

The role of local Government in delivering warm homes

Version 2 - Updated May 2025



Produced in
partnership with



About this report

Sureserve has been focused on creating healthy homes, lowering bills and reducing emissions for the UK's social housing stock since its foundations were laid in 1988.

Our expert team have experienced first-hand how different aspects of the policy environment have both enabled and inhibited the delivery of more energy efficient homes across the UK. The cost-of-living crisis, rising energy prices, and carbon emission studies have raised the profile of domestic heat as a key area to tackle for both inequality and climate reasons.

Local and national government now need to work together with industry and local communities to deliver the changes required. This report, and the recommendations within it, offer insights into some of the challenges facing the rollout of energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heating at a local level. It also sets out how local authorities can be better

Contents

About this report	2
Executive Summary	4
State of Play	7
Challenges facing local government retrofit delivery	8
Case studies of good practice	11
Recommendations	14
About Sureserve	16

Executive Summary

The Role of Local Government in Delivering Warm Homes

Retrofitting the UK's homes is an inherently local challenge. UK housing stock varies enormously and differences in communities, regional and local socioeconomics and demographics influence the kinds of retrofit and support needed in each area.

We have seen this first hand in our work at Sureserve, where we have been focussed on creating healthy homes, lowering bills and reducing emissions for the UK's social housing stock since our foundations were first laid in 1988.

The energy price crisis and the ambitious pledges of the new government create an impetus for local and national government to work together with industry and local communities to create warm homes.

This report and the recommendations within it are the product of Sureserve's extensive experience in retrofitting and social housing as well as ongoing engagement with local authorities, NGOs, research bodies, consumer advice groups, social housing providers and residents.

Challenges facing local retrofit delivery

Local authorities and housing associations will be critical to the rollout of retrofit. They have strong ambitions to decarbonise, create warmer homes and save residents money on their energy bills. However, the levers they have to achieve this are often insufficient in the context of capacity challenges and barriers to funding access.

01

Stop-start funding cycles

There has been a growth in the overall number of funding pots available to local authorities for retrofit, but not all are easily accessible. There remain challenges associated with the current funding regime such as short-term funding and project delivery windows, inflexible implementation criteria, and inconsistent application processes.

02

The private-public investment gap

This government has pledged to invest an extra £⁶.⁶ billion over the course of this parliament – but according to a report by Frontier Economics, this will be less than half of the £⁵.⁶ billion investment needed each year in energy efficiency and low carbon heat to meet net zero targets.

03

Resource and capacity shortages

Over the last decade and a half, austerity has meant that local authorities' capacity has been eroded across the board. There is also an enormous disparity across different regions in terms of housing and retrofit capabilities, resulting in some local authorities being far better resourced than others.

04

Lack of framework for good resident engagement

Home retrofit upgrades cannot succeed without the support and involvement of households. However, there is a lack of widely used best practices for local authorities and housing associations to engage with residents and community groups.

05

Lack of data on grid capacity and properties

Local authorities frequently lack easily accessible data on both the housing stock they are required to retrofit as well as the grid capacity for powering low carbon heating technologies. Although government is considering reforming EPCs, currently, there is only partial coverage of properties and many EPCs are out of date or inaccurate. Additionally, spatial planning and energy planning are not integrated at a regional level and there is a fragmented landscape of Local Energy Areas Plans, DNO investment plans and Regional Energy System Plans.

Opportunities to do things differently

Recognising that every local authority faces a very different set of issues, the examples in the report highlight some of the innovative approaches already being taken by some to overcome the challenges set out above.

01

Place-based retrofit

The Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) initiative provides funding for facilitators to work with local authorities that currently lack the internal expertise and capacity to develop bespoke local area retrofit strategies. It demonstrates how place-based retrofit can be successful across a range of tenures whilst recognising local community needs and the need for greater support for local authorities with limited internal resources.

