

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

7 March 2024

New recruits needed to meet green homes capacity challenge

Fenland residents and businesses are being urged to discover the opportunities available to them created by the drive to make homes greener.

Rising energy costs, government schemes, the push to cut emissions and the adoption of a new, toughened standard for retrofitting homes are all driving the demand for more qualified professionals to get into low carbon construction.

It is estimated around half a million more builders, tradespeople, administrative staff and some entirely new construction roles are needed by 2035 if the government's ambition for all residential homes to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C is to be achieved.

In Fenland, Fenland District Council has been working in partnership with Clarion Housing Group and EQUANS on retrofitting over 200 social homes in the district, with funding from the government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.

Retrofitting involves making homes more energy-efficient, and in turn warmer and cheaper to run. Measures include fitting external wall and roof insulation, loft insulation, energy efficient doors and windows, air source heat pumps, solar panels and more.

Now the Council and its partners want to raise awareness of the retrofit training and upskilling opportunities available to residents and businesses in the area.

Cllr Ian Benney, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth and Skills said: "The drive to meet net zero targets combined with ongoing increases in energy prices means there is a significant and growing demand for skilled workers to carry out quality retrofit works to homes.

"Due to this demand, there are more opportunities than ever to gain new skills and qualifications in an area which is also vital to the Fenland economy. Whether you're considering a role in retrofit or have a business and are looking to get into the retrofit supply chain, there are a number of routes to grow your experience and become an integral part of this growing industry."

Rob Lane, Chief Property Officer at Clarion Housing Group said: "We are committed to leading the path towards a greener, more sustainable future for our residents and communities. Through our retrofitting programme in Fenland and Tonbridge, we are not only enhancing home energy efficiency, but also improving living conditions and reducing the quantity of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere.

"The work we are doing has also delivered tangible economic advantages for our residents by easing the financial pressures on many families, particularly those in the most challenging homes to heat.

“We will continue to work together with our local council partners to generate new opportunities for ‘green’ jobs by nurturing a new wave of talent in the construction industry, providing pathways for skill development and future employment for the wider community.”

Webinar

A webinar, ‘**Green Works: Getting into Low Carbon Construction**’, raising awareness of the available opportunities, was held last month. The event was supported by Fenland District Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Clarion Housing Group, United Living and EQUANs.

To watch a recording of the webinar, visit Fenland District Council’s YouTube channel at:
https://youtu.be/BY5_NGCP9V4

- If you’re considering retrofit learning opportunities in the Fenland area, contact Alex Meads, Green Skills Manager at the College of West Anglia, via email at: Alex.Meads@cwa.ac.uk
- If you’re an SME and are interested in retrofit supply chains and exploring how your business may be able to help, contact Fenland for Business on business@fenland.gov.uk or call 01354 622506. Alternative visit: www.fenlandforbusiness.co.uk/contactus

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Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk