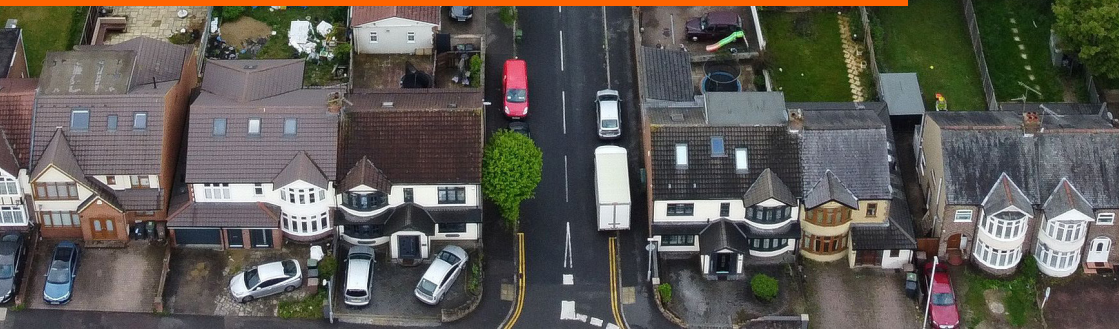




A VISION FOR A STRONG RETROFIT SYSTEM



ABOUT THIS REPORT



This report examines what needs to change to create a stronger, more stable and effective national retrofit system.

The National Retrofit Hub has developed the report through its work with people and organisations across the retrofit system, bringing together experience of policy, programme delivery and retrofit in practice. It brings together their experience and identifies the areas in which change is needed.

We are publishing the report at the Retrofit, Obviously! Summit to test and develop this thinking with the wider sector. The Summit will explore where responsibility for action sits, strengthen the proposals, and begin building commitment around the next steps.

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INTRODUCTION



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UK retrofit sector stands at a pivotal moment. The Government's Warm Homes Plan (WHP) represents a significant and welcome commitment to helping more people live in comfortable homes they can afford to run. It also provides a route towards reducing carbon emissions and energy poverty as we change how our homes are heated and powered. However, while the Plan provides an important foundation, it does not capture the full opportunity that retrofit presents for society, the economy, and communities.

The WHP provides an opportunity to build a stronger retrofit system, but short-term funding and fragmented programmes have prevented the sector from developing the long-term capacity needed for consistent delivery across all tenures. Transforming the retrofit system must therefore happen alongside the delivery of the WHP if we are to meet legally binding fuel poverty and carbon reduction targets, and provide millions of people with resilient, comfortable, and secure homes.

This report calls for a long-term national commitment that strengthens, scales, and diversifies local delivery and gives the sector greater certainty. It asks the government that in the design of policy they involve those with practical experience, and to judge success by how homes perform for the people living in them, not only by the number of measures installed.

It calls for a strong retrofit system built on seven foundations.

1. Long-term direction

A clear, long-term vision so organisations can plan, invest, and build capacity with confidence

2. Local flexibility

The freedom for local areas to develop place-based approaches that reflect their buildings, communities, and priorities

3. Shared decision making

Meaningful involvement of delivery organisations and communities in shaping policy and programmes, including decisions about governance, procurement and accountability

4. Whole homes and neighbourhoods

An approach that considers the needs of whole homes and neighbourhoods rather than focusing on isolated measures

5. Outcomes that matter

A broader measure of success, developed with the sector, that includes residents' health, comfort and energy costs, alongside the performance and resilience of their homes

6. Lasting capacity

Public investment that builds long term delivery capacity across tenures, with revenue funding for people, skills and partnerships alongside investment in capital works

7. Quality and confidence

Stronger quality assurance, informed decision making, interoperable data, effective coordination, and proportionate oversight that support consistently high-quality work



A successful retrofit system can generate healthier and more comfortable homes, lower energy bills, improved climate resilience, reduced fuel poverty, economic activity, secure and dignified employment, enhanced social value, stronger communities, and a more just transition to a low-carbon future for all.

The WHP can be a powerful lever for this transformation. Its implementation should address immediate needs while creating the conditions for long-term market development, workforce growth, community participation, and sustained delivery capability across every tenure and locality. This means strengthening approaches that are already delivering results and building the systems, capacity, and partnerships needed to scale them over time. Policy must support a thriving and resilient retrofit sector as well as individual outcomes.

Retrofit is essential to making the UK's existing homes fit for a changing climate. The Warm Homes Plan gives us an important starting point. We now need transformation that turns individual programmes into a stable and effective national retrofit and home improvement system.



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SECTION 1

THE MOMENT WE ARE TRYING TO MEET



Retrofit does not happen in isolation. The system we need must respond to the social, economic, and environmental pressures shaping people's lives, while preparing homes and communities for the changes ahead.

THE PICTURE AT HOME

The UK's socio-political landscape has become increasingly defined by a sense of uncertainty and transition. Households have faced rising energy bills and a prolonged cost of living crisis, while the impacts of climate change are becoming harder to ignore, from extreme weather and flooding to pressures on food production and agricultural resilience. At the same time, political instability, widening inequalities, and growing tensions within communities have contributed to a feeling that old certainties are breaking down. Concerns about failing crops, energy security, and economic vulnerability highlight how deeply interconnected social, environmental, and economic challenges are.

