



Housing Retrofit Task and Finish Group

Task and finish group scoping report

Date: 16 July 2021

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1 (open)

Wards affected: All (none specific)

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

This report describes the role of the housing retrofit task and finish group, and outlines the scope of the work it will carry out.

Members of the task and finish group are asked to:

- consider and comment on the content of the report
- describe the intended outcomes of the task and finish group
- agree the group's key lines of enquiry
- agree a timetable for completion of this work.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The subject of this task and finish group was proposed by Councillor Louise Krupski.

The subject and membership of the task and finish group were both agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 May 2021.

The first meeting of the group is on 16 July 2021.

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report asks members of the task and finish group to consider the scope of the review and describe its intended outcomes.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Members of the task and finish group are asked to:
 - consider and comment on the content of the report
 - describe the intended outcomes of the task and finish group
 - agree the group's key lines of enquiry
 - agree a timetable for the completion of this work.

3. The role of the task and finish group

- 3.1. The role of the housing retrofit task and finish group is to explore the ways in which Lewisham Council can ensure that it is doing everything it can to retrofit and insulate homes, both those owned and managed by Lewisham and those in the private sector, in order to reach its Climate Change target by 2030.
- 3.2. The outline proposal for this task and finish group can be found at [appendix 1](#). The Key lines of enquiry are discussed in section 6 and are summarised below:

Key lines of enquiry

Meeting the retrofit challenge in social housing

- 3.3. Key line of enquiry 1: What are the aspirations of Lewisham's housing providers?
- 3.4. Key line of enquiry 2: How can we ensure that the planning and sequencing of current decent homes works or other cyclical/planned upgrades are in alignment with any future retrofit works? And - how do we ensure that our housing providers are best placed to make use of additional funding when it becomes available?
- 3.5. Key line of enquiry 3: Are there examples of good practice amongst councils in London (or elsewhere) in adapting their housing stock to meet the challenges of the climate emergency that we can learn from?

Exploring options for owner occupiers and the private rented sector

- 3.6. Key line of enquiry 4 - What are the principal barriers to enabling retrofit in Lewisham's private sector? And – are there planning policy (particularly in reference to the development of the new Local Plan) or building control related issues that need to be considered?
- 3.7. Key line of enquiry 5 – What are the current plans for licensing of landlords in relation to energy efficiency ratings?
- 3.8. Key line of enquiry 6 - What can the Council do in order to encourage and incentivise change in the private housing sector?
- 3.9. Key line of enquiry 7 - What options are there for Lewisham to become involved in the green recovery for jobs?

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4. Context

'Climate change is happening and is due to human activity, this includes global warming and greater risk of flooding, droughts and heat waves¹.'

- 4.1. It is widely acknowledged that climate change is occurring due to human activity. It is also established that increases in global temperatures will lead to further volatility in weather systems and result in major upheavals for human societies and the ecosystems we depend on. The UK Government recognises that amongst the severe effects of climate change on human health, food production, ecosystems and economies it is the poorest people - globally and nationally - that will face the most damaging impacts.

Lewisham's climate emergency declaration

- 4.2. In 2019 Lewisham Council was one of the first local authorities in London to declare a **climate emergency**². The unanimous decision by councillors reflects the concern that changes to the world's climate will have significant detrimental impacts on people and communities generally as well as Lewisham's residents and citizens specifically- with the most significant and harmful impacts being dealt to the most vulnerable.

- 4.3. The motion states that, in Lewisham, the consequences of inaction to address this climate emergency will include:

- Increased risk of flooding and damage to buildings, infrastructure and the local economy.
- Health problems, particularly for children, older people and those with pre-existing conditions.
- Higher living costs including energy, food, travel and insurance costs.
- Increases in social injustice and inequality.
- Financial and emotional consequences for residents with families around the world adversely affected by the impact of a changing climate

- 4.4. The motion commits the Council to:

- Set specific and measurable targets to reduce carbon emissions for the Council and for the borough as a whole, including costed milestones to zero-carbon.
- Consider systematically the climate change impact of each area of the Council's activities.
- Increase local resilience to climate impacts already in the system.
- Continue to prioritise support for vulnerable residents through the Council's fuel poverty programmes working with partners at a community, borough wide and regional level to provide advice services and access to funding for heating, insulation and ventilation.
- Accelerate existing programmes to deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions including delivery of heat networks in the borough, low carbon development and high quality housing, an efficient and low carbon corporate estate and support for renewables and for community energy.
- Work with partner bodies across the borough and across London to ensure the

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained>

² [link to the Council motion on the declaration of the climate emergency in February 2019](#)

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climate emergency is adequately reflected in the development and implementation of all borough wide strategies and plans.

- Draw up a communications strategy to support delivery of a Zero-Carbon Lewisham and enable Lewisham residents to make low carbon choices.

Lewisham's corporate strategy

- 4.5. The Council's Corporate Strategy for 2018-2022 sets out the following priorities:

Open Lewisham - Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all, where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.

Tackling the housing crisis - Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.

Giving children and young people the best start in life - Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education, and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.

Building an inclusive local economy - Everyone can access high-quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.

Delivering and defending: health, social care and support - Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.

Making Lewisham greener - Everyone enjoys our green spaces, and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.

Building safer communities - Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

- 4.6. Relating as it does to the issues of: safety, community, social justice, housing, health, opportunity, equality and economics - tackling the climate emergency is fundamental to the delivery of the Council's corporate strategy.