02

Crowding in private investment

Bristol City Council through the City Leap partnership has identified over £875 million pounds of investment opportunities across a range of green sectors, including retrofit. The partnership provides a blueprint for how other cities and local authorities, in collaboration with industry, could maximise private investment opportunities for retrofit and other sustainability programmes.

03

Building internal capacity and skills

Both Nottingham and Doncaster city councils have set up internal energy efficiency consultancy services from their housing and sustainability teams, training internal staff as retrofit coordinators for their public projects. These schemes demonstrate how increasing in-house knowledge and skills is crucial to ensuring that local authorities are able to best plan and coordinate retrofit works for residents.

How local and national government can work together to deliver

Taking these points together, we have developed recommendations, focused on three areas where we believe national government can play an important role in creating the right environment for local authorities to deliver.

01

Identifying funding gaps

Consistent funding cycles and crowding in private investment will be key to enabling local authorities and housing associations to deliver the government's energy efficiency targets and decarbonisation objectives.

02

Building capability and capacity

The mixed results of previous schemes have highlighted an insufficient focus on those expected to deliver the schemes and benefit from them. Local authorities and housing associations need support from central government to ensure they have the skills, resources and frameworks to deliver.

03

Supporting localised approaches

A Westminster-centric approach to the home decarbonisation and energy efficiency transition may restrict local government's ability to develop bespoke approaches. Likewise, prioritising those most in need ensures we are not creating unequal provision.

These recommendations recognise the essential role local authorities have in delivering warm, green, and healthy homes for residents and look to ensure that their differing capabilities do not create unequal provision, especially when it comes to those households most in need.

About Sureserve

Sureserve is a trusted partner dedicated to addressing the unique needs of housing associations, local authorities and residents by providing a comprehensive portfolio of high-quality solutions that ensure energy efficiency, safe compliant homes and buildings, and improved quality of life.

The company's strength is our nationwide knowledge delivered as regional expertise and commitment to excellent customer service. We foster strong partnerships and maintain a focus on 'people first' solutions and sustainability.

State of Play

Retrofitting the UK's homes is an inherently local challenge. UK housing stock varies enormously in terms of building types, age and condition, archetype and the natural and built environment surrounding it. Alongside this, differences in communities, regional and local socioeconomics and demographics influence the kinds of retrofit and level of support needed in each area.

Local authorities are expected to be critical to the rollout of retrofit programmes; upgrading over 4 million social homes is a major transformation project that will need to be locally led. Just under 40% of all social housing is rented from local authorities with the remainder rented from housing associations, ALMOs and charities. Social housing providers have strong ambitions to decarbonise, create warmer homes and save social housing residents money on their energy bills, that could go back into the local economy.¹

However, the levers they have to achieve this are often insufficient in the context of capacity challenges and barriers to funding access (both private and public). In September last year, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero announced three government funds targeting retrofit across social housing, private homes and public-sector buildings and at the Budget in October confirmed that £3.4bn would be

made available for the Warm Homes plan over the next three years. The government has already allocated £1.8 billion of this funding to be deployed by local authorities and social housing providers through the Warm Homes: Local Grant and Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund.²

This is a significant and welcome commitment; however, current estimates suggest that it could cost up to £104bn to retrofit all social housing in the UK to zero carbon standards alone.³ This is compounded by significant variations in the funding available to local authorities at different levels across the regions of the UK and vast differences in the availability of retrofit supply chains and skills.

This report sets out some of the challenges facing local authorities in delivering warm homes for their residents and offers ideas on how to do things differently. It is the product of Sureserve's extensive experience in retrofitting and social housing as well as ongoing engagement with local authorities, NGOs, research bodies, consumer advice groups, social housing providers and residents.

1. Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget, The Climate Change Committee, 2020

2. Up to 170,000 homes to get energy saving upgrades, GOV.UK Press Release, 2024

3. Delivering Net Zero Carbon in social housing: will it happen in time, and at what cost?, RPS Group

Challenges facing local government retrofit delivery

Funding and the public and private investment gap

Stop-start funding cycles

There has been a growth in the overall number of funding pots available to local authorities for retrofit in recent years, but there are often issues around how accessible these funds are. For many of these pots, local authorities are required to submit individual bids to deliver each stage of retrofit schemes. While some local authorities supplement government grants with their own funds, seek private investment and/or combine delivery with the ECO scheme, the majority of capital investment is reliant on these regular bidding processes.⁴

A 2021 Local Government Association (LGA) survey of the climate change officers of all councils in England found that “short-term funding necessitating 12-month contracts” was the most common answer when asked what the main challenge was to securing expertise and skills to tackle climate change

This process influences the way funding is distributed, the level of autonomy held by local authorities, and their ability to build local supply chains. There are challenges associated with the current regime such as short-term funding and project delivery windows, inflexible implementation criteria, and inconsistent application processes that exacerbate existing discrepancies in local authorities’ resourcing and capacity. The CCC has specifically highlighted that short-term competitive funding for narrowly specified projects with tight bidding times makes it very hard for smaller authorities with less dedicated capacity to apply and concentrate funding in certain areas.⁵

The other challenge with short term schemes is that they do not create a sufficient incentive for new installers to get the training and certifications they require. For example, the COVID-era Green Homes Grant scheme only ran for around six months meaning that despite significant funding being available, access to it was limited and it provided no incentive to train or retrain new work.

There is now an opportunity for this government, alongside its broader devolution agenda and the Warm Homes Plan, to review these settlements and ensure that local authorities access the long-term funds they need to deliver warm, healthy homes for their residents, while bolstering local supply chains and skills and capabilities in retrofit.

The public private investment gap

Government funding alone will not be sufficient to deliver a net zero social housing stock. The government has pledged to invest an extra £6.6 billion over the course of this parliament – but according to a report by Frontier Economics, this will still be less than half the £5.6 billion each year that is needed in energy efficiency and low carbon heat in existing homes to meet targets.⁶

The government has acknowledged this and highlighted the need for private investment. It has also expressed its clear intention to work with local government and the private sector on financing. However, this does not to acknowledge that many lack legal and finance support as well as project delivery teams to identify finance solutions at scale.

UK100’s July 2020 report identified the potential to crowd in over £100 billion of investment in local developments, including retrofit projects⁷. Although most commercial models are likely to require some level of government support in order to ensure they provide a reasonable return to investors, there is a clear opportunity for local authorities to be given more tools to capitalise on potential private sector investment.

4. Enabling Locally-led Retrofit, ESG, 2023

5. Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget, The Climate Change Committee, 2020

6. The UK’s Net Zero Investment Gaps, Frontier Economics, 2022

7. Accelerating the Rate of Investment in Local Energy Projects, UK100, 2020

These financing challenges are compounded because the case for retrofit funding and financing is too often seen only through the prism of climate and bill reduction benefits.

Specifically, the metrics local authorities and social housing providers currently use to measure the added value of different retrofit measures can create barriers to uptake. For example, here there are strong budgetary constraints, and there is an incentive for local authorities to opt for a single measure like heat pumps over insulation, given basic cost-benefit analysis does not consider the holistic benefits of insulating homes ahead of the installation of low-carbon heat measures. Low-carbon heating, though an integral part of the journey to decarbonising housing, does not necessarily tackle fuel poverty or deliver better health outcomes or improve thermal comfort in the absence of fabric measures.

Housing retrofit is too often viewed as an “all-or-nothing” intervention, which can cost well over £30,000. This leads to an unfavourable comparison with a heat pump which can cost around £5,000 after subsidy. This situation is particularly acute in the context that social housing providers tend to use the cost per unit (CPU) metric which ignores the indirect and medium-to-long-term benefits of a whole-house approach.

