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Net Zero Carbon Retrofit

Putting Residents at the Heart
of the Solution



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The Challenge

By 2030, all landlords must reduce carbon emissions from the homes they own to achieve Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Level C. Then by 2050 operational carbon emissions must be at net zero.

This is a mammoth task for councils and housing associations to retrofit existing housing stock. It will require collation of accurate data on asset condition and a significant programme of improvements to the existing building fabric, windows, doors, and heating systems. From 2050, there will be the added need to measure, monitor, and maintain energy performance for the life of the property.

A retrofit programme of this magnitude has not been undertaken before, and every activity is potentially intrusive for those living in the properties and the wider community. Clear, open, and early engagement lines will be essential to address the needs and concerns at every touchpoint, so that together landlords, delivery partners, and residents can transform homes to net zero carbon (NZC).





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The Solution

Residents should be at the heart of the solution and the Tenants and Leaseholder Committee (TLC) is an important link between individual residents and the delivery team/ landlord. To gain a better understanding of the touchpoints and the communication needs for such a large scale retrofit programme, we approached an existing client for help. A first workshop was arranged with their TLC to gather and gain valuable insight.

Some very clear messages came out from the session:

- Listen to us, our voice is valuable.
- Face to face communication is always best.
- Relay the bigger benefits – warmer homes, lower bills, cleaner air quality, and better health – visually.

- Employ a local 'Green Champion' – a central point of contact for residents from design right through to commissioning.
- At each touchpoint, all staff should be able to answer questions on NZC and the new green technology.
- Quick access to simple operating guidance to reduce resident energy costs from day one.
- Avoid a piecemeal approach and where possible incorporate other planned works such as kitchens or bathrooms.

The output from the workshop is a six-stage Resident Experience Cycle which takes residents from 'Awareness' of NZC and what it means to them, through the design, installation, and operation of the new technology in their homes and culminates in 'Advocacy' where residents become promoters of the benefits of NZC for the Client's next retrofit project.



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The Solution

Every stage of the cycle identifies the touchpoints with the residents, their questions and concerns, the most impactful communication tools and who from the team should input to the content and messages.



The Outcome

Residents will play an ever-increasingly important role in the delivery and adoption of the retrofit programme and their engagement should be part of the delivery strategy.

From our workshop findings, residents place high value on clear visual messaging delivered face to face. They want information which relays the benefits and savings to them individually as much as to the planet.

They also value direct access to experts and are suggesting a locally employed Green Champion along with knowledgeable staff available at every touchpoint to explain the new green technology and how it operates.

Projects which adopt this proactive style of engagement will develop informed residents who are less reliant on the call centre support and are able to quickly benefit from reduced energy use and money savings. In turn, clients can take advantage of their usage data to benchmark and trend energy consumption and product performance. This will help inform efficient maintenance regimes, aid future product selection, and demonstrate compliance with the government's targets for carbon reduction over the whole life of the asset.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the meeting. It was very interesting, and I learnt so much." – TLC member

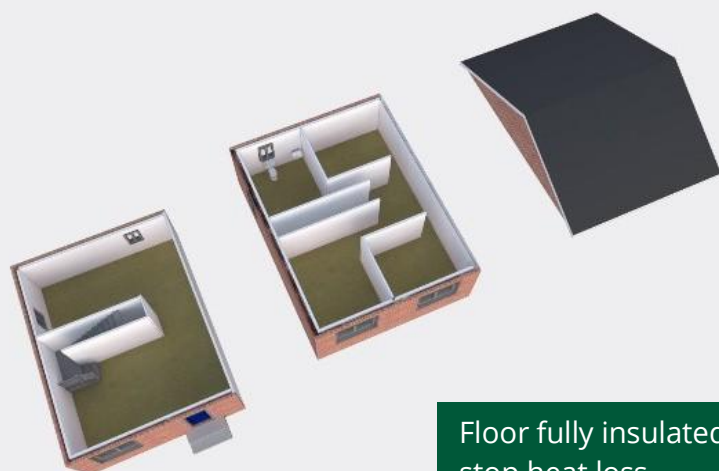


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The insight gained from this first resident workshop is being translated into the engagement strategy for the Greater London Authority's Innovation Partnership, a framework which has been established to deliver large scale low-carbon upgrades to social housing. Better engagement will influence efficient delivery and satisfied residents will become the best advocates to assist in the roll-out of each successive retrofit project on the framework.

To learn more about our Retrofit Resident Journey Mapping and its importance, please contact nick.davidge@cardogroup.co.uk

Note: The findings of our first workshop align with a recent report by Placeshapers and Tpas - 'Residents' voices in the UK's Net Zero Carbon journey'.number of repairs for those properties.



Floor fully insulated to stop heat loss.



Windows and doors improved to reduce heat loss.