London's recovery from the coronavirus crisis

- 4.7. The Mayor of London has identified nine 'recovery missions' as part of plans for the city's recovery from the coronavirus crisis. Amongst these is **A Green New Deal** for London, through which the Mayor intends to: 'Tackle the climate and ecological emergencies and improve air quality by doubling the size of London's green economy by 2030 to accelerate job creation for all.' The task and finish group should consider how the Council might become more closely involved with initiatives happening in the London region and beyond. This should include work announced as part of the Mayor of London's 'retrofit revolution'³
- 4.8. London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee and the London Environment Directors Network met in late 2019 to discuss the climate emergency and to consider options and ideas for collaboration between London boroughs. They recognised the importance of action on the climate as central to councils' core mandates. They issued a joint statement⁴ outlining their support for a number of projects and programmes – including 'Retrofit London' - which has the ambition to retrofit all domestic and non-

³ [Mayor declares a retrofit revolution to tackle the climate emergency](#)

⁴ London Councils: [Joint Statement on Climate Change](#)

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domestic buildings to an average level of emergency performance certificate⁵ (EPC) B between 2020 and 2030.

Future Lewisham⁶

- 4.9. The work of the task and finish group also aligns with the strategic themes set out in the Council's recovery strategy. The strategy describes how Lewisham will recover from the coronavirus crisis – and it places emphasis on the goal of attaining 'a greener future' and as such, the Council's response to the climate emergency will be a key part of the recovery.



Lewisham's climate emergency action plan

- 4.10. Following from the Council's declaration of a climate emergency, officers were tasked with developing an action plan⁷. The plan is based on in-depth modelling and analysis of Lewisham's current (and historic) carbon emissions and the likely actions that will need to be taken to reach the target of net zero emissions by 2030. Research carried out for the development of the plan indicates that over the 10 years to 2030, £1.6 billion in funding will be required for Lewisham to achieve its carbon neutral target.
- 4.11. The plan sets out activities across five delivery areas:
- Leading By Example
 - Sustainable Housing
 - Decarbonised Transport
 - Greener Adaptive Lewisham
 - Inspiring, Learning and Lobbying
- 4.12. The work of the task and finish group is most likely to relate closely to the 'sustainable housing' section of the plan (see appendix 2), which details the original measures identified across the different housing sectors to support the borough in its pursuit of the net zero target and as such, the task and finish group's work will further the progress already made by building on the necessary actions already identified.

⁵ See [the Energy Savings Trust's guide to energy performance certificates](#) for more information.

⁶ [Future Lewisham announcement: our borough's recovery](#)

⁷ [Lewisham Climate Emergency Strategic Action Plan 2020-2030](#)

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- 4.13. The Sustainable Development Select Committee has been tasked with scrutinising the development and delivery of the plan. Following consideration of the draft action plan, the Committee made referrals to Mayor and Cabinet in [January 2020](#) and [January 2021](#). The Committee's comments emphasised the importance of: public engagement; the development of green infrastructure and the value of trees - as well as Council communications and provision of information.
- 4.14. At its meeting in March 2020, Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet⁸ adopted the action plan and affirmed the ambition for the borough to reach carbon neutral by 2030.
- 4.15. In the [2021 update](#), officers acknowledged that the action plan would require reviewing and streamlining in order to align with the council's financial and organisational recovery plans as a result of the impact of the pandemic. The task and finish group is well placed to support this work.

Previous relevant scrutiny

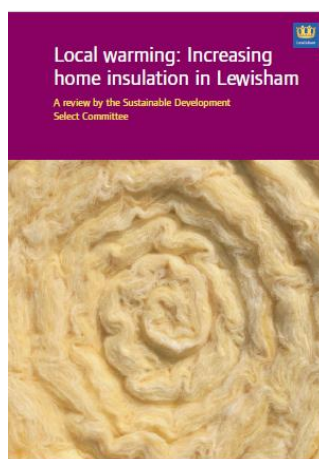
- 4.16. As outlined above – the Sustainable Development Select Committee has taken the lead on this issue. Its work over a number of years has recognised the importance of sustainable use of resources and the protection of the environment. Moreover, as far back as 2010 it carried out an in-depth review of retrofitting measures:

Local warming: increasing home insulation in Lewisham, 2010⁹

'Reducing carbon emissions to combat climate change is one of the most urgent challenges we face today... If the urgency of climate change is not incentive enough to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, dwindling global supplies and future volatility in energy prices should be. It is the poorest in our society who are most harshly affected by fluctuating energy prices. One of the most effective ways of tackling the fuel poverty this leads to is by improving home insulation.'

(Extract from the Chair's foreword, Local Warming review, 2010)

- 4.17. Councillors on the Sustainable Development Select Committee considered the opportunities and challenges of insulating the borough's homes as well as reviewing carbon emissions in the borough and examining examples of best practice. The Committee found that approaches to insulating Lewisham's housing stock were complicated by the age of and variation in housing types - as well as the different kinds of rental and ownership modes and the range of schemes and funding routes available for retrofit.



⁸ [Mayor and Cabinet decision on the climate emergency, March 2020](#)

⁹ [Sustainable Development Select Committee: local warming report 2010](#)