With the appropriate support, there is an opportunity for local authorities and social housing providers to better account for the wider benefits of retrofit in their business planning and project delivery. This should include recognising that energy efficiency is crucial to reducing fuel poverty and improving the UK’s health, particularly for the most vulnerable in society. Better insulated, warm homes prevent avoidable health conditions and reduce disparities in life expectancy across geographies and income.

Variations in capacity and skills across local authorities

Resource and capacity shortages

This government is looking to usher in the most significant period of decentralisation in a generation but there is a lack of clarity about how this will impact retrofit schemes and whether it will provide local authorities with the scope to take an increasingly localised approach to delivering measures. There is an opportunity to consider how local authorities under the new settlements can be empowered to deliver retrofit in the way that works best for their area.

A 2023 survey of 75 English local authorities by Local Partnerships and commissioned by the former Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, found that 71% prioritised retrofit as an action for achieving net zero targets but they are not clear how best to intervene and/or lack the resources to develop a planned approach.

As more local authorities are expected to receive devolved settlements, the Government needs to consider the suite of options available for supporting local authorities in implementing retrofit programmes. There is an opportunity to learn in real-time from the experiences of the West Midlands Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Combined Authority which are already implementing retrofit schemes, but this needs to be balanced against the fact that many authorities face a very different set of challenges and capacity limitations. In many housing teams, local officials are often stretched, having retrofit as only one element of their remit. In this context, there is little chance that they can fully champion retrofit internally or engage with the more technical aspects of the retrofit agenda.

In addition to a focus on developing a capacity and capability within local authorities, there is also an opportunity to focus on greater collaboration across the levels of government and between local authorities to ensure resources and skills are directed efficiently across the system.

Lack of framework for good resident engagement

Home retrofit upgrades cannot succeed without the support and involvement of households. To maximise funding opportunities and create future advocates, retrofit projects need to be implemented on time and through good working relationships with residents. This is especially true in the social housing sector where over 15% of all over-65s live, who the Government suggests may be particularly likely to be “resistant to new and unfamiliar energy efficiency technologies.”⁸

Retrofit needs to be seen not only as a building and planning project but also as a people project with creating healthy homes at its heart. Although the sustainability and bill reduction benefits of retrofitting are often stressed to residents, communicating the thermal comfort and health benefits of measures is also key so to increasing uptake and building trust. There are cases where retrofitting has

8. What are the Barrier to Retrofit in Social Housing, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2018

led to worse health outcomes due to ventilation issues not being resolved, partly because residents were not adequately consulted or fully informed about the need for ventilation systems.

In addition, by allowing local people, via community organisations, to feed into retrofit programmes there is an opportunity to build trust and create a network of people who will be invested in articulating the benefits of retrofit to others in the community in the future.

However, there is a lack of widely used best practices for engaging with residents and community groups to support this. Creating frameworks for what good resident and community engagement should look like would provide a useful resource for local authorities and housing associations, increasing uptake and reducing some of the planning and costs associated with delivering the upgrades.

Constraints in the energy system

At present, the energy system too often acts as a barrier to the deployment of solar PV and low-carbon heating technologies in areas with ageing electricity infrastructure that are already facing constraints. While District Network Operators (DNOs) are required to consult with all stakeholders about their network plans, local authorities do not always have the capacity to engage with them on a sustained basis. This is a specific limitation in the street by street retrofit approaches often favoured by local authorities⁹. For example, if a local authority wants to fit a single heat pump, it might be comfortable that the local grid might have the capacity, but if it wants to fit a heat pump to every home in a street it might be concerned that will require a significant DNO upgrade.

Currently, spatial planning and energy planning are not integrated at a regional level. There is a fragmented landscape of Local Energy Areas Plans, DNO investment plans and more recently Regional Energy System Plans developed by Ofgem. As the government looks to bring forward the English Devolution Bill, there is an opportunity to be clear on the roles of the various bodies (regulator,

DNOs, local authorities) in the delivery of energy systems, retrofitting and low carbon technologies and align these with existing responsibilities for spatial planning.

