

Homes for the Future Update

During 2011/12 the Council refurbished two properties at Top Dysons, Cranford as part of our ground breaking 'Homes for the Future' project.



Why was the Pilot Carried Out?

- Both properties were in need of substantial structural work due to subsidence.
- As a pilot, our aim was to find ways to make our housing stock more energy efficient whilst reducing fuel costs for tenants.
- *The energy saving features incorporated into the properties included*

Energy Saving Features:

- Air source heat pump central heating system (no 11)
- Biomass central heating system (no 12)
- Solar water heating
- Photovoltaic solar panels
- Positive pressure heat recovery system
- Extensive wall and roof insulation
- Double glazed A rated argon filled windows
- Supplied with A rated white good

Following advertising and selection, two families moved in in August 2011.



Evaluation of the Pilot

- As part of the evaluation, in-depth interviews were carried out with both households in January 2013 to establish what seemed to be working well and not so well, what the tenants liked/disliked about their homes and what effect tenant behaviour was having.

Evaluation of Fuel Costs

- Key objective – lower fuel bills.
- Results = electricity consumption still relatively high.
- Air Source Heat Pump (no other fuel) - £730
- Biomass Boiler (electricity and biomass) - £990
- Expected fuel costs for a 3 bed house - £1,032

The Positive Feedback..

As a Landlord:

Properties Popular and tenancies on-going

Feed in Tariff from PV panels - £1,000 per 6 months.

From the Tenants:

Both households experience a good level of thermal comfort

The air source heat pump is a significantly cheaper option to solid fuel

The tenants love their properties and being able to embrace a more sustainable lifestyle

Negative Experiences...

Technology Difficult to Understand
and use

Heat recovery units disabled

Lifestyle counteracting technology

Lessons Learned...

Education, training and ongoing support for tenants living in these properties is vital.

Communication needs to be clearer through both easier to understand appliance manuals and knowing where to turn to for support when encountering problems.

Simple controls are important. Technology needs to be user friendly and as far as possible should not need to be interfered with by tenants.

Ensuring we act on the learning

- Further monitoring
- Ensure all options considered when improving properties
- Behaviour and understanding are critical elements in the success of new technology