

### Mr & Mrs Sapsted- External Wall Insulation

#### Benfleet

Cheryl (65) and John (67) Sapstead recently had external wall insulation added to their semi-detached bungalow in Benfleet, through the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme. The insulation will help to reduce the property's heating costs and carbon emissions.

Speaking about their home, Cheryl Sapstead said: "Our house was built in the 1960s with solid brick walls and no cavity. Essentially whatever weather we had would just come straight through from outside!"

After a chilly winter which saw the couple's heating on full blast most days, they came across the energy efficiency scheme online. David Sapstead said: "We found out about the insulation scheme on the Essex County Council Facebook page, filled in our contact details and just a week later we received a phone call."

Essex County Council's contractor for the scheme, Aran Insulation, soon arranged for a surveyor to visit the Sapstead's home.

Cheryl said: "Aran sent a surveyor round to see if we were eligible for the scheme and, if so, what we needed done to improve the energy efficiency of our home. We were accepted and work to install external wall insulation began a few weeks later."

A minimally disruptive procedure, external wall insulation (EWI) involves an insulation layer being fixed to a property's existing exterior wall which is finished with a protective render or decorative surface. EWI improves energy efficiency by limiting heat loss and in turn reduces heating bills and carbon emissions.

The process took just over five days and the couple have already begun to notice a difference in the comfort of their home.

Cheryl added: "We've had all this work done for free and we are grateful for that because we're hoping that it will make our home a lot warmer this winter. I've now recommended the scheme to my sister, and I would definitely encourage other Essex residents to consider applying for the council's green home improvement schemes."

Homeowners with a combined household income below £30,000 and an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of E, F or G are invited to check eligibility for the free local authority grant of up to £10,000\* to upgrade heating systems and install insulation.

Funding for the scheme, which ends next month, will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Further opportunities for funding are expected to be announced by

Cllr Peter Schwier, Deputy to the Leader with the lead on Climate Action at Essex County Council said: "I'm delighted to see that Cheryl and David have actively taken steps to ready their home for the future through our Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme. Not only will the couple be reducing energy consumption through their new insulation, but they will also be doing their bit to tackle climate change.

"I hope that the Sapsteads' story will encourage many other Essex residents to pick up the phone and take advantage of every opportunity to boost their home's energy efficiency."



Cheryl said: "We've had a couple of colder days when we've had to put the heating on. Before there would still be a cold chill in the air but now the house seems to hold the heat in. During all the recent hot weather, the house has actually seemed cooler inside too."



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