Lack of property data

Not only do local authorities lack information on energy supply but they often also lack data on the housing stock they are required to retrofit, making assessing needs and prioritising certain neighbourhoods, estates and households more challenging.

The government is already considering reforming EPCs, including making better use of their data and ensuring they paint a more accurate picture of the energy efficiency and carbon emissions of homes. However, currently, there is only partial coverage of properties.¹⁰ The Local Energy North West Net Zero Hub identified that only 56% of properties had a valid EPC, once duplicates had been removed. Additionally, EPCs that are more than three or four years old are likely to be out of date and not reflective of a property's actual emissions or energy efficiency.¹¹ There is also significant evidence of current EPC assessments being done badly, providing inaccurate data on fabric, performance and best next steps.¹² Although EPCs are available for individual properties and can be searched at a postcode and street level, it is resource-intensive for local authorities to aggregate raw EPC data to inform a local retrofit strategy.

There is an opportunity to ensure that the data from reformed EPCs is more accessible and useful for local authorities. Collating housing data across local areas would allow for more strategic retrofit planning at a local government level as well as help facilitate greater alignment between retrofitting programmes, LAEPs, and LHEES.

9. The UK's Net Zero Investment Gaps, Frontier Economics, 2022

10. Predicting the Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) of properties, Data Science Campus, 2022

11. Local Authority Domestic Retrofit Handbook – 2023 Edition, Local Partnerships, 2023

12. Energy Performance Certificates for Buildings – Call for Evidence Summary for Responses, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2020

13. Local Area Retrofit Accelerator, MCS,

Case studies of good practice

Place-based retrofit: Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) initiative



Who: A collaboration between the MCS Foundation and Ashden, Connected Places Catapult, National Retrofit Hub and the UK Green Building Council and launched last year.

The LARA provides funding for facilitators to work with local authorities, local partners and installers, to develop a retrofit plan tailored specifically to individual regions and circumstances.¹³



What: The LARA is currently collaborating with four pilot areas – Hertfordshire, Surrey, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and Liverpool City Region – to help create tailored retrofit plans. This includes monitoring and evaluating the impact of these plans through

a comprehensive programme and helping attract investment and funding where possible. LARA also provides an online toolkit for local authorities who want to set up 'Retrofit Facilitation Services' for households in their area.



Impact: The LARA programme supports local authorities that currently lack the internal expertise and capacity to develop local area retrofit strategies. It demonstrates how place-based retrofit can be successful across a range of tenures whilst recognising local community needs. There is an opportunity for government to expand such programmes geographically and increase their funding to further establish precedents for robust place-based retrofit.

Scaling retrofit schemes: Milton Keynes



Who: Several local authorities have started combining funding streams to launch their own area-based schemes. Milton Keynes has used grant funding as well as maintenance and improvement funds for social housing to retrofit housing estates, creating efficiencies by aligning funding streams with its wider investment strategy for its housing stock.¹⁴



What: The City Council developed a methodology for scalable energy efficiency upgrades utilising a street-level approach. The work for properties included roof upgrades, external and internal wall insulation, high-

performance windows and doors, ventilation upgrades, and high-performance garage doors. A key principle of the approach was to complete the retrofit works alongside other maintenance work in social housing, meaning issues such as low internal air quality, dampness and mould could be addressed simultaneously.



Impact: Milton Keynes demonstrates the potential benefits of bringing decarbonisation goals into the wider capital spend pipeline, and that a holistic, area-based approach for social home upgrades can be effective.

14. Domestic Energy Efficiency Upgrades, Netherfield, Milton Keynes City Council, Local Government Association, 2022

15. 2024/2025 Business Plan, Bristol City Leap, 2024

Crowding in private investment: Bristol City Leap



Who: In May 2018, Bristol City Council released its 'City Leap Prospectus' which set out details of the council's sustainability programs, past successes and identified over £875 million pounds of investment opportunities across a range of green sectors. The prospectus attracted interest from over 180 local, national and international organisations, including technology firms, investors, community organisations and energy and infrastructure developers.



