

North Staffordshire Warm Zone Helping to Cut the Local Carbon Footprint

15 March 2007

Homes in Knutton and Silverdale are getting a helping hand to cut their energy bills and reduce their carbon emissions - thanks to the launch of North Staffordshire Warm Zone major energy efficiency programme.

Over the next two years the North Staffordshire Warm Zone team will visit around 73,000 homes and help reduce the Local Carbon Footprint. It's expected that householders could cut their energy use by up to 55% just by insulating their loft and cavity walls

On average around 35% of households will benefit from free cavity wall & loft insulation work, whilst everyone else could save up to 60% on insulation work. All households will benefit from a free and confidential benefits health check and advice on the energy efficiency of their home.

Everyone knows that it's important to save energy and the need to reduce their impact on climate change. Now thanks to North Staffordshire Warm Zone it just got easier for owner occupiers and privately rented households in Knutton and Silverdale.

Over the next coming weeks a letter will be sent to residents telling them about the scheme. That Home Visitors, who will be in Warm Zone uniforms and carry identity cards will visit them and ask a series of questions on their doorstep after which the data collected will be assessed to determine whether or not they qualify for the free measures. A surveyor will then visit a few weeks later and all being well, arrange for the necessary work to be carried out.

Tracy Hine, Director of the Warm Zone, says the programme will bring immense benefits to the area: "We expect tens of thousands of people will be able to reduce their Carbon Footprint by accessing free measures making their homes much warmer and more comfortable whilst at the same time cutting their fuel bills," she said.

It's estimated that the average house could reduce their energy use by up to 55% just by insulating their loft and cavity walls. About 35%

of all the heat lost in an un-insulated home is lost through the walls and 20% is lost through the roof."

Councillor David Becket and Cabinet member with responsibility for Environment and Recycling said "I welcome the North Staffordshire Warm Zone initiative, it helps to tackle fuel poverty as well as helping to reduce individuals' carbon footprint which will help reduce the local impact on climate change.

Adding "I would like to see the scheme extended to cover the whole borough which would see further benefits to individuals and the local environment"

Councillor Richard Gorton who represents Knutton and Silverdale said "I think this is a great scheme that will help a lot of private homes in the area, already over 38% of residents who have completed a short questionnaire have qualified for free insulation measures. Residents can qualify for a full grant even if they aren't on benefits, which is marvellous news for those that spend more than 10% of their annual income on energy bills.

Warm Zone home visitors will be calling on residents in Knutton and Silverdale over the next couple of weeks, they will be wearing black and red uniforms and carry identification which they show residents when they call. It is important that householders ask for identification from any organisation as unfortunately, you can't always be sure that people turning up on your doorstep are from a bonifide organisation.

I would encourage people to participate and complete the short questionnaire as they will be able to cut their energy use as well as their bills"

Councillor David Leech who also represents Knutton and Silverdale said "I would encourage residents to participate in the scheme and make use of the free benefits and energy advice available, as this will help improve their properties and reduce energy consumption."