

Welcome

to *Wolverhampton
Affordable Warmth
News*, Winter 2010

Insulation measures at low prices

Now is a good time for everyone to consider insulating their home.

Cavity wall and loft insulation is available from £85 per measure. With potential savings of £220 a year, this is a worthwhile investment for all.

Contact the Energy Saving Trust on freephone 0800 512 012.

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Keeping your home warm and your bills low

As autumn sets in and the weather gets colder, now is the time for you to start thinking about how you can stay warm during the winter months without paying through the roof prices for fuel.

Wolverhampton City Council are working with Hestia Managed Services to offer free training to those organisations who have day to day contact with residents who may feel the effects of winter more than others.

Suffering from the cold?

With the ever increasing cost of fuel bills, poorly insulated homes and inefficient heating systems many people are worrying about how to stay warm over this winter. For residents who are suffering from a cold related illness like angina or arthritis it is essential that their home is as warm as possible during winter. The very old, very young and those who are disabled or have a long-term illness are especially vulnerable. Our training courses are delivered by qualified advisors who will be able to inform you about grants and subsidies that are available and also how to help those suffering in poorly insulated accommodation.

Children can save energy too!

Hestia are also running a series of energy efficiency workshops in Wolverhampton schools. During these activities the children have to answer climate change related questions and identify objects that would help to save energy in their homes.



The children also get involved in Hestia's 'My Energy Saving Passport' challenge aimed at making pupils aware of how much energy they use both at home and at school as well as teaching them how energy usage can be reduced. The challenge encourages children to make sure lights are switched off when leaving the room and that appliances are not left on standby when not in use. Parents also have the chance to get involved by helping their children to take electricity meter readings and adopting behavioural changes to reduce energy usage at home. The class which scores the most points from the passport will be presented with a solar prize!

If you are interested in finding out more about any of these activities or would like to get involved in hosting a presentation session or a school workshop event contact Matthew Pearson on 0121 543 2913.



Loft insulation can help save money on fuel bills

Black Country Housing helps to Kick Start heating

Black Country Housing Group, the Home Improvement Agency for Wolverhampton City Council is bracing itself for an increase in enquiries from people needing new central heating as the cold weather approaches.

The Care & Repair team have already helped hundreds of Wolverhampton homeowners to install and repair central heating, which makes a home more comfortable and can dramatically improve health and wellbeing.

With one of the coldest winters on record last year, people are naturally thinking about how to avoid the worst this winter. Upgrading an old boiler, replacing windows, repairing a roof or installing loft insulation can all help to reduce the cost of heating a home and make it more energy efficient.

But getting repairs can be a stressful thing to organise. “Which builder can I trust? How do I pay for the works? How do I know what needs fixing?” are all common questions which are heard daily by the staff at Care & Repair.

We can help by taking the worry out of having home improvements by giving advice on the repairs and improvements needed, using vetted quality contractors, inspecting the finished works and helping to identify ways to pay for the work through the Kick Start scheme. This scheme has been an affordable solution for many homeowners in Wolverhampton to help them to pay for much needed home improvements such as installing central heating, roof repairs, window replacement and kitchen and bathroom replacements.

To find out more, contact the team on 0121 561 3845.

For information about heating and insulation grants contact the Energy Saving Trust on
0800 512 012

New web pages help us to ‘go green’

A new collection of web pages has been launched that offers residents a wealth of information on green issues.



www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/gogreen brings a range of information together into one place, making it easier for people to find advice on green topics such as how to access heating grants, changing to low energy light bulbs, saving water, and even how to encourage wildlife into your garden.

The web pages include stunning photographs of Wolverhampton’s wildlife and green spaces taken by local amateur photographers.

Tom Winckley, Sustainability Officer at Wolverhampton City Council, said “We wanted to make it easy for residents to find information on green issues. The website pages offer energy saving tips and show how residents can access grants or discounts for heating and insulation. In addition there are direct links to over 60 relevant local and national organisations each providing their own advice and tips.”

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/gogreen also gives information on subjects such as climate change, recycling, composting and volunteering.

From empty homes to eco homes

Wolverhampton Homes, in partnership with All Saints & Blakenhall Community Development (ABCD), have bought 13 empty properties in the All Saints area back into use as energy efficient family homes.

Thanks to a successful funding bid to ABCD, the partners embarked on a refurbishment scheme to improve the traditional pre-1900 solid brick properties and increase demand for the area.

The refurbishment scheme included the installation of renewable technology measures such as solar power to generate heating, hot water and electricity, thermal boarding to improve insulation and measures to harvest rainwater.

These renewable technology and insulation improvements will reduce household running costs and reduce CO² emissions from the properties.

Over the next 18 months students from Wolverhampton University and Colton Hills Secondary School will be in contact with residents to monitor their fuel usage and household running costs, and to measure how residents behaviour has changed based on the technology that has been installed in their properties.

The results will enable Wolverhampton Homes to plan future improvement programmes based on the success of the work undertaken in All Saints.



Renewable technology will reduce household running costs

Wolverhampton Homes worked closely with their decent homes partners Thomas Vale, Frank Haslam Milan and Bullock to deliver the scheme.

For more information contact Homes Direct on (01902) 556789.

Residents benefit from renewable measures

A significant number of properties in Wolverhampton are difficult to insulate through conventional means due to the age, construction or number of people living in the property. As a result Wolverhampton Council is now providing Low Carbon Grants to look at measures that go beyond the more familiar ways of making the home more energy efficient.