What: Since then, a twenty-year joint venture between Bristol City Council and Ameresco has been established, attempting to demonstrate how the public and private sectors can work with communities to change how a city generates and uses energy, in a way that reduces bills for those



most in need and improves environments for residents. Unsurprisingly, a core component of this is retrofitting homes and improving housing across the city.

Impact: City Leap has already created a substantial pipeline of decarbonisation projects; this includes targeting a £57 million investment in social housing.¹⁵

Although local authorities across the country at different levels face distinct challenges and have varying resources, City Leap provides a blueprint for how other cities and local authorities could maximise private investment opportunities to crowd in private investment for retrofitting and other sustainability programmes.

Enhancing public confidence and local skills: City of York



Who: Through the support of Innovate UK, the City of York is partnering with Brightsparks Agency, Energy Systems Catapult, University of York, York Community Energy CBS, Wrapt Homes, Abundance Investment and North Yorkshire Council to launch its Retrofit One-Stop Shop York (ROSSY). The project aims to support the retrofitting of homes with low-carbon measures, improve the resident experience and contribute to better energy efficiency standards across the city.¹⁶



What: The project will involve engagement with residents, creating 'deep retrofit' demonstrator homes, developing supply chain skills and ways to match approved suppliers and products to needs, and exploration of innovative financing methods. Through a digital platform, residents will have access to personalised advice and recommendations. They will also be able to commission in-person home energy assessments, receive support from an adviser, and be referred to relevant grants and financing



options to help them find the most affordable way of achieving their goals.¹⁷

ROSSY will have a network of approved suppliers who have received training and meet standards, helping to provide residents and communities with greater confidence in the companies carrying out the work. ROSSY will also require all retrofits facilitated through its platform to be managed by public sector retrofit coordinators to ensure a consistent standard.¹⁸

Impact: Although ROSSY is largely focused on the private rental sector, there is an opportunity to replicate similar programmes across the social housing sector, providing residents with more opportunities to engage with the retrofit process and advocate for home upgrades. Similarly, replicating local public databases of trusted service providers will encourage providers to ensure they are working to the highest standards whilst facilitating greater trust from residents.

16. Retrofit One-Stop-Shop York, City of York Council

17. Making the retrofit journey simple for York residents, York and Humber Climate Commission, 2024

18. CSI York project to boost green construction skills, City of York Council, 2024

19. Enabling Locally-led Retrofit, ESG, 2023

Building internal capacity and skills: Doncaster and Nottingham



Who/what: Both Nottingham and Doncaster city councils have set up internal small energy efficiency consultancy services from their housing and sustainability teams. Doncaster's consultancy programme also provides heat and energy efficiency advice to schools.¹⁹

The City of Doncaster Council has also trained internal staff as retrofit coordinators for their public projects, which has significantly increased quality and accountability outcomes.²⁰



Impact: These schemes have enabled the local authorities to maintain in-house skills in sustainability and homes despite cuts to local authorities' funding. Not all authorities have the resources to develop such skills or programmes and there is an opportunity for government to provide training for those that don't.

Increasing in-house knowledge and skills will help ensure that local authorities are able to best plan and coordinate retrofit works for residents and that measures are delivered to high standard.

20. Recommendations for the government's Warm Homes retrofit strategy, TUC, 2024

21. [Reforms to the Energy Performance of Buildings regime - GOV.UK](#)

Recommendations

Our recommendations are focused on three areas where national government can play an important role in creating the right environment for local authorities to deliver. The recommendations are by no means exhaustive but, instead, seek to build on good practices and identify where significant challenges remain. They recognise the essential role local authorities have in delivering warm, green, and healthy homes for residents and look to ensure that their differing capabilities do not create unequal provision, especially when it comes to those households most in need.



