What does retrofit mean?

An RFA is a PAS 2035 requirement for your property to participate in the scheme you have applied for. PAS 2035 is a national framework to ensure energy efficiency works are installed professionally, safely and to the highest standards.

You may have already had an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) carried out for your property. An RFA is an energy efficiency survey similar to that for an EPC, but is much more detailed, tailored to your property and a requirement of government grant funding.

What is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?

An EPC rates your property's energy efficiency, based on data gathered by an EPC assessor and then entered into a software that generates the rating.

In order to potentially qualify for the **[enter name of funded scheme]** scheme, the EPC for your property must be a **[enter EPC funding criteria]**. If it is an **[enter scheme ineligibility criteria]** your property will not qualify. Please note that if your property is a D rated property, the government has specified that only a certain number of these may qualify for the funding and so you may not qualify. All final decisions are made by the relevant housing provider. An EPC with an A rating indicates high energy efficiency for the property, while a G rating signifies a property with very low energy efficiency.

Do I have to pay for anything?

No. The government has awarded £**[enter amount of funding]** million to local authorities across the country to retrofit social homes. In the **[enter local area]** area, **[enter organisation name]** is working with the Council to retrofit approximately **[enter number of homes]** social houses.

What is a Smart thermostat?

A Smart thermostat, or **[enter specific technology name]** is a digital thermostat that works in exactly the same way as a normal thermostat, allowing you to control your central heating and hot water. It also monitors indoor temperature and humidity to help resolve any problems in the house and make sure the new energy efficiency improvements are doing their job properly.

What energy efficiency improvements will I get?

The energy efficiency improvements that are installed in your home depends on the RFA survey. Improvements may include:

- external wall insulation
- loft and floor insulation
- new doors and windows
- a new heating system (such as an Air Source Heat Pump)
- a ventilation system.

Who is doing the work?

The project manager is **[enter project manager name]** and they will be working with a variety of specialist contractors to do the work. **[enter customer support organisation]** is a local energy efficiency charity, and are here to answer your questions and provide ongoing support before, during and after the installation. They can help you find the best energy supplier and tariff after the work is completed.

Will I have to move out?

The work will inevitably cause some disruption, but it should not be necessary to move out.

What is external wall insulation?

Older style properties with solid walls (i.e., those without a cavity) lose a lot of heat through the walls. Cladding the outside walls with a layer of insulation can reduce this heat loss through the wall by around 25%-45% depending on factors such as the thickness and quality of the insulation, the type of wall construction, and the climate.

External wall insulation is a layer of insulation material, sometimes called cladding, fixed to the outside walls of a house. This is finished with a layer of render so that the house looks the same as it did before, but warmer!

[INSERT SAMPLE IMAGE OF EWI FOR TENANT]

Will I get a choice of colour for the external walls?

If options are not available, be transparent and focus the resident to the comfort levels that will be achieved as well as the bill savings.

I've got a conservatory or lean-to shed. Can I still have external wall insulation?

Yes. **[provide more information]**

What is an air source heat pump?

An air source heat pump operates by harnessing warmth from the outdoor air, even in colder temperatures. It uses a clever process involving a refrigerant fluid that absorbs this heat, then compresses and releases it, usually via the water in radiators, inside a building to provide heating. Essentially, it's like a magic box that captures existing outdoor heat and brings it indoors, making it a cost-effective and eco-friendly way to keep your home warm in winter. The following dispels some of the myths around heat pumps.

Myth: Heat pumps are only suitable for well-insulated homes. **Fact:** While proper insulation can enhance the efficiency of heat pump systems, modern heat pumps are designed to work efficiently in a wide range of homes, regardless of insulation levels. Heat pumps can still provide significant energy savings and effective heating in homes with varying insulation qualities, making them a versatile option for decarbonizing heating systems.

Myth: Heat pumps are noisy and disruptive. **Fact:** Modern heat pump technology has significantly reduced noise levels, and many units operate quietly, similar to other household

appliances like air conditioners or refrigerators.

