

Subject: Decarbonising London's Homes: The Challenge of Retrofitting

Report to:	Housing Committee
Report of:	Executive Director of Secretariat
Date:	20 July 2021
Public Access:	This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the background information for a discussion with invited guests on what is needed to reduce the carbon emissions of London's existing housing. It will map the scale of the challenge, the barriers and the costs which will likely be associated with any major programme of retrofitting in London, including financial, skills, and quality assurance. It will also review the retrofit initiatives that have been established by the Mayor.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to putting questions to the invited guests and the subsequent discussion; and**
- 2.2 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair, in consultation with party Group Lead Members, to agree any output from the discussion.**

3. Background

- 3.1 The Mayor has committed to making London a carbon neutral city by 2030 – 20 years sooner than the Government's legal target to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.¹

¹ [Mayor of London, Zero Carbon London, Gov.uk, UK becomes first major economy to pass net zero emissions law, 2019](#)

- 3.2 Reducing emissions from the housing stock is central to achieving these targets, with research by the Climate Change Committee suggesting that the Government's targets for achieving net zero will not be met without near complete decarbonisation of the UK's housing stock.²
- 3.3 In London, it is estimated that together homes and workplaces account for 78 per cent of carbon emissions, with 80 per cent of the existing building stock likely to still be in place in 2050.³ As London's 3.5 million homes account for one third of the city's greenhouse gas emissions alone⁴, retrofitting existing homes to improve energy efficiency is also crucial to achieving the Mayor's 2030 commitment.
- 3.4 The Committee will explore what is required by London's existing housing to contribute to our climate commitments, mapping the scale of the challenge, the barriers and the costs and benefits which will likely be associated with any major programme of retrofitting in London. The Committee will focus specifically on issues such as the financial requirements, skills capacity and quality assurance associated with retrofitting London's homes. The Committee will also have an opportunity to review the retrofit initiatives that have been established by the Mayor as the new mayoral term gets underway.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The Committee may wish to consider:
- Level of funding, skills and resources needed to retrofit existing homes in London;
 - The different incentives in place for social landlords, private landlords, and homeowners, and whether these methods are working at a London level;
 - Mayoral initiatives including Retrofit Accelerator: Homes, National Retrofit Centre of Excellence, and Innovation Partnership;
 - The impact of this work on local authorities' and housing associations' other activities, and their experiences with retrofit initiatives;
 - How can high-quality work be assured; and
 - Economic impacts and job creation.
- 4.2 The following guests have been invited to attend the meeting and participate in the discussion:
- Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy;
 - Susan French, Chief Executive of Barnsbury Housing Association and Vice Chair of the g320;
 - James Hardy, Head of Energy, Greater London Authority (GLA); and
 - Councillor Adam Harrison, Cabinet member for a sustainable Camden, London Borough of Camden.

² [Committee on Climate Change, UK housing: Fit for the future? February 2019](#)

³ [Mayor of London, Energy in buildings](#)

⁴ [GLA, Mayoral press release, February 2020](#)

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications to the GLA arising from this report.

List of appendices to this report:

None.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers: None

Contact Information

Contact Officer:	Stephanie Griffiths, Senior Policy Adviser
Telephone:	07783 805 834
E-mail:	stephanie.griffiths@london.gov.uk