Eachard Road, CB3 0HY

Christoph and Gill

Christoph, a freelance conservationist, says:

‘When we bought our house in 1999 we suffered from cold spots and had to frequently adjust the heating to reach a comfortable temperature.

‘We decided to combine insulation works with building a ground floor rear and side extension to provide more family living space. We now use less energy, save money, and as the heating goes on automatically I don’t have to interfere with it – to the relief of my wife!’

Overview

Date built: 1935
Type: Semi-detached
Wall type: Solid brick
Project timescale: 2010-2011
Cost of retrofit: £70,000
Occupants: 2 adults, 1 child

Key features

Insulation
Internal wall insulation
External wall insulation
Loft and floor insulation

Glazing
Double-glazing in front windows, door & porch

Heating/energy
Woodburning stove with oven for cooking & hot water
Solar PV

Water
5 water butts

Materials
Wood for conservatory construction (2001) and brick for extension 2010-2011

Low Energy Measures

Insulation

We bought the house in 1999, and insulated the loft and floors the first winter with grant support from the Council via our gas supplier. From 2000-2010 we tackled cold spots in the house by installing internal wall insulation (Sempatap and Styropor) in the new extension, and external wall insulation on the upper floor side wall.

Glazing

We added double-glazing windows throughout, and insulated the porch area with new front door in 2006, restoring the original design in the front door window (with a double glazed panel behind it).
Heating/energy
We have a large wood burning stove in the kitchen-cum-living room. We use the small oven built into it for roasting, baking and to supply hot water.

Our wood fuel is tree prunings from our own and neighbours gardens, and a supply from a local tree surgeon – we pay more for oak and ask, which burns better; different wood types need different lengths of time to season. The stove has saved a substantial amount of energy. In summer it’s too hot to cook using the wood stove so we switch to a gas cooker.

Solar PV (1.2 kw) panels were installed in 2010.

Performance
The improvements have dealt with the cold problems and cut our energy bills.

Future Plans
We’re now considering further insulation work, possibly in combination with a loft conversion. Also we’re interested in a greywater recycling system.

Products
Internal wall insulation:
- **Sempatap** 10mm-thick roll-on insulation
- **Styropor** expanded polystyrene sheet insulation