Our homes sit at the centre of this picture. They affect our health, comfort, finances, and security, yet much of the UK's housing was not designed for the climate and energy system it must now withstand.

"Home is where everything begins. It is where our personal relationships stem from. It is the base from which we engage with society, with our community."

- Vicky Spratt, Tenants

A GLOBAL VIEW

Globally, a similar picture emerges. Armed conflicts continue to devastate lives and displace millions, while democratic institutions in many countries are strained by increasingly divisive politics and polarised public discourse. Alongside these immediate crises, the accelerating breakdown of the climate system presents a profound challenge to humanity, bringing rising temperatures, biodiversity loss, and growing risks to food, water, and energy systems. Together, these pressures are exposing the limits of a model of progress built on endless extraction, consumption, and the burning of fossil fuels.

The transition ahead is therefore about more than replacing one technology with another. It also requires us to consider how resources are used, how decisions are made, and how people participate in shaping the places in which they live.

LOOKING FORWARD



Yet this moment can also be understood as the end of one story and the beginning of another. The dominant narrative of recent decades has often cast people primarily as consumers, with economic growth driven by extraction and ever-increasing consumption. A new story is emerging, one that sees people not simply as subjects of political systems or consumers in markets, but as active citizens with the power to shape the future.

"What would it look like if we put the same energy and inspiration that currently goes into telling ourselves we're consumers, into building our agency as Citizens."

- Jon Alexander, Citizens

In this emerging narrative, care, resilience, and collective wellbeing become as important as, if not more important than, efficiency and profit. The "green transition" offers more than a technological solution to climate change; it represents an opportunity to build more resilient communities, restore relationships with the natural world, and create economies that are designed around stewardship, participation, and long-term flourishing.

Applied to retrofit, this means moving beyond a system in which measures are delivered to passive recipients. Residents should be recognised as active participants with valuable knowledge about their homes, needs, and communities. Local organisations and institutions should have greater influence over how programmes are designed and delivered, while residents should have a meaningful role in shaping the decisions that affect their homes and neighbourhoods.

WHAT THIS MOMENT ASKS OF US

Retrofit must be more than a technical response to climate change. It must help create healthier homes, more resilient places, and a society in which people have a meaningful role in shaping change.

The opportunity is to build a system that works with people and communities, values their knowledge, celebrates a thriving home improvement sector, and prepares our homes for the future.

SECTION 2

WHY THE RETROFIT SYSTEM NEEDS TRANSFORMATION



Against this backdrop, the Warm Homes Plan provides an important foundation and vital investment. However, delivering its ambitions and realising the wider potential of retrofit will require a system capable of sustaining progress beyond individual programmes.

HOMES PREPARED FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Our climate is changing around us. Average temperatures are rising, with periods of extreme heat in the summer, while wetter and more unpredictable winters are increasing pressure on our infrastructure and public health. These changes are exposing the fact that many of our buildings were not designed for the conditions they now face. Many homes struggle with overheating in summer, heat loss in winter, flood risk, poor air quality, and rising energy costs. Homes must keep people warm when it is cold and protect them from overheating during hot weather and manage moisture effectively as weather patterns change.

"To address this, we will need to implement neighborhood sites for dealing with heat related emergencies, to adapt our homes, as well as to create greater access to, and quality of, green and blue infrastructure."

- CIVIC SQUARE

At the same time, decades of underinvestment in local infrastructure and public space have weakened the resilience of many communities. As climate pressures intensify, the limitations of housing systems focused on short-term value rather than long-term wellbeing are becoming increasingly apparent.

Retrofit cannot therefore be treated simply as a programme of individual energy efficiency measures. It must be recognised as a wider societal investment, improving the performance of whole homes and neighbourhoods, protecting the health of the people who live in them and preparing our housing for the conditions it will face over the coming decades.

A SYSTEM THAT CANNOT SUSTAIN PROGRESS



The current system is not set up to achieve this consistently or at the scale required. Funding is often tied to individual schemes with limited timescales, whilst the market beyond grants continues to stutter rather than flourish. Delivery organisations build teams and capacity, only to lose them when programmes end. An industry filled with talent, capability, and drive is all too often left guessing what standards, quality, and investment are expected. Residents are often brought into the process after important decisions have already been made, while those responsible for delivery are not always involved early enough in shaping policy.

WHO DECIDES?

These challenges are also shaped by the way housing, energy and construction markets operate. Markets can support innovation and attract investment, but they do not always reward outcomes such as wellbeing, resilience, and long-term stewardship. In housing, the treatment of homes as financial assets more than places to live has contributed to rising costs, insecurity and a widespread feeling that the systems shaping people's lives are beyond their control. Many people experience a diminished sense of agency, as if decisions affecting people's homes and neighbourhoods are made elsewhere and for someone else's benefit.

A stronger retrofit system must give people greater agency and align the efforts of communities, industry, policymakers, and investors around shared outcomes. This does not mean working against commercial interests. It means creating the conditions in which investment and commercial activity support homes and places that work well for people now and remain resilient for future generations.

"What if the climate transition and retrofit of our homes and streets were designed, owned, and governed by the people who live there?"

- CIVIC SQUARE

There is considerable knowledge across the sector, but it is not being leveraged as effectively as it should be. Local authorities understand their housing and the needs of their areas. Housing providers and businesses bring direct delivery experience. Communities understand how proposed changes will affect the people who live there. A stronger retrofit system must make better use of this knowledge and involve those responsible for delivery, as well as those whose homes and communities are affected, in shaping policy and programmes.



CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

There is already evidence that a different approach is possible. Community energy projects, mutual aid networks, place-based retrofit initiatives, housing providers and businesses working to improve homes at scale all show that people and organisations are willing to engage with complex challenges when given the right opportunities, support, and incentives.

Our emerging [Retrofit Community of Industry](#) reflects this potential. It brings together organisations that recognise that the transition is not simply a technical or commercial challenge, but a social one too.

Responsibility for transformation cannot sit with one part of the system alone. Government has an essential role in setting a consistent direction and providing long-term certainty, but the wider sector must also improve how it works across organisational and geographical boundaries. The task is not simply to convince people to care, but to create the conditions in which communities, policymakers, practitioners, and institutions can work together to shape better outcomes (read our [Place-Based Retrofit in Practice](#) resource).

Building a more resilient future will require technology, investment, and policy, alongside the collective agency, creativity, and commitment that already exist across our communities and industries.

WHAT MUST CHANGE?

The sector needs a clear direction that gives organisations the confidence to invest and build capacity. Places need the freedom and resources to respond to their own homes and communities. Residents and delivery organisations need a meaningful role in shaping decisions.

Public investment must leave behind stronger skills, relationships and local capability, alongside better homes. Success must be judged by the quality of the work and the difference it makes to people's lives.





Understanding how we close the gap between the system we have and the system we need starts with an honest assessment of where we are today. The available data shows both areas of progress and the scale of the challenge that remains.

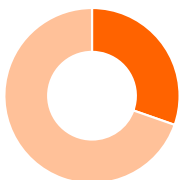
REVISITING THE STATE OF THE NATION

In 2024, the National Retrofit Hub published its first [State of the Nation report](#), bringing together data and insights from people involved in retrofit delivery across the UK.

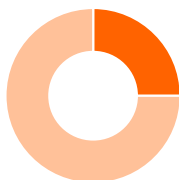
Two years on, we have revisited the evidence to understand what has changed, where progress is being made and how far the system still has to go. The picture is mixed. Some technologies are growing, but high energy costs, poor housing conditions and uneven delivery continue to affect millions of households.

FUEL POVERTY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

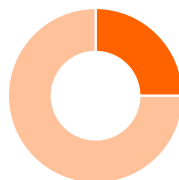
Fuel poverty is measured differently across the UK, but every measure points to significant pressure. In England, 9.4% of households are projected to be in fuel poverty in 2026 under the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency definition.¹ Broader affordability measures show that the number of households struggling with energy costs is much higher.



30.4% households in England need to spend more than 10% of their income (after housing costs) on energy



25% households in Wales need to spend more than 10% of their income (after housing costs) on energy



28.7% households in Scotland need to spend more than 10% of their income (after housing costs) on energy

Sources:

[Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics in England, 2026](#)

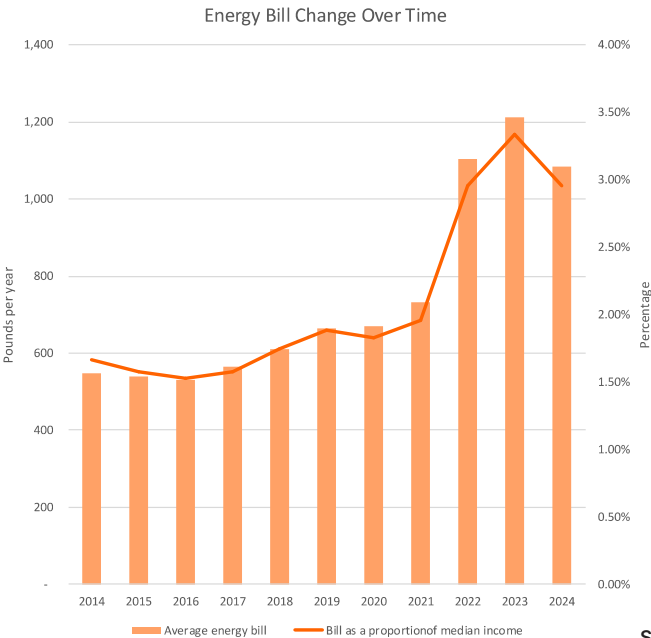
[Fuel Poverty modelled estimates for Wales: as of October 2024](#)

[Scottish House Condition Survey: 2024 Key Findings](#)

1. Gov.uk, Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics in England, 2026

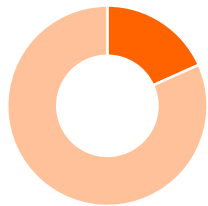


Energy bills have fallen from the peak of the energy crisis but remain well above their pre-2021 level. People living in inefficient homes need more energy to achieve the same level of warmth and remain more exposed when prices rise.