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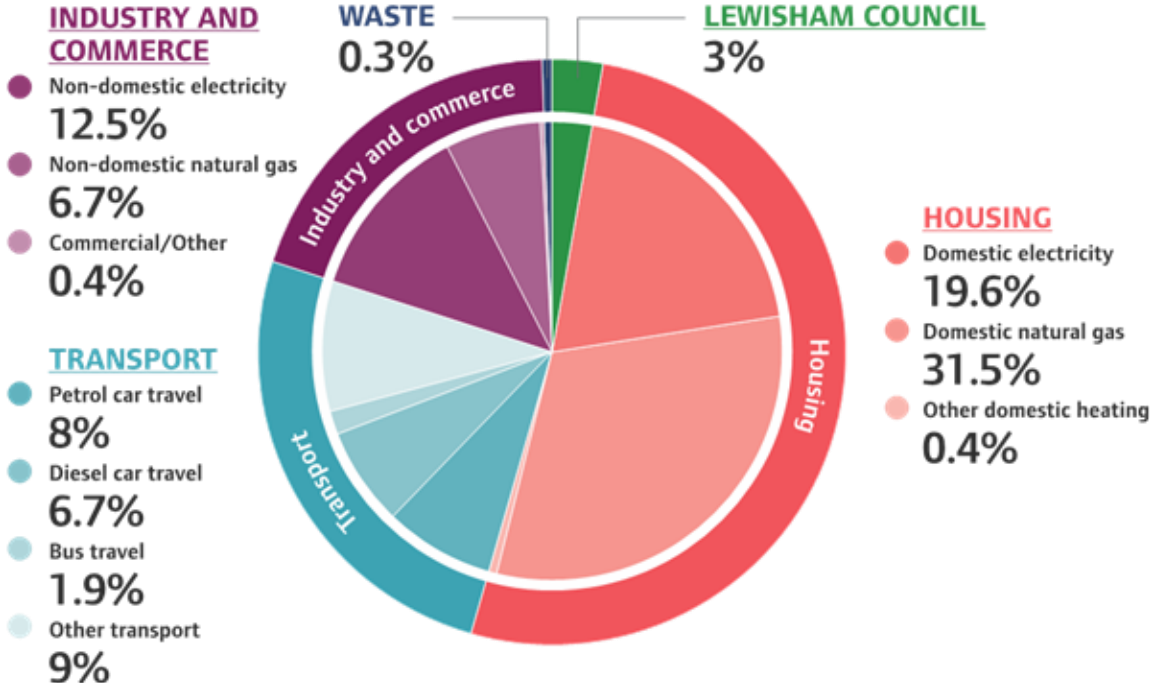
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- 4.18. Also of interest - is the Housing Select Committee's [review into the health impact of damp and mould in social housing \(2011\)](#) , which found that whilst damp and mould in poorly insulated homes could not be isolated as the only source of ill health for occupants - the evidence demonstrated that the linkage between damp and mouldy conditions and ill health was strongest in older people, children and people with an existing chronic illness. Furthermore, it identified quality insulation as one of the means by which to reduce the cold and condensation that led to damp and mouldy living conditions.
- 4.19. The Housing Select Committee's [communal heating systems review \(2015\)](#) explored the issues relating to the installation and maintenance of heating systems – predominately in new buildings. The Committee found evidence of significant gaps between the expectations and the delivery of communal heating systems. It also found that this was exacerbated by poor understanding of some of the novel installations involved and some examples of low quality delivery and management of these systems. In order to meet that challenge of the climate emergency, it is likely that new technology and novel installations will be required. As a result, the Climate Emergency Action Plan (2.1.3) identifies the raising of standards in communal heating systems as a key action.

5. Meeting the criteria for a task and finish group

The scale of the challenge

- 5.1. Housing accounts for half of Lewisham’s measurable carbon emissions. The use of natural gas (for heating and hot water) is the largest source of direct¹⁰ emissions from homes – making up over a third of the borough’s total. In addition, the use of electricity in homes makes up a fifth of the borough’s (indirect) emissions. To reduce these emissions it is estimated that 80% of Lewisham housing needs to be retrofitted to meet the Council’s ambition to be carbon neutral by 2030.



¹⁰ Put simply - direct emissions are as the result of fuel consumption in the borough (the use of natural gas boilers in central heating systems, for example) – indirect emissions are as a result of energy used in the borough but produced elsewhere (a power station fuelling the electric grid, for example).

- 5.2. Lewisham has a mix of housing ownership and tenure types. Census data (2011¹¹) shows that owner occupiers (either owning outright or with a mortgage) make up the largest housing tenure in the borough at over 40% of households. Households living in socially rented homes make up approximately 30% (more than 36,000 households). The Council, through its arm's length management organisation, Lewisham Homes¹² (and Regenter B3) manages almost 20,000 (more than half) of these socially rented homes. Thirdly, the private rented sector accounts for nearly 25% of Lewisham households – with the remaining (approximately 5% of) households living rent free or in other types of socially rented homes or shared ownership properties. It is notable that the number of households in the private rented sector has doubled in the past 20 years¹³.
- 5.3. Work to tackle emissions from homes is evidently made more difficult by the complexity across different tenures in terms of responsibilities and the actions needed in each of the housing sectors. In order to meet the challenge of the climate crisis, Lewisham's climate emergency action plan sets out initiatives across all of the tenure types - with the involvement of Lewisham's home owners as well as social and private landlords. However, the Council clearly has the most responsibility for (and direct control over) its homes - managed by Lewisham Homes and Regenter B3.
- 5.4. Cost also presents a considerable challenge. Research for the development of Lewisham's climate emergency action plan found that £1.6 billion in funding would be needed over the ten years to 2030 in order to enable the systemic change needed for the borough to meet its ambition to be carbon neutral. Just over 50% of the investment needed (£843m) relates to private housing. Social housing and Lewisham Homes account for a further £393m (p8, Lewisham Climate Emergency Action Plan 2020).

Protecting the most vulnerable

- 5.5. Households are considered to be in fuel poverty if they spend more than ten percent of their income on maintaining a decent level of warmth. This is further complicated in London by the age and characteristics of the housing stock and is further compounded by issues of income inequality and systemic disparities in access to services.
- 5.6. As recognised in the Council's climate emergency declaration, the reverse situation is also true - with the same households likely to suffer from the worst impacts of heatwaves and overheating as well as flooding and the many other associated dangers linked to an increasingly volatile climate.
- 5.7. The unequal impact of the climate crisis is recognised in Lewisham's climate emergency action plan (2.4.3) which identifies the need for further equalities analysis and engagement in order to support affected groups to mitigate the effects of the climate crisis¹⁴.