Myth: Heat pumps can lead to increased energy bills. **Fact:** Heat pumps are highly efficient heating systems that can reduce energy consumption compared to traditional heating methods like gas boilers or electric resistance heaters. While there may be initial upfront costs for installation, the long-term savings on energy bills often outweigh these expenses, making heat pumps a cost-effective and sustainable choice for homeowners. Additionally, government incentives and grants may be available to further offset installation costs and encourage the adoption of heat pump technology.

What is a ventilation system?

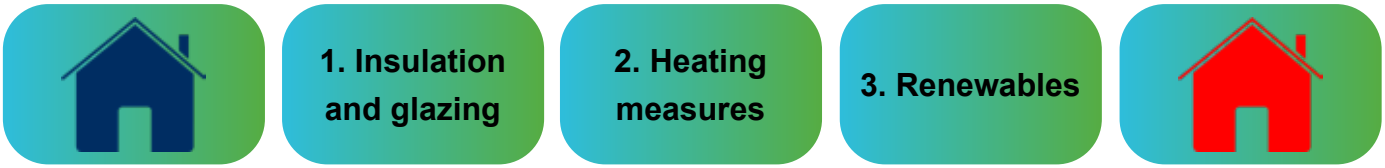
When a house is well insulated and draught-proofed, there needs to be a suitable and well-designed ventilation system to provide fresh air from the outside and expel stale air from rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms. Good ventilation in a home after a retrofit is crucial for maintaining indoor air quality and reducing the risk of health issues like mould growth and respiratory problems. Proper ventilation helps remove pollutants, excess moisture, and odours, creating a healthier living environment. There are various types of ventilation systems, including mechanical ventilation (such as exhaust fans or Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery systems), natural ventilation (such as windows and vents), and hybrid systems that combine both approaches. Each type has its advantages and suitability depending on factors like climate, building design, and energy efficiency goals.

Will I have to empty my loft?

If you have any belongings in the loft, **[enter organisation name]** will help you remove them and provide somewhere to store them. We do not advise storing belongings in the loft after the work has been completed as this may damage the insulation and reduce its effectiveness. The depth of insulation may also make it potentially dangerous to enter the loft.

What is a fabric first approach?

You may need additional insulating measures to be installed prior to any work on your heating system, for example cavity wall insulation or loft insulation. The installer surveys will confirm which measures are most appropriate. This is important because in order for your heating system to be most efficient, so you save energy and money, homes should be fully insulated.



The Fabric First Approach

If you have just applied for heating or renewables, please note that these are the final considerations under the ‘fabric first’ approach. If your house needs insulation or double glazing first, the grant will have to support that.

Customer journey support

MIDLANDS NET ZERO HUB

Working with you is what we do

Here are the series of steps you can expect on your customer journey with us

Recording your interest

We can take calls through our dedicated phone lines, through our websites, or whilst we deliver community events

Confirming your eligibility and next steps

If you are found to be eligible, we will then hand you over to technical specialists to assess and record what needs to be done before any work can start

Providing you with your energy efficiency pack

This will help you become accustomed to your energy efficiency measures, answer common questions, and will provide details of how to contact us

Capturing your feedback

We love to hear about your experience of our service and will record and capture this feedback from you

Sharing available retrofit government-funded schemes with you

We do this through targeted mailshots, road shows, events, and content displayed on our websites

Assessing your personal circumstances

We will assess things such as whether you have a landlord or not, the energy rating of your property, your household income, and where you live to see if you are eligible for the programme

Referring you on to an approved contractor

Approved contractors will carry out a technical survey, produce a schedule for your work, and confirm with you that you are happy to go ahead

Carrying out and completing the work

Your contractor will install the agreed measures in your home. The quality of the work will then be checked, any installation problems dealt with, and signed off only when you are happy

Keeping in touch

We want to hear how you are getting on with your new measures, so will give you a call within the first month of the contractors completing your work and chat through this with you