Sources:
[Energy Bill - gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk/energy-bills)
[Income ONS](https://www.ons.gov.uk/income)

The effects are not shared equally. Private and social renters are more likely than owner-occupiers to report being unable to keep comfortably warm, showing how tenure, housing condition, and household circumstances shape people's experiences.



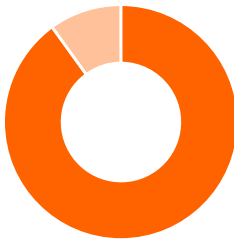
18.3% households in
England **unable to keep
warm in winter**

Sources:
[English Housing Survey 2024 to 2025: home insulation - fact sheet - Annex table 7](#)

THE CONDITION AND RESILIENCE OF OUR HOMES

The underlying condition of the housing stock has also changed too slowly. In England, 44% of homes are still rated EPC D or below², 15% fail the Decent Homes Standard and 1.4 million have damp or mould problems.³ Together, these figures show that poor energy performance is often part of a wider problem with the quality and condition of the home.

The challenge is not limited to keeping homes warm. Research by Arup estimates that 90% of UK homes could be at risk of overheating at 2°C of global warming. Retrofit must therefore prepare homes for hotter summers as well as colder winters, while avoiding improvements that create new risks through poor design or inadequate ventilation.

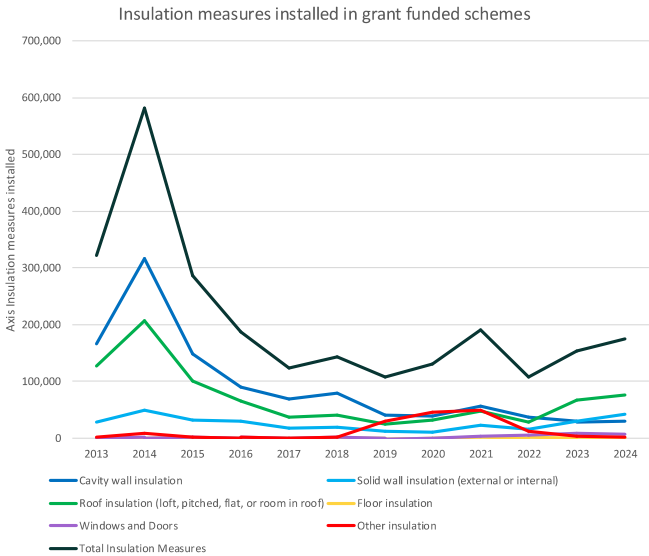


Sources:
[Arup - Addressing overheating risk in existing UK homes](#)

DELIVERY REMAINS UNEVEN

Government-funded programmes have delivered millions of insulation measures, but activity peaked around 2013 and 2014 and has not since returned to the same level. This shows that delivery at scale is possible, but also how quickly it can fall when programmes, funding or policy change without a long-term vision to keep working towards.

Sources:
England – gov.uk official statistics releases
[Heat in Buildings: progress report 2025](#)



-
- 2. [English Housing Survey – Energy Efficiency Annex Table 2.2](#)
 - 3. [English Housing Survey 2024 to 2025: headline findings on housing quality and energy efficiency](#)

A stronger retrofit system needs sustained delivery rather than short periods of high activity followed by decline.

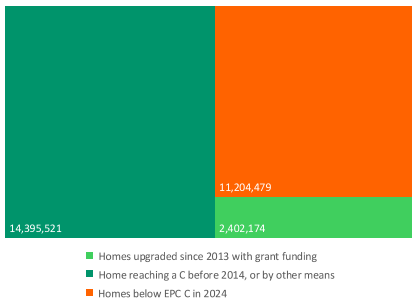
The picture is more positive for some low-carbon technologies. Heat-pump, solar and battery installations are increasing, showing growing household and market interest. However, progress differs considerably by measure and remains far short of what will be required across the housing stock.

No single programme, technology or funding route can provide the whole response. Delivery will need to increase through a broader range of routes so the system can reach different homes and households without becoming dependent on one programme.

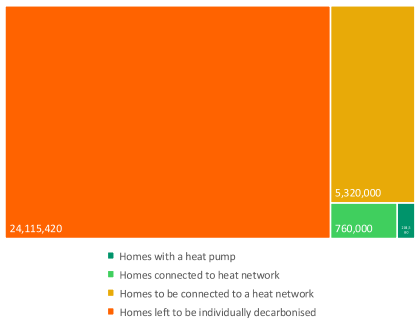
THE GAP THAT REMAINS

Millions of homes still need to improve their energy performance and resilience to changing weather patterns, while decarbonising heat will require a significant increase in low-carbon heating. The sector will also need the capacity to deliver this work well, with an estimated 200,000 additional builders and skilled professionals required.⁴

ENGLAND – EPC C TARGET



UK – HEAT DECARBONISATION



Closing these gaps will take sustained delivery across different tenures, technologies, and funding routes. Increasing volume will be essential, but it cannot come at the expense of installation quality, household experience or the performance of the completed home.