¹¹ Housing ownership and tenancy: <https://www.observatory.lewisham.gov.uk/housing/>

¹² As a result of the Council's strategy for stock ownership, management and investment, which has been in place since the Lewisham Housing Commission of 2001, operational management of Council homes is undertaken by two organisations. These are - Lewisham Homes, an arms-length management organisation (or ALMO) - which manages 19,000 homes and Regenter B3, which is a special purpose vehicle for homes in Brockley as part of a private finance (PFI) arrangement - which manages just over 1800 homes.

¹³ [Lewisham Housing Strategy 2020-2026](#)

¹⁴ See also: <https://www.climatejust.org.uk/messages/adapting-buildings> (People can experience different intensities of climate impacts as a result of the type of housing that they live in).

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Percentage of households in fuel poverty (from 2014 to 2019) for Lewisham

Period	% households in fuel poverty			
	%			
	Lewisham	Minimum for All London Boroughs (excl City)	Mean for All London Boroughs (excl City)	Maximum for All London Boroughs (excl City)
2014	10.5	8.1	10.7	14.3
2015	10.2	6.9	10.1	15.7
2016	10.7	6.9	10.0	15.3
2017	10.9	9.1	11.8	19.1
2018	12.1	8.4	11.4	16.1
2019	18.2	10.6	15.2	22.5

Source:
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

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- 5.8. Since the Sustainable Development Select Committee's 'local warming' review (see above for a summary) in the proportion of Lewisham households in fuel poverty has increased. The national data also indicates a steady worsening of this trend in urban areas. This is not to say that this issue is uncomplicated. The measures for fuel poverty are comprised of a balance of contributing factors (and have recently been changed) – although principally they are made up of the cost of fuel set against household income. Clearly, however, the reduction in energy demand for heating is a key way in which fuel poverty can be tackled¹⁶.
- 5.9. In summary, it is worth recalling that back in 2011, in its review of damp and mould, councillors on the Housing Select Committee acknowledged the impact of inadequately heated homes on vulnerable households. And, the effects of fuel poverty on both acute and long term physical and mental health conditions are well documented elsewhere¹⁷.

Options for reducing emissions

- 5.10. Retrofit is the introduction of new materials, products and technologies into an existing building to reduce the energy needed to occupy that building.¹⁸ The UK's Climate

¹⁵ [Local Government Association: households in fuel poverty London comparison](#)

¹⁶ In its recent interim report – the committee on fuel on fuel poverty indicates that it will ensure that the '...impact of the transition to Net Zero on those in fuel poverty is clearly costed and the measures are put in place to ensure that there is a just transition. Committee on fuel poverty [July 2021 interim report](#)

¹⁷ See for example, the evidence gathered for this report of the [Committee on Fuel Poverty, 2020](#)

¹⁸ From [Retrofit for the future: a guide to making retrofit work \(2014\)](#). The report by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy notes that 'Retrofit is not the same as renovation or refurbishment, which often make good, repair or aesthetically enhance a building without aiming to reduce its energy use'.

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Change Committee¹⁹ identifies four main areas for reducing emissions from buildings: behaviour change, increasing the energy efficiency of the building stock, improving the energy efficiency of lighting and electrical appliances, and switching away from fossil-fuel based heat. Retrofit relates to all of these areas and may include:

- Adding or improving insulation to walls, roof spaces, floors and windows (through improved/additional glazing);
- Installation of low energy lighting and appliances;
- Replacement boiler technology or heat pumps;
- Connection to heat networks
- Other measures to increase energy efficiency, such as draught proofing and upgrading ventilation systems.

5.11. Behavioural change also has a part to play in the retrofitting process. The reasons for this are twofold – firstly, there is potential for retrofitting to cause disruption during installation works, which may require the understanding of residents. Secondly, some of the technological changes require residents to adapt the way in which they inhabit their homes. These changes might include changed expectations about the instant provision of heat – or the consideration of energy conservation when using new appliances. More broadly (although not related to this review) there are behaviour change associated emissions savings to be made from reducing wasted energy (switching off lights and using heating controls, for example).

Barriers to retrofit in social housing

5.12. The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy commissioned a report in 2018²⁰ on the barriers to retrofit in social housing. The report's authors carried out research with a number of housing associations and councils' arm's-length housing providers. They found a range of barriers to retrofit – not least amongst them was the financial cost of the works required, however – the report's authors also highlighted some of the key things that brought about change²¹:

- “An EPC target included within a sustainability or asset management strategy
- Heating system replacements as part of planned investment programmes
- Window and door replacements as part of planned investment programmes
- Voids between tenancies, when property is empty and works can be carried out
- Political intervention internally (i.e. Board members prioritising certain projects) or externally (i.e. media attention)
- Availability of external funding, such as ECO.”

5.13. The task and finish group is well placed to explore how these ‘triggers to action’ might be utilised in Lewisham. In the wake of the covid-19 pandemic, the group's work may also support the prioritisation of efforts through the Council's existing plans and strategies for change.

¹⁹ The Climate Change Committee (CCC) is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008. Its purpose is to advise the UK and devolved governments on emissions targets and to report to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change. See its [Sixth Carbon Budget Buildings Report for details](#)

²⁰ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2018) [Barriers to retrofit in social housing](#)

²¹ p15 – what are the triggers to action?

