Hello

Welcome to the first Optimised Retrofit newsletter, which is our way of keeping industry, stakeholders, partners and the wider community informed about the progress of our project and share our learning as we go.

Not only will we update you on progress, but we will provide further information on how the retrofit of the 1,370 pathfinder homes is shaping up and what an optimised retrofit looks like in action.

We will track the progress of the development of a series of digital tools that underpin this project.

These tools are what will enable the decarbonisation of homes across Wales.

We will also document the delivery of the wider foundational economy 'mini-projects', which collectively make up the scope of the work, covering a range of areas including procurement, finance, skills and training.

We are committed to regular communication and sharing information about the project, to ensure the Optimised Retrofit legacy far exceeds the delivery of the project itself.

What's the project all about?

The Optimised Retrofit project will see more than 1,370 homes across Wales made more energy efficient, and using the lessons learnt from these pathway homes, will enable the creation of the digital tools required to enable the decarbonisation of homes across Wales.

January in review

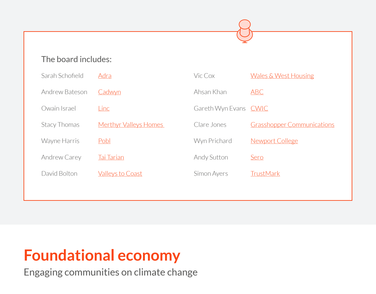
Our 26 Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners have begun engaging with their residents as they identify pathfinder homes.

The homes will make up our 1,370 pilot projects that will enable us to test and refine the Optimised Retrofit digital tools.

Ensuring the understanding and support of residents is going to be key to the success of this project.

Longer-term, community buy-in is critical for the successful decarbonisation of homes across Wales.

These early conversations are to understand what matters to residents and what opportunities exist to maximise the benefits of this new investment – especially unlocking community involvement on climate change and sustainability issues.



Home surveys

We kicked off our Home Survey Training on Monday 18 January.

This will see a series of modules explored over four weeks; training over 100 surveyors.

The training has been taking place virtually over Zoom and is designed to cover all aspects of the Whole Home Survey.

This will provide surveyors with the skills to complete robust surveys of the pathfinder homes.

Each survey is specific to each home and informs the Pathways to Zero plan to take that home to its lowest achievable carbon footprint.

Meet our project board

Made up of representatives from project partners, our project board is responsible for overseeing the delivery of the project.

The board will meet monthly to discuss progress against key milestones to ensure the project is being delivered efficiently and on time.

The board includes:

Sarah Schofield	Adra	Vic Cox	Wales & West Housing
Andrew Bateson	Cadwyn	Ahsan Khan	ARC
Owain Israel	Linc	Gareth Wyn Evans	CWIC
Stacy Thomas	Merthyr Valleys Homes	Clare Jones	Grasshopper Communications
Wayne Harris	Pobl	Wyn Prichard	Newport College
Andrew Carey	Tai Tarian	Andy Sutton	Sero
David Bolton	Valleys to Coast	Simon Ayers	TrustMark

Foundational economy

Engaging communities on climate change

People in Blaenau Gwent have been invited to share their views and suggest solutions for tackling the climate crisis in Wales' first climate assembly to discuss climate change.

The Blaenau Gwent Climate Assembly will be held during two weekends in March and is being organised by housing associations United Welsh, Linc Cymru, Melin Homes and Tai Calon in partnership with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, ERS Cymru and independent sustainability charity Cynnal Cymru.

The Assembly will bring together 50 Blaenau Gwent residents from across the borough to address the question: "What should we do in Blaenau Gwent to tackle the climate crisis in a way that is fair and improves living standards for everyone?"

Exploring the themes of housing, nature and green space, transport and food, the recommendations from the Assembly will inform how partners tackle climate change and work with communities effectively in future.

Blaenau Gwent to hold first Climate Assembly in Wales - United Welsh.

Climate Assembly Cynulliad Hinsawdd

Constructing Excellence in Wales event

On Tuesday 26 January, Constructing Excellence in Wales (CE Wales) hosted the first of a programme of Construction Opportunity Knocks events.

The event introduced Optimised Retrofit, what it is, what the opportunities are and what the benefits will be for the whole Welsh built environment supply chain.

The event was attended by more than 150 people and the speakers inspired plenty of questions and discussion.

The audience heard from Welsh Government that supports the scheme through its Innovative Housing Programme, including some words from the Minister for Housing and Local Government, Julie James MS.

Other speakers included Sero's Colin King and Wyn Prichard, NPTC Group of Colleges' Director of Construction Skills who both stressed the enormous potential for the programme to improve the quality of lives and that the goals will set a template for future retrofit work across the UK, not just in Wales.

We thoroughly recommend listening to the session if you missed it.

.pdf .pdf Video

You can use the links on the left to access the session and the slides.

The video link is via WeTransfer and needs about eight minutes to download.

'Tweet us'

We are now on social media.

Alongside our new branding and logo, we launched our Optimised Retrofit Twitter (@OptimisedR) and LinkedIn (Optimised Retrofit: Overview | LinkedIn) earlier this month.

Please follow us for project updates, related articles and active case studies.

We want to hear from you!

If you have any questions or want to find out more about the Optimised Retrofit project, then please get in touch:

Visit:	Optimised Retrofit – Sero Group
Email:	optimisedretrofit@sero.life
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