

Open Eco Homes 2016



At [Open Eco Homes](#), over September 18th and 24th, householders from [15 Cambridge homes](#) showed visitors on 340 tours how they save energy and have comfortable, sustainable homes. Visitors could see homes similar to their own, ask questions and work out what would suit them. 86% of visitors giving feedback were inspired to make their own home energy improvements.

“Inspirational and thought-provoking use of new technology and affordable devices to save energy.”

13 Retrofits of properties from 1810 to 1960 reflected the challenge of making our older homes fit for the future. The wide variety included DIY & low-cost improvements like hempcrete for internal wall insulation, with a special day-long practical workshop. A 1936 home had a clever mix of improvements, partly guided by an earlier Cambridge Carbon Footprint thermal imaging survey



St John's College' thorough retrofit of an 1810 town house is a shining example of how an historic building can be turned into elegant, energy efficient student housing.

2 new-build homes were open: the [K1 co-housing project](#) showed visitors what's coming in this exciting scheme, and a new kit house demonstrated very high aesthetic and energy standards:



[Cosy Cambridge](#) was our follow-up home energy day to help people turn their ideas and inspiration into reality. It was opened by Cambridge's MP Daniel Zeichner and had a packed programme of Workshops, as well as a 'human library' – a popular session where people could book one-to-one conversations with experts on many relevant subjects:



*"It's great to be in a room with people who are passionate & enthusiastic about this stuff."
"Theory is all very well, but speaking to someone with hard experience balances the picture."*

- 169 visitors made 340 tours of Open Eco Homes: most visits take an hour
- 75% of the visitors were new to OEH – we're reaching well beyond core supporters
- From visitor surveys, we estimate that this year's Open Eco Homes and Cosy Cambridge inspired or enabled home energy improvements that will save 938 Tonnes of CO₂
- About 1,200 volunteer hours contributed to the success

"It's a learning and inspiring experience, well worth it. I had my 10-year-old in tow who loved it too! They are after all the future eco-warriors!"

Wider outreach

Visitors came from as far away as Wales.

The [Bishops Stortford Climate Group](#) asked us for advice about starting their own version of Open Eco Homes and Thermal Imaging projects. We visited them in October to discuss how to get started on a fairly small-scale and building up. They also came to us for thermal imaging training, along with [Muswell Hill Sustainability Group](#).

Thanks to all funders, volunteers and participants who enabled these inspiring and practical days, showing people getting on with saving home energy, with significant results.

[Open Eco Homes](#) is an annual project of the charity, [Cambridge Carbon Footprint](#)

Nov'16, Tom Bragg, Trustee