

Appendix A
Draft Cabinet response to recommendations of
the Climate and Environment Panel of the Scrutiny Committee

The document sets out the draft response of the Cabinet Member to recommendations made by the Climate and Environment Panel on 29 November 2023 concerning the Retrofit item presented at the meeting. The Cabinet is asked to amend and agree a formal response as appropriate.

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Recommendation	Agree?	Comment
<p>1) That the Council, through its current Retrofit campaign and any future initiatives, ensures a focus on simplification and demystification of retrofit so that the options and processes are easily digestible by the public – thus encouraging uptake at scale.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Council is delivering projects that aim to test retrofit solutions and give the public the opportunity to experience ‘living examples’ via open house events to see heat pumps and other retrofit solutions in situ. Two particular projects of note are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Clean Heat Streets project seeks to install up to 90 Air Source Heat Pumps in Rose Hill and Iffley. The project offers residents the opportunity to see heat pump installations and interact with heat pump ‘champions’ in the local community. The project also works with a ‘local convenor’ who offers one-on-one support for residents through their retrofit journey, and provides clear, simple advice. • The House Like Mine Project focusses on supporting residents, those on low income, and both Council and private tenants. The project also supports private landlords who house 32.2% of those that live in Oxford and therefore are a key

		<p>stakeholder group to encourage retrofit solutions. The Council has created a webpage specifically to help these groups access advice and support for different types of retrofitting and grant opportunities, short films showcasing work already completed and actionable support to find an installer.</p> <p>The Council joint funds the Better Housing Better Health (BHBH) service with Oxfordshire County Council and the other districts. BHBH is a one-stop shop for energy advice. BHBH help us to administer and promote energy efficiency upgrade grants such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme and the Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS). We work together as a partnership to create useful materials on how to access grant funding and they offer support to residents with the grant application process.</p> <p>The Council is severely constrained in terms of funding and resource to offer deeper engagement in these areas. To combat these limitations, the Council leverages information and advice compiled by others via national entities such as the Energy Saving Trust, and at a local level, groups such as Low Carbon Hub, and other likeminded groups to disseminate information and offer support and advice.</p>
<p>2) That the Council ensures an emphasis on two-way communication in relation to retrofit and maintains a list of interested community groups and areas of the city where residents are interested in community retrofit schemes, so that relevant information, intelligence and opportunities can be shared.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Community engagement does take place via project work and in our work with several community groups who have an interest in community retrofit schemes. These groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities for Zero Carbon • Oxford Local Carbon • Low Carbon Oxford North

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Environmental Action Florence Park • Rose Hill & Iffley Low Carbon • Low Carbon Oxford South • Low Carbon West Oxford • Friends of the Earth Oxfordshire <p>The Council has engaged with these groups and provided advice and support to community-based retrofit initiatives in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helped secure funding for community-based retrofit projects - e.g. Eco Open Doors event, which allows people to find and visit their neighbours to see what retrofit means in a local context. • Assisted with promotion of community-based events and projects that focus on retrofit. • Assisted with dissemination of the Housewarming Guides – simplified and easy to use handbooks for retrofitting in Oxford, produced by Low Carbon Oxford North. <p>Clean Heat Streets has worked closely with the Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon Group to provide a targeted community-based approach and keep retrofit knowledge at the centre of the community.</p> <p>Engagement work to promote grant funding is ongoing and includes staff presentations at community outreach events such as the 50+ Network event and the Community Links Oxfordshire event. Staff also work in partnership with BBC Radio Oxford on their cost-of-living clinics in-person at Templars Square and attend food larders to talk to</p>
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		residents about grants.
3) That the Council compiles a list of local retrofit suppliers/installers to share publicly so that residents can see which suppliers are in the retrofit market.	No	<p>The Council works with Low Carbon Hub who in turn work with CosyHomes who offer a number of retrofit services in Oxfordshire. More information is available here.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council's website gives signposted service to organisations who assess installers such as TrustMark, and the MCS certified installers list, where one can search via one's region to locate a suitable installer.</p> <p>Oxford City Council works in partnership with Better Housing Better Health to provide energy efficiency advice and access to grant funding for retrofit works. BHBH is run by the National Energy Foundation (NEF). NEF has a supplier network where TrustMark registered installers can be linked up to residents who qualify for funding such as ECO. The Council works with NEF to encourage suppliers to work with NEF and has requested NEF make this list public.</p> <p>A countywide source is the Climate Action Oxfordshire website offering a range of carbon cutting solutions including retrofit – it too signposts visitors to the site to local suppliers/organisations – e.g. this webpage for loft insulation or this webpage for energy assessments. The main energy homepage offers other options too.</p>