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6. Key lines of enquiry

- 6.1. The Council's climate emergency action plan sets out a range of actions required to reduce carbon emissions from homes. It is acknowledged that these will need to be prioritised as a result of the impact of the pandemic – and the associated (and as yet not fully foreseen) changes to the life, jobs and home lives of Lewisham's residents. And whilst there are initiatives, technologies and approaches that are applicable to both social and private housing – there are also distinct opportunities and challenges associated with the two (roughly defined) sectors. Accordingly, the key lines of enquiry are divided as follows:

Meeting the retrofit challenge in social housing

- 6.2. In relation to social housing - the plan agreed by Mayor and Cabinet in March 2021 makes specific reference to Lewisham Homes' development of a new 'asset management strategy' this was also identified in the initial proposal for the creation of this task and finish group (see appendix 1).
- 6.3. Key line of enquiry 1: What are the aspirations of Lewisham's housing providers?
- 6.4. Key line of enquiry 2: How can we ensure that the planning and sequencing of current decent homes works or other cyclical/planned upgrades are in alignment with any future retrofit works? And - how do we ensure that our housing providers are best placed to make use of additional funding when it becomes available?
- 6.5. Key line of enquiry 3: Are there examples of good practice amongst councils in London (or elsewhere) in adapting their housing stock to meet the challenges of the climate emergency that we can learn from?

Exploring options for owner occupiers and the private rented sector

- 6.6. Key line of enquiry 4 - What are the principal barriers to enabling retrofit in Lewisham's private sector? And – are there planning policy (particularly in reference to the development of the new Local Plan) or building control related issues that need to be considered?
- 6.7. Key line of enquiry 5 – What are the current plans for licensing of landlords in relation to energy efficiency ratings?
- 6.8. Key line of enquiry 6 - What can the Council do in order to encourage and incentivise change in the private housing sector?
- 6.9. Key line of enquiry 7 - What options are there for Lewisham to become involved in the green recovery for jobs?

How the task and finish group will be run

- 6.10. It is intended that task and finish groups will be run as projects, utilising an Agile methodology, and they are intended to be:

Collaborative – scrutiny officers, directorate officers and councillors working together to address a topical issue of concern, using a shared space on MS Teams

Time limited – to suggest solutions in a timely manner, with allocated tasks, progress checks and deadlines

Flexible – with a mixture of formal and informal meetings, visits, research, user engagement etc.

Focussed on residents – service user experience is key, the issue will be clearly defined, and solutions suggested, on the basis of understanding residents' experience

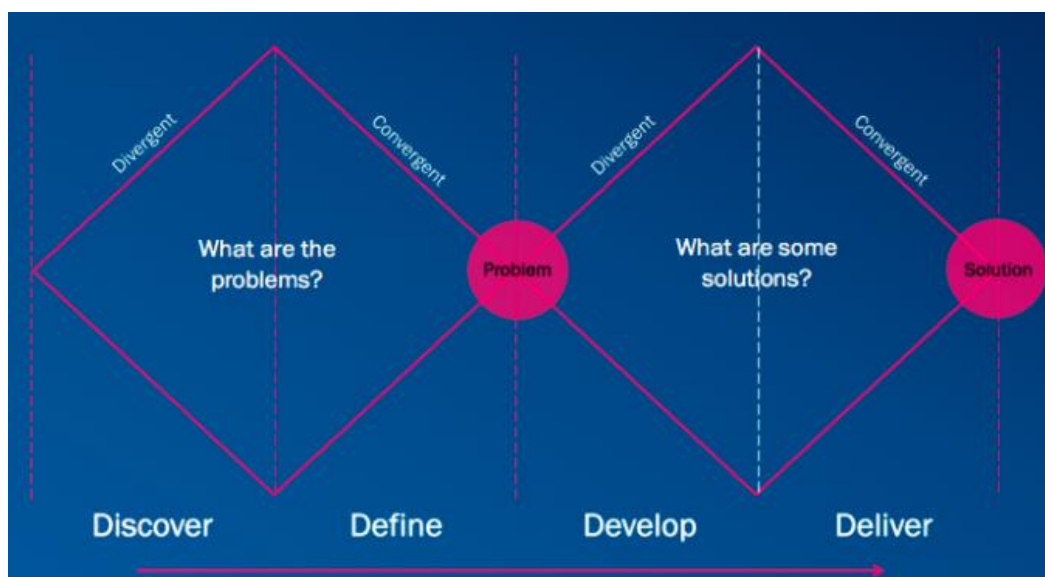
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Focussed on solutions – the aim is to take evidence from a wide range of sources and good practice to develop affordable, practical solutions that are evidence based and implementable and that will have a positive impact on the lives of residents.

- 6.11. A 'double diamond' approach will be taken which will split the project into two parts (diamonds). The first part is the 'discovery' stage. The issue (the topic of the task and finish group) is the starting point and then research and evidence collection is carried out to really understand the issue and define it more clearly. Once the issue is well understood and well defined, the second stage begins. Further research and evidence collection is carried out, seeking inspiration from elsewhere and working with a range of different stakeholders and experts to investigate potential solutions. Then a clear set of recommendations can be produced.



7. Sources of evidence and engagement

- 7.1. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning as well as the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport are key stakeholders in the Council's Executive and it is proposed that early discussions are held with both members about their vision and their ambitions for housing retrofit in Lewisham, particularly in the wake of the response to the covid-19 pandemic.
- 7.2. Officers in the Council's climate resilience team can provide a briefing on the latest updates to the climate emergency action plan and the current and most pressing issues the group should consider.
- 7.3. Council officers should provide an update on the licensing programme for the private rented sector, evidence may also be sought from tenants organisations and local groups involved in climate campaigning for their views on the role of the Council in enabling change in the private housing sector²².
- 7.4. Lewisham Homes and Regenter B3 – will be asked to set out their current plans and aspirations. As already noted, this should include consideration of the Lewisham Homes asset management and sustainability strategies at the earliest opportunity. The views of Lewisham's tenants and residents associations should also be sought on the

²² There is good evidence that the majority of Londoners are concerned about climate change and are willing to take action. See – 'what do Londoners think about climate change?': <https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/node/37827>

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opportunities, challenges and their readiness for retrofit schemes.

