

# Open Eco Homes 2020 Report

## Summary of achievements

All Open Eco Homes activity went online in 2020, with **11 home 'tours' and 5 talks**:

- 556 participants joined these Zoom events, plus 647 views of [their videos](#) (so far)
- 82% of participants said they were 'more' or 'much more' likely to create an eco-home because of their tour or talk
- an estimated 928 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> will be saved by improvements inspired or enabled by this year's OEH, based on a survey asking participants what they intend to do as a result and likely energy savings

## Highlights

It was disappointing to realise in March that in-person Open Eco Homes (OEH) home tours and talks, as in the previous decade, weren't possible because of Covid-19. So in April we ran our first Zoom event, '[Beginner's Guide to Retrofit](#)', a talk inspired by the Carbon Co-op in Manchester who presented this for OEH in Cambridge last year. It engaged 28 participants who gave useful and encouraging feedback, helping us develop a bigger online program of events, including:



'[Cool Homes in a Heatwave](#)' in June helped people reduce overheating of their homes in the coming hot weather, with shading, night-time ventilation and personal cooling.

'[Mark Brinkley's Self Build](#)', featuring videos and interesting details of the design and build process, making this first online home tour involving and inspiring. It attracted 45 participants at the time and the two videos of these tours have been viewed over 180 times so far.

***"A fine example of building in a restricted space but not extravagant. Not a 'grand design' but a fine design!"*** – tour participant

'[Victorian Family House with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Insulation](#)' by Zoe and Samin showcased the extensive retrofit of their home. The design by AC Architects transformed their Victorian semi. Where previously it was freezing and damp in winter and too hot in summer, it is now comfortable year round and much more energy efficient.

In '[Victorian Terrace Getting Off Gas](#)' James and Hannah shared how they extended and retrofitted their home, fitting demand-controlled ventilation and a heat pump which replaced their gas heating. Their architect, [Margaret Reynolds](#), described challenges, including the struggle for planning permission to allow raising the roof level in a way not visible from the street. Tim Acheson of [Green Hat Construction](#), the builders, gave another important perspective on the dramatic improvements to make this delightful family home fit for the future.



'[House Built in 3 days](#)' is Adrian and Judy's [Baufritz](#) home, which was made in a Bavarian factory and then erected on prepared foundations and made watertight in 3 days, as in this [3 minute video](#).

It was fascinating to see this example of the whole Baufritz process to completely specify and then construct so much, including doors, windows & services off-site and finally to assemble this custom, healthy, very eco-home.



### **We also ran more tours and talks, including:**

#### **Tours**

[1930s eco-retrofit & loft extension](#)

[Country in the City](#)

[More space, less energy](#)

[Carbon-neutral studio flat](#)

- warmer, bigger living space with a lower footprint
- 10 years in a brilliant newbuild, fitting into a wild garden
- 1940s semi with passive house extension and DIY retrofit
- architect owned renovation, exploring carbon neutrality

#### **Talks**

[Green Homes Grant](#)

[Insulation](#)

[A Heat Pump for your Home](#)

- planning a retrofit and getting up to £5k grant help
- essential for the low energy demand of all these homes
- how to specify and use one for efficient electric heating

*“Brilliant way to get started thinking about your own home”* – 2020 participant

We were in partnership with RIBA East and it was great to attract their audience of architects and other professionals, who made 8% of the Autumn Season bookings.

*“The friendly informative atmosphere of OEH is one of my prime motivations for putting so much time into the research and design of these projects.”* – architect

58% of participants were new to OEH, with a further reach online to the North of Scotland and Trinidad!  
**Going online was better than we'd dared hope for.** When we can run live events again, we'll be online too.

**Thank you** to our funders, staff, host householders, speakers and to all the other volunteers organising and helping run Open Eco Homes. And to participants inspired by OEH to make their own home energy improvements or to create an eco-home, which is our main aim.

**Tom Bragg**, OEH Manager, and the OEH team

Open Eco Homes 2020 Funders:



[Open Eco Homes](#) is a project of [Cambridge Carbon Footprint](#), charity no: 1127376