1. Identifying funding gaps

Consistent funding cycles and crowding in private investment will be key to enabling local authorities and housing associations to deliver the government's decarbonisation objectives

- 01 Consolidate local retrofit schemes and allocate funding on a non-competitive basis and through longer settlements. Move towards funding that is more flexible, so local authorities can blend and deliver schemes more efficiently as well as combine pots of funding to deliver retrofit alongside wider maintenance and infrastructure improvements.
- 02 Establish a working group on how local authorities and social housing providers can better account for the wider benefits of retrofit in their business planning. DESNZ should coordinate the group which should include representatives from the department and MHCLG, local authorities and other social housing providers.
- 03 Review new routes to crowding in private investment into local government and housing providers' retrofit schemes, identifying existing schemes and alternative funding mechanisms that support residents and those delivering measures. Consolidate funding options and relevant advice into a single resource that is easily accessible for local authorities and housing providers.



2. Building capability and capacity

The mixed results of previous schemes have highlighted an insufficient focus on those expected to deliver the schemes and benefit from them. Local authorities and housing associations need support from central government to ensure they have the skills, resources and frameworks to deliver.

- 01 Build on the work of retrofit training programmes, such as Retrofit Information, Support and Expertise (RISE), to ensure more training is readily available to local authorities around delivering retrofitting schemes as well as on green finance and private sector investment opportunities within legal and finance teams. Training programmes should work with existing training providers including the LGA, the Retrofit Academy, UKGBC and CIPFA to help signpost clear routes for local authorities to courses and improve the understanding of the benefits of relevant training.
- 02 DESNZ to consult on allowing local authorities to use funding awarded through government schemes more flexibly in terms of training staff and building internal capacity. This should include considering permitting authorities to allocate a certain percentage or portion of funding to upskill staff to ensure grant funding will be spent effectively and delivery is efficient.
- 03 To support local skills, the new Office for Clean Jobs should develop a new local skills drive and strategy to scale up efforts to train more low-carbon heat engineers and renewables installers, working with local authorities to identify where there are the greatest regional gaps in retrofit skills and building this into the final iteration of the Skills and Growth Levy.
- 04 To enhance planning capacity for local authorities and increase the availability and accessibility of property data. This includes, as suggested in DESNZ and MHCLG's EPC consultation, reforming the EPC register to ensure higher quality data is more readily available at a local and individual property level.²¹



3. Supporting localised approaches

A Westminster-centric approach to the home decarbonisation and energy efficiency transition may restrict local government's ability to develop bespoke approaches and engage properly with residents. Likewise, prioritising those most in need ensures we are not creating unequal provision.

- 01 Ensure the Warm Homes Plan places responsibility for the development and implementation of retrofit strategies in the hands of local authorities, supporting the scale up of delivery. DESNZ to provide local authorities with greater control over how grant funding is spent including expanding the eligibility criteria for households, facilitating area-based approaches which cover a range of tenures and allowing a set quantum of grants and subsidies to be used for homes that would otherwise not qualify for funding.
- 02 Provide advice to local authorities to produce priority neighbourhood plans alongside local area energy plans and spatial plans as well as expand initiatives like LARA. This would facilitate area-based approaches and help tackle the households most in need in every area including social homes, alongside building local workforces nationwide and ensuring the energy system can support the pace of retrofit.
- 03 Establish a strong framework for good resident and community engagement to be employed by local authorities and housing providers. MHCLG to consult with local authorities, housing providers and community groups on development, incorporating examples of existing best practices and highlighting the benefits of engaging households early on.
- 04 Ensure the sharing of knowledge from devolved retrofit pilots – including those run by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and the West Midlands Combined Authority – with other local authorities alongside the wider expansion of such schemes and integrated settlements. This would support the successful rollout of future locally led retrofitting schemes, allowing councils to effectively target the homes that need the support most.

About Sureserve

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The company's strength is our Nationwide knowledge delivered as regional expertise and commitment to excellent customer service. We foster strong partnerships and maintaining a focus on solutions and sustainability.





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