- 7.5. Evidence of best practice will be sought from the councils leading on the 'Retrofit London' (London Councils) programme – specifically the London Boroughs of Enfield and Waltham Forest.
- 7.6. Further engagement should take place with the Greater London Authority regarding the opportunities for Lewisham to engage with the Mayor of London's retrofit accelerator and Green New Deal programmes.
- 7.7. Engagement will take place with Lewisham's social housing providers (Particularly the largest providers, including L&Q, Peabody, and Phoenix Community Homes). This may entail a call for evidence and a request for examples of good practice²³. The group should also consider holding focus groups or visits to hear directly from residents (of all tenures) and tenants regarding their views on retrofitting.
- 7.8. The task and finish group could issue a public [call for evidence](#) on the council website so that anyone resident in Lewisham can share their views about retrofit.

8. Timeframe and resources

- 8.1. The first meeting of the task and finish group will take place on 16 July 2021 and further desktop research, evidence gathering and engagement will take place over the seven months to February 2022. There will be further meetings of the group, either formal or informal, over the lifespan of the project and officers from the scrutiny team will work with council officers in the housing and climate resilience teams to provide information to Members. It is anticipated that officers from Lewisham Homes and Regenter B3 will also be involved with the review. The project will conclude with a final formal meeting of the task and finish group to consider the recommendations the group will make to Mayor and Cabinet and housing providers.

9. Intended outcomes

- 9.1. The work of the task and finish group is intended to support work to improve the following outcomes:
 - More housing in Lewisham retrofitted with insulation, connected to heat networks and other sources of low carbon heating.
 - Increased understanding and awareness among housing providers, owners and tenants about the importance of retrofit and the options available across housing tenures to implement changes.
 - Ensuring that the Council's housing providers (specifically Lewisham Homes) are considering the necessary financial, technical, operational and resident satisfaction implications of delivering carbon neutral standards across the stock.
- 9.2. Issues outside of the scope of the task and finish group include the other significant sources of carbon emissions in the borough – namely transport and industry/commercial operations as well as the Council's corporate buildings and schools.

²³ Building on the action set out under 2.3.18 of the climate emergency action plan (see appendix 2 for details)

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10. Financial implications

- 10.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Elements of the work of the task and finish group may have financial implications and these will need to be considered in due course.

11. Legal implications

- 11.1. The Council's Constitution provides at paragraph 6.11, Article 6 that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees, to be known as task and finish groups which will exist for a period of no less than 3 months, nor more than 12 months from the date of their creation. It further adds that "Any task and finish group shall consist of 5 members and be established for the purpose of examining a particular issue in depth. The terms of reference of any task and finish group shall be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which shall also appoint members to it."

12. Equalities implications

- 12.1. The [Equality Act 2010](#) (The Act) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act, making the law easier to understand and strengthen protection in certain situations. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 12.2. The Act also imposes a public sector equality duty. This means that in public bodies, of which this Council is designated, they must consider all individuals in carrying out their day-to-day work when shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires public bodies to:
- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
 - Advance equality of opportunity
 - Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities
- 12.3. The Council recognises diversity is one of its strengths and is committed to creating a more inclusive community. Therefore, having due regard to the Act, is confirmation of the Council's commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination against any group within the community and to actively promote an equality of opportunity and positive community partnership.
- 12.4. The delivery of the Council's equalities objectives is to be achieved through the delivery of all of the Council's strategies, plans and procedures. As such, all select committees and other scrutiny bodies, when planning their work and scrutinising items, bear in mind the delivery of the Council's equality objectives.
- 12.5. Scrutiny tries to make sure that its work reflects the diversity of Lewisham's communities and that the views of residents are fairly represented in scrutiny processes. Any recommendations arising from scrutiny work support the Council's corporate strategy and reflect the needs of local residents.
- 12.6. There are no direct equality implications arising as a result of the implementation of the recommendation in this report but there are likely to be equality implications arising as part of the task and finish group's work and there will need to be considered in due course.

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13. Climate change and environmental implications

13.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, (as outlined above) in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. The declaration tasked the Sustainable Development Committee with scrutinising the Council’s emerging plans. The work of this task and finish group will be in addition to the scrutiny carried out by the select committee. There will be climate change implications arising throughout the review and as part of any recommendations made by the group. These will need to be considered in due course.

14. Crime and disorder implications

14.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the task and finish group may have crime and disorder implications and the task and finish group will need to give due consideration to this.

15. Health and wellbeing implications

15.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the task and finish group may have health and wellbeing implications, particularly in relation to housing quality and fuel poverty. These issues will be considered as part of the review.

16. Glossary

16.1. This list of terms incorporates the standard usage that will be applied throughout the work of the group for example: the term ‘climate crisis’ or ‘climate emergency’ will most often be used in preference to ‘climate change’.