WHAT THE DATA DOES NOT TELL US

The metrics used to measure retrofit delivery also have limitations. An EPC rating of C does not guarantee a well-performing home. The number of measures installed does not tell us how much the quality, comfort, or resilience of a home has improved. Available data also provides an incomplete picture of privately financed retrofit.

The National Retrofit Hub's [Measuring Outcomes and Impact Evaluation project](#) makes the case for better measurement and more consistent collection of data on both retrofit outputs and outcomes. Without this, activity can be counted without providing a full understanding of whether homes and lives have improved.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR RETROFIT

Upgrading the nation's homes is not only a response to urgent social and environmental challenges. It is also an opportunity to create skilled local employment, support manufacturing, strengthen supply chains and contribute to local economic growth. Realising these benefits will require delivery at far greater scale, without losing sight of quality or the needs of individual households.

We need to understand the national picture while recognising the experience behind the figures. Every number represents a person living in a home with its own characteristics, circumstances and needs. A stronger retrofit system must respond to the scale of the challenge while improving homes and lives.



SECTION 4

A VISION FOR A STRONG RETROFIT SYSTEM



The NRH State of the Nation shows the distance between the scale of the challenge and our current ability to respond. Our vision sets out the system we need to close that gap.

A strong retrofit system is not measured only by the number of measures installed or programmes completed. It is measured by whether homes work well for the people living in them. They should be healthy, comfortable, affordable, and resilient.

WHAT IS MISSING?

Industry transformation is not simply about increasing retrofit activity or improving individual programmes. It is about creating the conditions for retrofit to operate as a coordinated, scalable, and enduring system.

The sector is not short of solutions. Rather, it lacks the shared infrastructure, relationships, and enabling conditions needed to connect existing good practice, build confidence, and deliver consistent outcomes at scale.

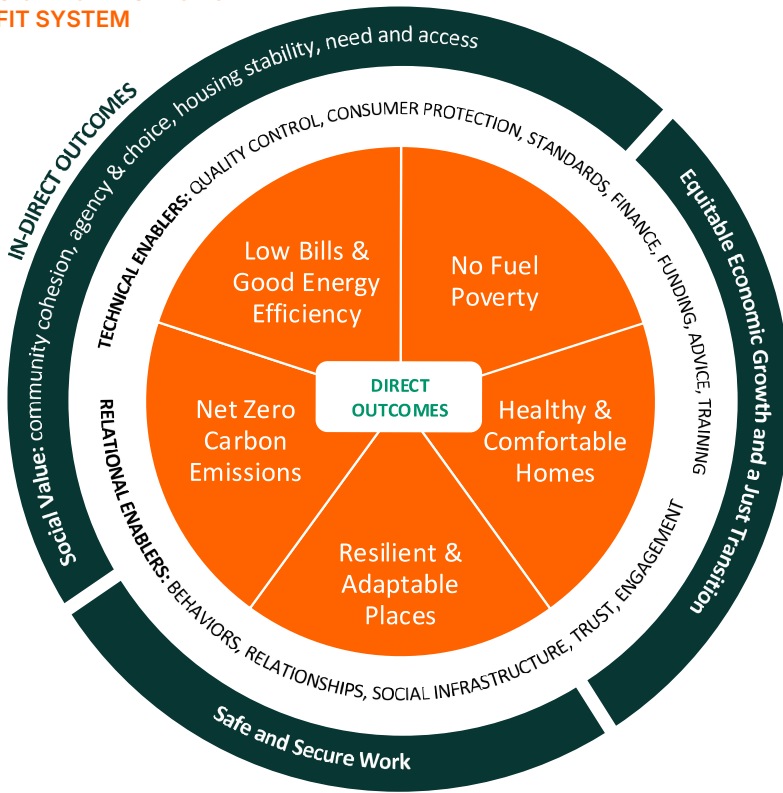
Transformation means moving beyond a fragmented landscape of projects and interventions towards a system capable of delivering lasting change. National direction should provide long term certainty while local areas have the flexibility to respond to their buildings, communities, and priorities. Residents should be active participants rather than passive recipients. Delivery organisations should be able to invest in people, skills, and partnerships with confidence.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE?

At the heart of this transformation is an understanding that retrofit should deliver far more than carbon reduction or lower energy bills. A strong retrofit system creates direct outcomes such as healthy and comfortable homes, reduced fuel poverty, lower emissions, and more resilient places.

It can also generate wider benefits including equitable economic growth, social value, community resilience, and safe and secure employment. These outcomes are mutually reinforcing, but they can only be realised when the sector invests not just in delivery, but in the infrastructure that supports it.

