

Retrofit and levelling up

Rebecca Gipp
Head of Levelling Up Co-Ordination

September 12th 2023



Retrofit

- **Retrofitting is the process of making alterations to an existing building to improve its energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption.**
- **Retrofitting can include the installation of energy saving measures ranging from loft insulation to new windows, through to a 'whole-house' retrofit that involves improvements to the building's entire fabric and heating systems.**
- **Retrofit delivers across our climate and levelling up goals. It can transform lives and deliver economic growth:**
 - one of 5 future growth sectors, (alongside sustainable construction)
 - worth more than £15 billion in Essex
 - estd. 6,740 retrofit roles by 2030

Barriers to delivering at scale:

- **Low demand: cost, uncertainty, lack of trust, competing priorities**
- **Low supply: skills, uncertainty, strong demand for traditional trades**

The relevance of retrofit to better socio-economic outcomes?

“ Poor-quality housing harms health and evidence shows that exposure to poor housing conditions (including damp, cold, mould, noise) is strongly associated with poor health, both physical and mental. The longer the exposure to poor conditions, including cold, the greater the impact on mental and physical health. ”

Marmot Review, 10 Years On

The ‘business case’ for retrofit is often thought of as purely economic or environmental, but there is a strong social case for retrofit as well.



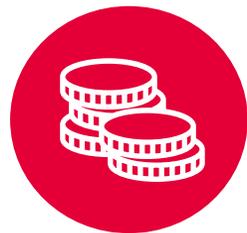
- Increased risk of heart attack, stroke, flu, asthma and falls
- Poorer mental health
- >10,000 people die each year from cold homes
- Estimated cost to NHS: £540m per annum



- UK children miss more school days due to disease burden from damp than any EU member state, with rates over 80 per cent higher than the EU average
- Home environment affects children’s ability to learn



- Approx 14% of UK carbon emissions are from home heating (excl. electricity use)



- >21% of people in Essex in fuel poverty
- Rises to > 60% in deprived areas

Retrofit and levelling up

National themes; local priorities



Retrofit in action across Essex



Unlocking maximum grant funding for fuel disadvantaged residents

- £24.8 million Home Upgrade Grant funding secured to March 2025
- Aiming for £20-40 million from energy company ECO4 scheme to 2026 (working with Cities, Districts and Boroughs to make sure this money reaches the most vulnerable)
- Rolling out fuel poverty training led by Citizens Advice across Anchors Network, to improve referrals. >500 front-line workers trained last year, more targeted training planned for 23/24



Growing green skills

- £80K allocated for fully-funded places for professional retrofit training at level 2 Understanding Domestic Retrofit and level 3 Certificate in Retrofit Advice
- Submitted bid for £113k to DESNZ for Home Decarbonisation Skills Training Competition round 2
- Creating a Retrofit Forum: informal networking events for people working in the sector to identify challenges and co-create solutions and break down barriers
- Actively working to secure other training partners, to grow the training offer right across Essex
- Working with retrofit businesses to help them upskill in accessing public sector procurement for retrofit work



Empowering communities

Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD): >£1 million DESNZ funding for local energy champions to provide face to face retrofit advice in 3 areas of Essex.

Shared Green Deal: EU-funded project to create a community-led vision for energy in Jaywick Sands

Community Energy: ongoing support with a particular focus on Levelling Up areas:

EssNet (Essex Net Zero Delivery Taskforce) bid for £3million to address non-technical barriers to net-zero (access to finance and data, stakeholder capacity, capability and coordination, operation of the public sector)

For discussion

- *What are the additional levers and activities that the Essex system could focusing on, that add to or build on existing efforts to widen impact?*