16.2. [Link to Oxford English Dictionary here.](#)

Term	Definition
Carbon dioxide	Carbon dioxide (CO ₂) is a naturally occurring gas fixed by photosynthesis into organic matter and is a by-product of fossil fuel combustion, land use changes and other industrial processes. CO ₂ is the principal greenhouse gas associated with human activity and climate change (see below) and the reference against which other greenhouse gases are measured. Unless otherwise indicated the terms ‘carbon’ or ‘carbon dioxide’ are used in this report to refer to a combined measure of greenhouse gases (CO ₂ e or CO ₂ equivalent), of which carbon dioxide is the most common.
Carbon neutral	The term ‘carbon neutral’ is used in this report in line with the original declaration of a Climate Emergency in Lewisham. Carbon neutrality balances greenhouse gas emissions with carbon removals. As defined by the Committee on Climate Change, a net-zero or carbon neutral target requires “deep reductions in emissions, with any remaining sources offset by removals of CO ₂ from the atmosphere”. In the context of Lewisham’s target this means additional carbon removal and storage activity at the borough level or ‘carbon offsets’ funding an equivalent removal outside the borough.

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Term	Definition
Climate	Climate is usually defined as the average weather, or more rigorously, as a statistical description in terms of the mean and variability of relevant quantities over a period of time ranging from months to thousands or millions of years. The relevant quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation, and wind.
Climate change	Climate change, as used by the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change, refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer.
Climate emergency	Recognition that a changing climate will have severe and enduring social, economic and environmental implications. Declaration acknowledges the current gap between understanding and the sustained effort needed to meet the challenge of climate change.
Climate emergency action plan	The Council's formal plan to reduce emissions. Formally first adopted in 2020 and reprioritised on an annual basis. It originally consisted of 143 actions across five key themes.
Fuel poverty	The Government's definition of fuel poverty for England and Wales states that a household is said to be in fuel poverty if: they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level), and, were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. There is a direct link between living in cold and damp conditions and poor health outcomes.
Green New Deal	The Mayor of London's plan to reduce emissions (and improve air quality) alongside a programme for skills, job creation and investment.
Housing tenure	Whether someone owns (with or without a mortgage or loan), rents (either from a private landlord – or - the council or a housing association (referred to as social renting)) – or otherwise has formal arrangements for occupying a property.
Retrofit	Retrofit is the introduction of new materials, products and technologies into an existing building to reduce the energy needed to occupy that building. In most cases this would include work to insulate a home – although the two terms are sometimes separated to draw a distinction between technological interventions or appliances (providing heat) and increasing thermal efficiency (retaining heat generated and/or levelling out fluctuating temperatures within a home)

17. Report author and contact

- 17.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact scrutiny managers: Timothy Andrew (timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk) or Katie Wood (katie.wood@lewisham.gov.uk)

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Appendix 1 – Task and finish group proforma

<p>Proposed title</p> <p><i>This should be written as a question. What is the main question that you are looking to answer? Ideally use “how” I.e. “How can we improve……XXX?”</i></p>	<p>How can Lewisham Council ensure that we are doing everything we can to retrofit and insulate homes, both owned and managed by Lewisham and in the private sector, in order to reach our Climate Change target by 2030?</p>
<p>Overview</p> <p><i>Provide 2-3 sentences explaining the proposed investigation in more detail including the key areas that you are proposing to look at.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough investigation of what is being done to upgrade our housing stock by Lewisham Homes. • Benchmarking - what we are currently doing and how this compares with other London Boroughs of a similar make-up • Best practice from other boroughs and Local Authority advisory bodies – what can we learn to improve and speed up? • Implementation of enforcement of the Minimum Energy Efficiency standards infringements by private landlords. Is there a way to make this work and pay for itself? • What can we do as a Local authority to help home owners to upgrade their own homes? • Can this work, both of private and publicly owned housing, be part of a wider economic recovery for Lewisham Post-Covid and be our own “Green New Deal” creating local jobs in this sector?
<p>Reason for proposal</p> <p><i>Why do you think that a task and finish group is the most appropriate way to address this issue / answer this question? Where has the suggestion come from? (I.e. through resident engagement, casework, external inspection, performance information.)</i></p>	<p>We have discussed with officers, involved in the Climate Change work of the council, which issue they feel is the most pressing and this was clearly the most important. Currently we need to retrofit at least 80% of Lewisham’s housing stock which equates to 28 houses per day in order to reach our climate goals, and with every passing day this number increases. The cost of getting this work done will rise as the task increases in size and becomes more pressing, plus the value of the improvements for residents will be greater the earlier the work is completed.</p>