The Low Carbon Grant Scheme which is managed by Hestia Managed Services on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council offers renewable energy measures such as solar hot water systems and Sempatap (internal wall insulation). These measures help to improve the thermal efficiency of the property and help residents to save money on their fuel bills and reduce their carbon footprint.

If your home is of solid brick construction householders will not be able to install cavity wall insulation as there is no cavity to fill. However, under the Low Carbon Grant the Council can insulate the internal side of the external walls with a flexible insulation foam/plasterboard called Sempatap. This is particularly effective in terraced properties built before the 1930's.

A solar hot water system can help reduce running costs by approximately 30 - 50% per year. This can make a significant difference to people on a low income who are concerned about spending money on hot water. It will help cut carbon emissions and enable the householder to generate their own energy whilst reducing reliance on imported gas.



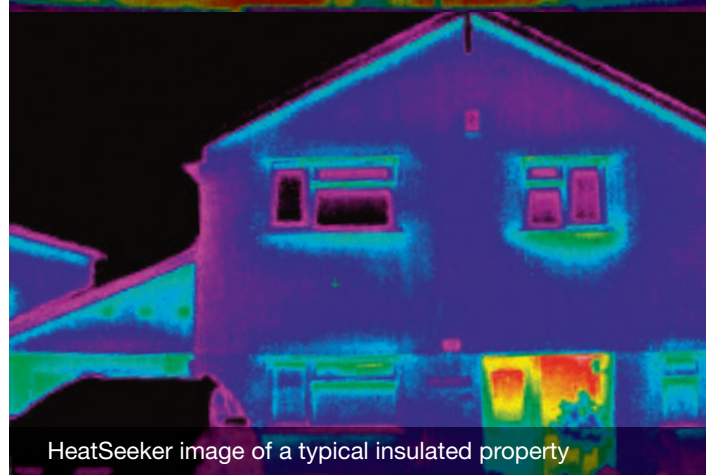
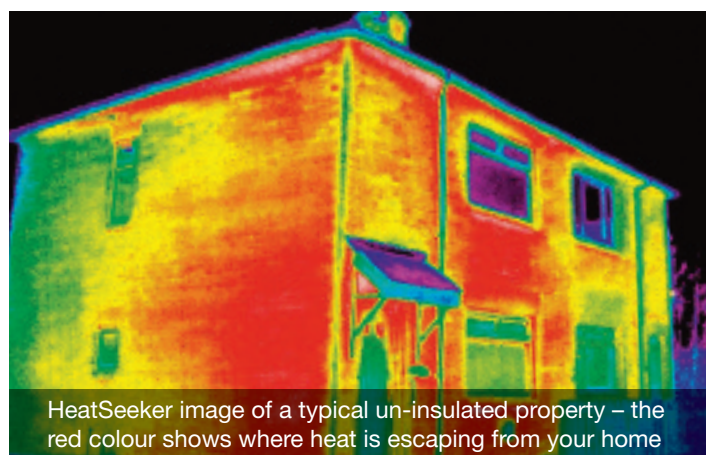
Solar hot water panels help residents save money on their fuel bills

If you would like to find out more about the scheme please contact the **Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre on freephone 0800 512 012**. An energy adviser will explain more about the grants and what help is available. They can also send out information booklets about specific energy saving measures including heating, insulation and renewable technology.

HeatSeeker vehicles hit the road in Wolverhampton

More than 50%* of the heat we use in our homes can escape through the walls and loft – bad news as we turn the thermostat up to keep out the winter chills. Well, help will soon be at hand for residents of Wolverhampton as a unique HeatSeeker scheme has recently hit the streets.

Using award-winning, revolutionary, technology, HeatSeeker vehicles use thermal imaging techniques to highlight homes which may benefit from improved insulation. The scheme has been developed by the Energy Saving Partnership and is operating with the agreement of Wolverhampton City Council to survey streets and help homeowners realise how energy efficient their property is.



The HeatSeeker vehicles only operate at night, during the colder winter months when heating is likely to be switched on in people's homes. Furthermore, the technology used is only capable of detecting heat – it cannot see through windows or walls and the image produced displays a palette of colours according to temperature.

Each vehicle has the ability to survey up to 1,000 properties in an hour and the scheme is completely free of charge to Councils, having the potential to help families save hundreds of pounds on their fuel bills.

Keith Hewitson, Director of the Energy Saving Partnership, said: "The HeatSeekers thermal imaging vehicle has already created quite a buzz in the energy-saving sector and we are delighted to see it in action.

"The technology has already helped improve energy efficiency in thousands of homes across the country and is one of the key front-line weapons in the battle against climate change."

Once an area has been surveyed, the images are securely-analysed by HeatSeekers' team of experts and then used by energy advisors as they talk to local residents about how they can improve insulation – taking action to reduce both their energy bills and carbon footprint.

In order to provide homeowners with a solution for potential insulation needs identified by HeatSeekers, the project has teamed up with Mark Group, the UK's leading domestic insulation and energy efficiency installation company.

If any homeowner would like a free insulation survey on their property please call HeatSeekers on 0800 111 4968 or visit www.homeheatseekers.co.uk

*Around a quarter of a property's heat can be lost through the roof and a further third through the walls". (Energy Saving Trust)