

Dreaming of a Green, Warm Christmas...

11 December 2008

THOUSANDS more Newcastle householders could be dreaming of a greener, warmer Christmas as North Staffs Warm Zone (NSWZ)* extends further across the borough this month.

Almost 3000 homes in May Bank area will be able to find out in the coming weeks if they qualify for FREE or cut-price home insulation.

It's the latest neighbourhood to be targeted by NSWZ, which is working to eliminate fuel poverty and boost energy efficiency across North Staffordshire.

One May Bank resident who has already taken advantage of the project is Ms Maureen Fraser. She had discounted cavity wall and loft insulation installed at her three-bedroom, post-war semi last December - and has noticed a definite improvement since then.

"I've made savings on my fuel bills and the whole house just feels warmer, even when you come in after a day at work and the heating hasn't been on," she said.

"It's really proved itself and I would definitely recommend anyone else to go for it, especially after how cold it has already been this winter!"

It's expected that around 35% of the neighbourhood's households visited by the Warm Zone team will benefit from free cavity wall and loft insulation, whilst everyone else could save up to 60% on the cost of the work.

Many of the other wards throughout Newcastle Borough have already been targeted by the NSWZ team. In the last 18 months, assessors have visited residents in the Bradwell, Butt Lane, Chesterton, Cross Heath, Holditch, Kidsgrove, Knutton & Silverdale, Parksite, Talke, Thistleberry and Town areas.

Letters are being sent out to residents in May Bank telling them about the scheme, and NSWZ's team of assessors will follow that up with door-to-door visits and leafleting.

A few simple home energy questions to check the energy efficiency rating of their property will help determine their eligibility for free or discounted insulation measures.

Following the survey, all being well, the surveyor will then arrange for the necessary insulation work to be carried out, at low cost or NO cost to the householder.

NSWZ spokesperson Sophie Thorley, Warm Zone Director said: "We would urge anyone in May Bank receiving one of our questionnaires to fill them in and return them as soon as possible - they have nothing to lose and could end up warmer AND hundreds of pounds a year better off as a result.

"But people in other areas don't have to wait for us to call on them - they can contact us today to find out how we can help."

To find out more about NSWZ's 'no cost/low cost' home insulation scheme, visit its website - www.nswz.co.uk - where you can also complete an online self-assessment.

Alternatively, telephone NSWZ on 01782 238443 to find out more about saving money and energy, or to arrange a home visit/assessment by a Warm Zone representative.

NSWZ also offers a benefits advice service, aimed at securing payouts for people who don't realise they could be eligible, or who have previously failed to make a successful claim. Anyone wishing to access the service can call 01782 238443 and ask to speak to a Benefits Service advisor.