

COMPETITION ENTRANT CLEANS UP

WINNER Alfred Francis cleaned up when he was entered into a free prize draw.

The 80-year-old, from Plaistow, was given a washing machine after his name was pulled out of a Newham Council hat.

Mr Francis said: "This has come at the perfect time as my washing machine stopped working last week. The heating and insulation has made a great difference to my home, especially as my new boiler means I can just have the hot water on as before I had to have the heat on too. It's much better and is saving me money too."

Mr Francis was automatically entered into the competition and beat 1,000 others after taking up the offer of a new central heating system, cavity wall insulation, 250mm of loft insulation and draught proofing, worth about £4,800.



It is part of a scheme that is being run by Warm Zone to help people in private and rented accommodation on low incomes to improve their home's energy efficiency and keep fuel bills down.

Executive member for equalities Councillor Neil Wilson and London Warm Zone's deputy director Nigel Turner were on hand to help deliver the prize, yesterday.

Cllr Wilson said: "It was a pleasure to help deliver Mr Francis's prize - I know what a difference these changes can make, not just to people's lives, but to the environment. "And that's the reason why the council offers people the chance to have improvements made to their homes - improvements that are especially important at this time of year."

The scheme is funded by the council in partnership with EDF Energy and London Warm Zone. To date 15,000 households in Newham have benefited from heating and insulation improvements to their homes at a value of approximately £6 million.

The project, which is managed by London Warm Zone, a not for profit agency, has also raised more than £646,000 in benefits for households in the borough by providing expert staff to help householders claim benefits that many did not know they were entitled to.

The council has received further funding from Central Government to continue the scheme for a another three years.