The opportunity is not simply to deliver more retrofit. It is to use that investment to create lasting value for people, places, and the wider economy.



HOW DO WE DO IT?

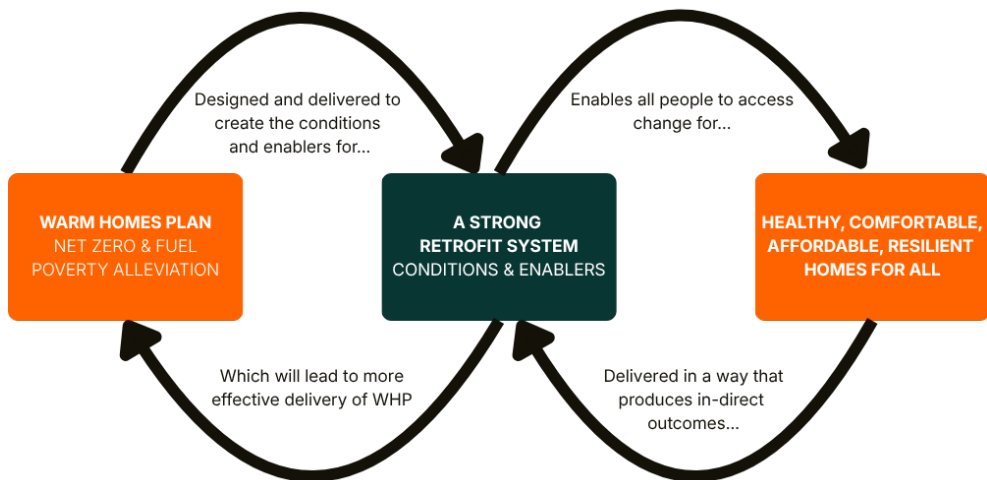
For the National Retrofit Hub, industry transformation requires strengthening both the technical and relational enablers of retrofit.

Technical enablers include standards, quality assurance, finance, funding, advice, and skills. Relational enablers include trust, engagement, collaboration, social infrastructure, and long-term relationships across the sector.

Neither is sufficient alone. Technical frameworks without trust and participation will struggle to meet people's needs. Strong relationships without finance, skills, and quality assurance cannot be delivered at the required scale. A successful system depends on both working together.

By bringing policymakers, industry, housing providers, local authorities and communities together around a shared vision, we can build stronger relationships and a clearer understanding of the role each can play. When people also commit to taking action within their part of the system, individual efforts become more connected and the whole system can learn and improve over time.

The Warm Homes Plan has the potential to act as a catalyst for this change. Its greatest legacy will be achieved if it helps create the conditions for a stronger retrofit system that delivers healthy, comfortable, affordable and resilient homes beyond grant programmes.



THE SYSTEM WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS

A strong retrofit system connects national direction with local knowledge, technical capability with trusted relationships and investment with outcomes that matter to people.

No part succeeds alone. When these elements work together, retrofit can deliver healthy, comfortable, affordable, and resilient homes at the scale the country needs.

Many of the foundations already exist. Our shared task is to connect them, strengthen them and make them available everywhere.





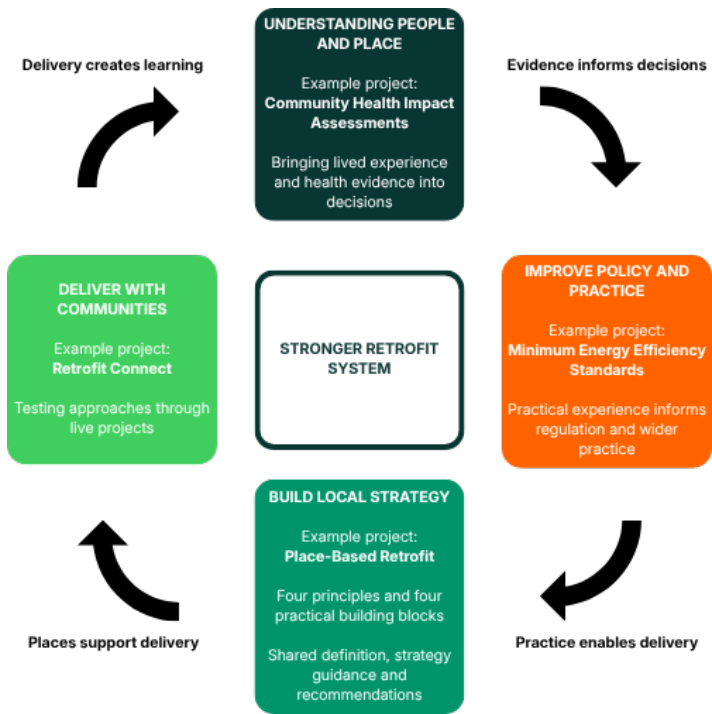
THE FUTURE SYSTEM IS ALREADY EMERGING

A stronger retrofit system will not be created through one policy, programme, or organisation. It will emerge as different parts of the system begin to work together in new ways. That change is already happening.

Across the National Retrofit Hub's work, communities are helping to define the outcomes that matter. Evidence and experience from delivery organisations is reaching policymakers. National ambition is being translated into practical local strategies. Industry expertise is being connected with community leadership and live delivery.

The National Retrofit Hub has work under way across many parts of the retrofit system. The four examples featured here offer a snapshot of that wider activity. Each addresses a different challenge and shows how change in one part of the system can support progress elsewhere. And each has been delivered in partnership with our many collaborators.

Together with the wide range of innovative work and best practice demonstrated across our network, they illustrate practical progress towards the vision set out in this report. They are strengthening place-based delivery, involving communities and practitioners, broadening how success is understood, and building the knowledge, relationships, and capacity needed for lasting change.



TURNING EVIDENCE INTO BETTER DECISIONS

These projects show how change in one part of the retrofit system can support change elsewhere. They bring lived experience and practical knowledge into decision making, give places tools they can use and create learning through delivery.

Community Health Impact Assessment (CHIA)

Retrofit is commonly measured through energy ratings, carbon savings and installations. These measures do not fully capture how homes affect people's health, comfort and security.

Developed by the National Retrofit Hub and Centric Lab, the Community Health Impact Assessment workbook brings lived experience, local knowledge and wider evidence together. It gives communities and local organisations a practical way to assess how proposed decisions will affect health before those decisions are fixed. The NRH and Centric Lab are working with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to test its use in place with communities who have been part of the Solihull Healthy Homes programme.

It changes the starting question: how will this decision affect our health?

This supports the wider shift called for in this report: involving people earlier and measuring success through the experience of residents as well as the performance of buildings.



Raising Standards in the Private Rental Sector

300 professionals informed three reports and consultation responses across England, Wales and Scotland.

The National Retrofit Hub brought together people working in housing, health, finance, tenant advocacy and retrofit delivery to inform the development of Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). Their experience showed that standards cannot work in isolation. They depend on effective enforcement, accessible finance, trusted advice and protection for tenants. The standards themselves also need to be well designed and set high-enough to ensure they provide the housing health and affordability outcomes renters need.

Evidence and insights from participants entered formal policy processes and helped move the discussion beyond compliance towards regulation that improves homes and protects the people living in them.

This shows why policy needs to be shaped with the people who understand how it will work in practice.



Place-Based Retrofit

73% of those consulted before the project did not feel equipped to deliver a comprehensive place-based approach.

The Place-Based Retrofit project explored what local organisations need to plan and coordinate retrofit around their own homes, people and priorities. It brought together research, case studies and experience from local authorities, housing providers, community organisations and practitioners.

The project established four guiding principles and four practical building blocks for place-based retrofit. These have been developed into a shared definition, practical guidance for local strategy and recommendations for national government.

The work gives places a clearer framework for bringing together housing, health, skills, finance, infrastructure and community priorities. It also identifies the national support and investment needed to turn local ambition into lasting delivery.

This shows how national direction can support local flexibility, giving places the tools and capacity to develop approaches that work in their area.



Retrofit Connect

Retrofit Connect strengthens community organisations to lead equitable, community-centred home retrofit projects through peer learning, mentoring, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing across the UK.

Retrofit Connect brings community and civic organisation leaders together with people working in the retrofit sector. The programme focuses on capacity building rather than short-term project delivery. By combining peer learning, mentoring, facilitated reflection, and direct access to expertise, we help organisations build sustainable capability that remains long after the programme ends.

The learning moves both ways. The 9 community and civic-led organisations of the current cohort gain technical knowledge and stronger networks, while sector organisations develop a better understanding of local priorities and the relationships needed for delivery.

This demonstrates the value of involving communities in shaping retrofit, rather than treating them only as recipients of programmes.



WHAT THESE EXAMPLES SHOW

Together, these projects support the central argument of this report. Better decisions draw on lived experience and practical knowledge. Places need the tools and capacity to respond to local circumstances. Delivery should improve people's homes and lives, not simply increase the number of measures installed.

SECTION 6

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?



This report calls for a strong retrofit system built on seven foundations.

1. Long-term direction

2. Local flexibility

3. Shared decision making

4. Whole homes and neighbourhoods

5. Outcomes that matter

6. Lasting capacity

7. Quality and confidence

The evidence and experiences brought together in this report point to a clear conclusion. The challenge facing the UK is not simply to deliver more retrofit, but to create the conditions for retrofit to become a stable, trusted and enduring national system.

While the Warm Homes Plan provides an important opportunity, lasting success will depend on whether it helps build the capabilities, relationships and confidence needed for long-term delivery across every tenure and locality.

Drawing on the experience of communities, delivery organisations, local authorities, housing providers and industry, these seven foundations provide a framework for achieving that transformation. Together, they offer a practical route towards closing the gap between the system we have today and the one we need, creating a retrofit system that can deliver at scale while remaining responsive to the people and places it serves.

WHAT THIS MOMENT ASKS OF US - HOW MIGHT WE RESPOND?

