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platform
housing group

Retrofit newsletter

Welcome to issue 1 of our Retrofit newsletter

Improving the energy efficiency of our homes through a fabric-first, whole-house retrofit approach is crucial in reducing our carbon footprint. The retrofit work on your home aims to lower your energy bills and improve comfort levels.

What is Retrofit?

Retrofit is simply the process of making changes to existing buildings so that energy consumption and emissions are reduced.

These changes should also provide the benefit of a healthier and more comfortable home with lower energy consumption, which also means lower bills.

Meet the Retrofit team



Darren Nevill
Retrofit
Programme
Manager



Richard Millward
Retrofit
Coordinator



Ian Townsend
Retrofit Energy
Assessor



Nadine Hall
Retrofit
Customer
Advisor



Mandeep Johal
Retrofit
Customer
Advisor

Please be assured that Platform Housing Group will support you throughout this process. If you have any questions, require more information or need any assistance please don't hesitate to contact the **Retrofit Team**:

Email: SHDF.retrofit@plaformhg.com
Tel: **0121 803 0380**

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Great news - your home has been identified for retrofit.

You will have received a letter from us about the upcoming retrofit works to your home and have probably been wondering when the work will start.

Our team has been super busy working in the background appointing contractors, arranging assessments and surveys, and planning and scheduling the work.

We are excited to announce these works are now due to begin.

Please note:

If you haven't heard from us yet, please be assured we have not forgotten about you, these works are ongoing until September 2025. You will hear from us as soon as it is time for the work to commence at your home.



Stage one

The first stage of the process is to carry out a **Retrofit Assessment** on your home to collect data and images of the current energy performance and recommendations on how to improve it.

You may have already had your assessment completed. If you haven't, when it is time for your assessment, Osmosis ACD will contact you directly to arrange an appointment.

Please let us know if there are any changes to the contact details you supplied by email to **SHDF.retrofit@platformhg.com** or call Osmosis on **0800 193 6655**.



Contact us

If you need to contact us about the Retrofit works taking place in your home please email **SHDF.retrofit@platformhg.com** or call: **0121 803 0380**

For all queries not related to Retrofit the easiest way to contact us about a non-urgent repair or housing matter is via:

- Your Platform - Customer Portal
- You can click the blue icon in the bottom right of each web page to talk to our Livechat advisors or Chatbot
- By completing an online enquiry form.
- By phone on 0333 200 7304.
- www.platformhg.com

Why have the Retrofit works carried out?

Most homes do not have adequate insulation to keep residents warm and comfortable. This has an impact on energy consumption in the home, meaning more energy is needed to heat the home, or, if this cannot be afforded, homes are cold in the winter. Having your home retrofitted will mean you will have a warmer, more comfortable and energy efficient home.

Will my Bills be cheaper?

This is a genuine concern for residents. Saving money on bills is entirely dependent on how the heating system is used. Insulation by itself will not save you any money on your energy bills. That said, insulation will keep the heat in the property, meaning you will not have to use your heating as much, and this is where the savings can come from.

What is Fabric first approach?

It's important to get it right the first time and using this approach by focusing on reducing a home's heat loss, allows us to create, warmer, dryer and more energy-efficient homes.

What is the fabric of a building?

The **'building fabric'** is the envelope of a home, or the physical parts of the building that separate the indoor environment from the outdoor. This consists of things like insulation, cladding, finishes and structure in the walls, floors, and roof.



Step 1 Insulate

Most homes do not have adequate layers of building fabric between the inside and outside to keep residents warm and comfortable. Retrofit aims to target the areas where heat leaks from homes.

Step 2 Build tight, Ventilate right!

'Building tight' is about stopping unintentional heat leaks in the home.

'Ventilating right' is about providing intentional ventilation to allow well designed air flow through the home, reducing unwanted condensation.

Step 3 Heating

Not all homes will need new heating systems. However, if you do have insulation installed before any heating is the best way to ensure a good outcome for your home. This is because the insulation reduces the demand on your heating system, meaning it doesn't take as much energy to heat the home.

Previous funding schemes have not followed this approach and fabric first is a new method to get a better outcome for customers.

If you have concerns about these works, or you have any special requirements or preparations needed, please contact us **0121 803 0380**.

Heat Pumps - Good to know

Many people think a heat pump is going to cost more than their current heating.

Because heat pumps work at a lower flow temperature than fossil fuel boilers they need to be controlled differently. A heat pump will take longer to heat up your home and will work more efficiently if they are left on throughout the heating season. It's only overnight or when the home is unoccupied for extended periods that they should fall back to temperatures of around 16 degrees.

If you let your home cool down significantly and have to heat it again, it's likely to be more expensive.

Heat pumps are installed with 'weather compensation'. This lowers the flow temperature in your central heating in response to higher external temperatures, therefore maximising efficiency.

This will demand a cultural shift in how we use our heating compared to the on/off cycles we are used to with fossil fuel boilers and electrical heaters.

All these factors mean every property will be different. But to get some idea of the savings available, look at the table below (figures from <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk>). This shows the potential annual savings of a standard installation in an average three-bedroom semi-detached home, depending on the existing system.

Existing heating system	Annual savings
Old electric storage heaters	£1,100
New electric storage heaters	£830
Old (G-rated) oil boiler	£455
New (A-rated) oil boiler	£15
Solid fuel (coal or wood)	£1,100

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Switchee thermostat installation

To help measure the current performance of your home and to optimise your energy use we would also like to install a smart thermostat called a Switchee.

What is a Switchee?

Switchee is a smart, connected thermostat for your heating and hot water which doesn't rely on your Wi-Fi network to function.

Many of you may already have had your Switchee thermostat fitted.



switchee

How does Switchee work?

Switchee has sensors that gather information about the energy efficiency of your home, it highlights issues like condensation, suspected damp and mould and helps us measure the effectiveness of repairs to your home.

- Over time, your Switchee will learn your daily routines and turn everything on/off automatically, according to your preferences.
- If you have a smartphone, you can download the Switchee app to manage your heating and hot water whenever and from wherever you are but you don't need a smartphone to enjoy the benefits of Switchee.
- It can help you reduce your energy usage and lower your bills by up to 15%.

- Through your Switchee, we can securely send you messages, schedule appointments, and ask you for feedback on repairs.
- Your Switchee gathers data and insights that help us look after your home effectively. It is completely secure and can identify issues early.

With rising energy costs it's more important than ever to use heating systems as energy efficiently as possible. If you are interested Switchee can provide advice based on the information gathered from your home.

To arrange your Switchee install please call **01302 244488**.

Additional information can be found at www.switchee.com/residents/



Sustainability – meeting our own needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, with consideration for environmental, social and economic resources.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

Climate Change - reducing the impact we have on the climate. By 2030 we will have moved all of our existing homes to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C or better.

Carbon footprint: how much carbon goes into the air because of something caused by people and not by nature.

Futureproof: making changes to a building to make it last longer in better condition and respond to changes in the environment (heat and cold).

Insulation: materials used to keep a building warmer.

Low carbon heating: a heating system that does not use fossil fuel (such as gas or oil).

Solar PV panels: an object that takes energy from sunlight and turns it into electricity.



Insulation



Replacement of door



Save heat with new windows



Solar PV panels

The **Successful Tenancies Team**

Need help?

We can help you - Are you struggling with money issues due to rising cost of living costs? Our Successful Tenancies Team is here for you. The team will work with you to help you sustain your tenancy by offering advice and support. You can contact them at successfultenancies@platformhg.com Cost-of-living advice is also available on our website: www.platformhg.com

