

Open Eco Homes 2019 Report

The **10th year** in succession that [Cambridge Carbon Footprint](#) has run [Open Eco Homes](#) with:

- a record **577** booked one-hour tours of new and retrofitted homes by 319 visitors
- a record **198** participants at 6 supporting events like ‘Beginners Guide to Retrofit’
- an estimated **998 Tonnes CO₂** saved by improvements inspired or enabled by OEH 2019

In March the stunning [Cambridge Mosque](#) and [Marmalade Lane](#), the UK’s biggest cohousing community, had fully booked OEH tours. These award-winning buildings attracted so much interest they were fully booked again in September.



An area for ablutions at Cambridge Mosque on a March OEH tour

In June [Getting Ready for Climate Change at Home](#) covered how to improve your home and garden’s resilience to heatwaves, floods and droughts. We wanted to run this before summer heatwaves and the next month saw a UK record temperature of 38.7°C in Cambridge.

In September [Cambridge 2030](#), started with a celebration of 10 years of Open Eco Homes and all that’s been achieved. Then Baroness Brown of Cambridge, Julia King, [Deputy chair of the Committee on Climate Change](#), introduced the huge challenges of the next decade:

- a **million retrofits a year** to make all older homes energy-efficient and comfortable
 - all new homes built to zero carbon standards, so they don’t need retrofitting
- Other speakers offered solutions, but clearly retrofits are the biggest challenge.

September tours featured 11 homes over 2 weekends:

Jeremy and Emma, who are both architects, designed and built their home in 2007 on an awkward site on [Auckland Road](#) and then founded an [architectural practice](#). Daylight floods into comfortable spaces, which have superb insulation and lots of thermal mass, giving it high energy efficiency, without high tech.

‘Clever use of space and light to construct a sustainable building.’ – 2019 OEH visitor



Jeremy showing his Auckland Rd Home

When Bart and Rosie planned to add an extension to their [Coton family home](#), they wanted it built to [Passivhaus](#) standards and realised the original part needed a matching deep retrofit. With professional advice, tradesman’s help and lots of DIY they’ve nearly completed an inspiring refurbishment. They’ve taken great care with the details and still have 200mm of external insulation to apply to the front of the house. We hope you can see it completed in next year’s OEH.



Heidi Allen, MP at Bart and Rosie’s mainly DIY [retrofit of a 1945 semi](#) in Coton

60% of visitors on tours were new to OEH, so we’re reaching lots of new people.

“Very informative –great stepping stone for ideas and understanding for your own project”

Other 2019 OEH events to help people turn inspiration into reality: (See [presentations](#) here)

- [Successful Draught-Proofing & Ventilation](#) low cost improvements for owners & renters
- [Beginner's Guide to Retrofit](#) training by the Manchester [Carbon-Co-op](#).
- [Better Insulation](#) new wisdom on old solutions
- [Your Smart Electric Home](#) PV, Batteries, Heat pumps, EVs and export

“Just go, because it gives you another view on how to refurbish your house”

The UK Govt, local councils, building industry and the public have an enormous challenge to reach 1 million retrofits a year! Open Eco Homes wants to play its part with raised ambition.

Thank you to all our funders and sponsors, host householders, speakers and to all the other volunteers organising and helping run open days and events. It wouldn’t happen without you.

Tom Bragg, Open Eco Homes Manager, with Allan Shepherd and Alana Sinclair

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