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<p>Policy Context</p> <p><i>How does the proposal support delivery of the Lewisham Corporate Strategy; national/regional policies, initiatives; legislation etc.</i></p>	<p>The Corporate Strategy states our housing aim to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable <p>This Task and Finish group will work towards making housing more affordable, particularly in terms of energy costs and will focus on those most in need.</p> <p>Although the Corporate Strategy does not explicitly set goals towards reducing our carbon emissions we passed a Climate Emergency Motion in 2019 which states the aim of Lewisham Borough to be Carbon Neutral by 2030 and to do this the Council should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set specific and measurable targets to reduce carbon emissions for the Council and for the borough as a whole, including costed milestones to zero-carbon. • Consider systematically the climate change impact of each area of the Council's activities • Increase local resilience to climate impacts already in the system. • Continue to prioritise support for vulnerable residents through the Council's fuel poverty programmes working with partners at a community, borough wide and regional level to provide advice services and access to funding for heating, insulation and ventilation. • Accelerate existing programmes to deliver reductions in greenhouse gas emissions including delivery of heat networks in the borough, low carbon development and high quality housing, an efficient and low carbon corporate estate and support for renewables and for community energy • Work with partner bodies across the borough and across London to ensure the climate emergency is adequately reflected in the development and implementation of all borough wide strategies and plans. • Draw up a communications strategy to support delivery of a Zero-Carbon Lewisham and enable Lewisham residents to make low carbon choices. <p>The GLA has pledged to make London Carbon Neutral by 2050</p> <p>The National target is 2050 together with a new target of 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade compared to 1990 levels.</p>
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<p>Criteria for the investigation</p> <p><i>(Essential)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the proposed investigation timely? Why?</i> • <i>Is it a strategic and significant issue? How?</i> • <i>Is it of concern to one or more sections of the population? Who?</i> <p><i>(Desirable)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the issue of concern to partners or stakeholders? How?</i> • <i>Will the investigation add value in terms of improving the council's or partner's performance or service delivery? How?</i> • <i>Will the investigation be duplicating any other work? What?</i> • <i>What control or influence does the Council have in this area?</i> 	<p>The proposal is timely because we have an extraordinarily huge task to reach our target of carbon neutrality by 2030 and unless we tackle the problem of how to control emissions from public and private housing stock we cannot reach this target. The quicker we work towards this target the easier and more efficient the journey will be.</p> <p>Post-Covid, the climate crisis will be one of the key drivers of all decisions made by the council as it will have to fulfil its responsibility to reach the targets set by both the GLA and National Government above.</p> <p>Climate Change will affect everybody, but the costs of increasing energy bills, contraction of economies, and migration of populations will hit the poorest in our community the hardest. Therefore we have a duty to do everything we can to mitigate this by acting now to reduce housing costs.</p> <p>The issue will be of interest to Lewisham Homes, as we will need to investigate their plans for how they will be retrofitting their housing stock.</p> <p>By increasing the amount of housing that is retrofitted we will improve the living conditions of those who rent from Lewisham Homes. Residents living in private accommodation which do not fulfil the required legislative standards will see an improvement in their living conditions.</p> <p>We have a team of highly committed officers working on our climate change policy but this work aims to support this team and we have checked with all parties to ensure that we are not duplicating their work.</p> <p>Lewisham Homes is developing a new Asset Management Strategy which is due to be presented to their board for approval soon. This document will, in part, include the work of Lewisham Homes on updating and maintaining all assets. Therefore this group would want to interrogate this document as soon as possible and possibly make recommendations as to possible amendments.</p> <p>The Council, through Lewisham Homes is responsible for the social housing stock of the borough, which needs to be brought up to a standard that fulfils our carbon target. We also have powers of enforcement over the rented sector.</p>
<p>Sources of evidence</p> <p><i>Do you have any thoughts/ideas on where you might gather evidence from? e.g. research or site visits. (Officers will be able to recommend suggestions and help with this.)</i></p>	<p>We would like to do the following (not exhaustive):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate good practice from other boroughs who have made good inroads into retrofitting to find out how this can be done efficiently and at speed. Possibly invite a representative from a council to speak to the group. • Investigate good private sector practice and how home owners can take affordable action on their own homes

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	<p>(possibly hear from the Association of Environmentally Conscious Builders)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advice/read papers from APSE, LGA and co-operative Councils Innovation Network • Through APSE find examples of councils doing good work on enforcement of private landlords and take advice on how to make this cost-effective. • Investigate any possible grants available to help with funding. • Learn from other councils how they have either created a commercial body to implement this work or assisted in any way to help local companies to ensure that we create a benefit to our local economy.
<p>Co-optees / Technical advisors?</p> <p><i>Would the task and finish group benefit from having expert input such as an academic or local expert?</i></p>	<p>It would be useful for the group to have an over-view of the types of retrofitting and insulation available, and the costs of this work. Therefore, an expert in this field, either from the private or public sector, would be good to hear from.</p>
<p>Suggested timeframe</p> <p><i>Do you estimate / suggest that the investigation take 3, 6, 9 or 12 months? Outline your suggested timetable for evidence gathering.</i></p>	<p>We plan to take 9 months on this piece of work from June 2021 to February 2022. Finishing in February will avoid conflict with the run up to the May elections in 2022. We will prioritise the work so that should the scope be too large to be covered in 9 months a separate smaller project could be carried into the following administration. Advice from scrutiny officers will be sought during the initial scoping meeting as to how to structure the meetings, use of officer time and when to invite experts etc to inform members.</p>
<p>Equalities Impact</p> <p><i>Identify any equalities issues that might be applicable.</i></p>	<p>This work will affect all residents but in particular it will have the most positive effect on the poorest members of our community.</p>
<p>Councillor(s) submitting the proposal</p> <p><i>Please list the names of the submitting councillor(s)</i></p>	<p>This is being submitted by Cllr Louise Krupski who will be acting as chair of the group. Cllrs who have agreed to be part of the group are: Cllr Patrick Codd, Cllr Aisling Gallagher, Cllr Tauseef Anwar, Cllr Stephen Penfold.</p>

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Additional sources

Costs of retrofitting homes

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-cost-assumptions-what-does-it-cost-to-retrofit-homes>

Costs of insulation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/determining-the-costs-of-insulating-non-standard-cavity-walls-and-lofts>

Eco-furb – retro fitting for the PRS

<https://www.ecofurb.com/>

RICS pdf: decarbonising the housing stock

<https://www.rics.org/globalassets/rics-website/media/news/news--opinion/retrofitting-to-decarbonise-the-uk-existing-housing-stock-v2.pdf>

Bristol city leap Mayor and Cabinet report

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/ielIssueDetails.aspx?IId=30452&Opt=3>

Retrofit academy

<https://www.retrofitacademy.org/>

Gov.uk guide to making retrofit work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/retrofit-for-the-future-a-guide-to-making-retrofit-work>

National Housing Federation

<https://www.housing.org.uk/news-and-blogs/blogs/alan-boddy/uk-targets-carbon-emissions-retrofit/>