Imagine a future with a strong retrofit system, where cycles of care and repair are a fundamental function of the built environment. A future that provides safe, skilled and secure work for generations to come; where damp, mould and cold homes are rare exceptions rather than common experiences; and where neighbourhoods are equipped to adapt to the climate and weather shocks that have become part of everyday life. Imagine people feeling confident that their homes will support their health, comfort, and wellbeing throughout changing circumstances and seasons.

WHAT MUST CHANGE - HOW MIGHT WE CHANGE?



Imagine a system where grant programmes strengthen, rather than substitute for, a thriving and innovative home improvement sector. A system where long-term investment gives organisations confidence to invest, where local areas have the freedom to respond to local needs, and where public investment leaves behind stronger skills, trusted relationships and lasting capacity. Imagine decisions being shaped not only by policy and technical expertise, but by the people living in those homes.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR RETROFIT - A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF RETROFIT?

Imagine if retrofit was understood not as a series of measures installed in homes but as an investment in people, places, and prosperity. A future where warmer homes improve health, lower energy demand strengthens resilience, and retrofit delivery supports skilled employment, local business, and economic renewal. Imagine every retrofit project creating wider value alongside carbon savings.

THE SYSTEM WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS - THE STRONG RETROFIT SYSTEM REALISED?

Imagine looking back and recognising that this transition began not with a single policy or programme but with thousands of people and organisations choosing to work differently together. Across communities, local authorities, housing providers, businesses, and government, the foundations of a stronger retrofit system are already visible. The task now is to strengthen them, connect them, and help them grow. The future system is already emerging. The question is how each of us can help make it last, together.



Baily Garner has supported the production of this report, helping NRH share its findings with the wider retrofit sector.

Baily Garner is a multidisciplinary construction consultancy with extensive experience in housing and retrofit. Its teams work with local authorities and housing providers on major programmes, combining technical knowledge with practical delivery experience.

The benefits of a project management approach to retrofit

Retrofitting millions of homes is not simply a technical challenge. Large programmes can lose momentum when properties are approached individually, without enough planning for how the work will progress across the wider housing stock. This can lead to delays and rising costs, as well as disruption and fatigue for residents.

Baily Garner's approach puts strong project management foundations in place before delivery begins. A clear retrofit strategy is supported by a better understanding of property types, constraints and costs. Resident engagement is planned early, while responsibilities and intended outcomes are agreed across the organisations involved.

This gives delivery teams a shared direction and helps them make better decisions as work moves through assessment, design and installation.

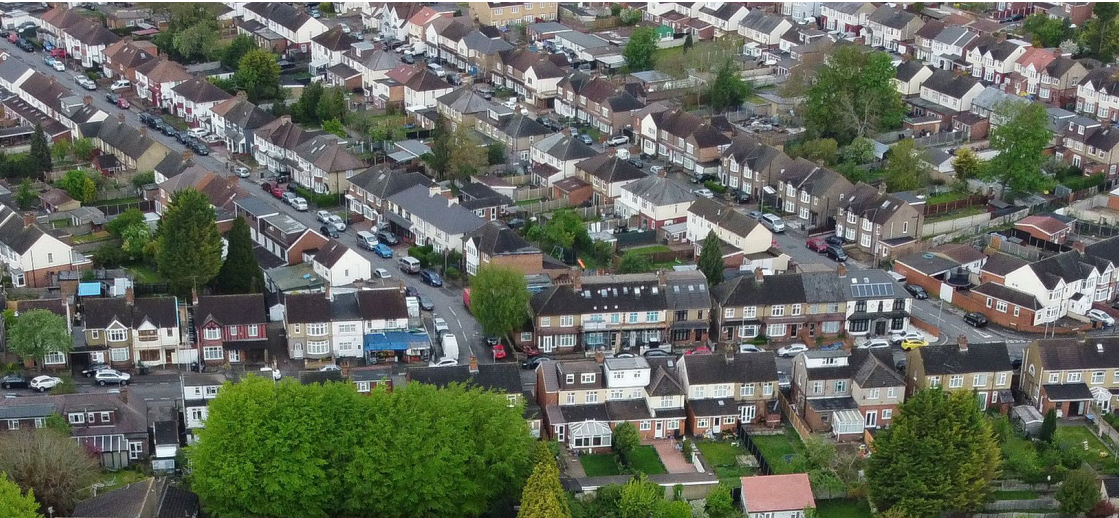
Read [The Benefits of a Project Management Approach to Retrofit](#)

Unlocking Retrofit at Scale

Drawing on more than four years of learning across £100 million of retrofit projects, Baily Garner has created a practical toolkit for organisations planning large-scale programmes.

The toolkit brings retrofit requirements and PAS 2035 together with the RIBA Plan of Work. It sets out the work needed at each stage of a programme, including early strategy, financial planning, resident engagement, quality assurance and evaluation. The result is a practical route through the full retrofit journey.

Explore [Unlocking Retrofit at Scale: A Practical Toolkit Towards Net Zero](#)



There's a role for everyone in building a stronger retrofit system.

Scan the QR code to see how you can get involved.



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