insulation or loft insulation. In properties heated with electric storage heaters, the property needs both cavity wall insulation and loft insulation.

Social housing providers can access funds from energy suppliers under the Energy Efficiency Commitment programme to help with the costs of insulation

The Decent Homes Standard has been responsible for improving the homes and lives of millions of people in the UK.


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