

Tweedbank external wall insulation project 2016/17

Scottish Borders Council ran an external wall insulation project in Tweedbank, funded by the Scottish Government and project managed by Changeworks. Home Energy Scotland provided free impartial energy efficiency advice to householders. The project was part of the Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland: Area Based Schemes (HEEPS: ABS), part of the Scottish Government initiative to tackle fuel poverty.

The total investment in energy efficiency improvements for this project was £1.5m. External wall insulation was offered to 234 properties, 208 privately owned homes and 26 Housing Association owned homes. To date, 203 properties have been insulated with a further 10 in progress. Everwarm is the contractor selected to carry out the installation of the insulation.

Gillian Allinson had external wall insulation installed on her end terrace home towards the end of 2016 as part of the external wall insulation project. It would usually cost in the region of £9000 to install external wall insulation on these types of properties but thanks to Scottish Government funding, householders could have the insulation installed for £1000.

Gillian received a letter from Home Energy Scotland and Scottish Borders Council informing her that they were running a project in her area and that there was funding available to subsidise the work, she was delighted and decided to sign up.

“I really feel the cold, so I liked the thought of having a warmer house, and I thought having the external wall insulation would make the house look better too. But it’s really expensive to have it installed, so the deciding factor for me was that it was heavily subsidised. I couldn’t have had it done otherwise. In the end I paid £1000, which has been worth it already.”

The letter told her who to contact, and what would be involved. Once she’d signed up to the project, the contractors employed to undertake the work got in touch, and someone from the company came out to do a survey. They made sure that the property was suitable for external wall insulation, and explained what would happen and arranged an installation date.

Once the installation started, the contractor worked on three or four houses in the street at the same time. They put the scaffolding up and quickly got to work.



Gillian Allinson



Gillian's home after the insulation was installed

“It was really impressive how quickly it all happened. We’d drive away in the morning, and come back to a completely different looking house in the evening.”

Gillian had already had loft insulation fitted, but she’s really noticed the difference in how warm her home is now that she’s had the external wall insulation installed.

“Having the external wall insulation has made such a difference to our home. The heating’s on a lot less, which is a miracle for me. I really feel the cold, and my family joke that I’ll have two jumpers on while everyone else is in shorts and t-shirts! Well now the house warms up so much more quickly, and best of all, it stays warm, especially upstairs, even when the heating’s off. Everyone thinks it’s nice and cosy now. The house looks a lot better too. And because so many houses have had it done, it’s really brightened up the neighbourhood.”

Gillian is very happy with her decision to take advantage of the Scottish Borders Council’s subsidy to install external wall insulation in her home.

“All in all I would completely recommend people to get it done. The subsidy meant I could afford to have it installed, and now my house is warmer, even though my heating’s on less.”

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) completed prior to the installation of the external wall insulation rated the energy efficiency of Gillian’s home as 49 (E) and the environmental impact (CO₂) rating as 45 (E). The EPC completed following installation rated an improvement to the energy efficiency with a new rating of 67 (D) and environmental impact (CO₂) rating of 66 (D).

Mike lives in a mid-terrace property in Tweedbank and decided to have the work done as he liked the idea of having a warmer home whilst spending less money to heat it. The project had initially started on one street in his estate but the project was extended. Mike spotted an advert in the local newspaper and he phoned the number for Home Energy Scotland to sign up to have the insulation installed.

The scaffolding was up around Mike’s house for around six to eight weeks, the contractor would complete each stage of the process across all the houses in the immediate vicinity, before going back around to complete the next stage.

Mike has also been impressed by the impact that the work has had on his house. As well as the visual benefits, his gas usage is down, and his house, which he previously described as cold, is now nice and warm.



“I’d say our gas usage is 10-15% below what it would normally be. Our daily charge is about 26p per day, which is very economical. Plus, our house used to be cold, but it’s not anymore, which is great. Our primary reason for getting the work done was because of the visual impact and we’ve not been disappointed. The whole estate has been given a new lease of life, and the houses look as if they’ve just been built. And apart from anything else, having the work done has improved the resale value of our home above ones that haven’t had the work done. It must make it more attractive to buy, both from a visual perspective and the heating benefits.”

“I would encourage anyone thinking of installing insulation to do it. If they could see what I can see now they wouldn’t hesitate. The house looks brand new, plus I’ve been able to turn my thermostat down by 2-3 degrees and my house is still lovely and warm.

I learned so much about how to save energy and cut costs just by going through the process. I encouraged



my neighbour to have it done, and she's really pleased I did. I told her what I'd tell anyone in her position: you'll save money, your house will be warmer, and it'll look better. If you're still not sure, try and see somewhere that the work's been done, and if you know someone who's had it done ask them if their house looks better and feels warmer. I bet they'll tell you 'Yes'. We spent money to save money, and it's been really worthwhile."

The energy efficiency rating of Mike's home prior to the installation of the insulation was 62 (D) with an environmental impact (CO2 rating) of 56 (D), another EPC was completed following the installation and the energy efficiency rating improved to 70 (C) and CO2 rating of 67 (D).