

# Home Energy Report 2025-26

## Open Eco Homes



For over 15 years Cambridge Carbon Footprint (CCF) has been inspiring and helping residents in the Cambridgeshire area to improve their home energy efficiency. This helps them improve their comfort while reducing their carbon footprint and potentially saving them money.



In 2025 over 4 weekends in October and November 2025:

- 8 homeowners opened their homes for a total of 50 one-hour in-person tours
- 252 people visited in person
- There was 1 online home tour, 2 online and 2 in person expert-led talks
- Of 476 people booking, 42% were new to Open Eco Homes
- 63% were planning to build or retrofit their own homes
- Feedback was overwhelmingly positive

The online expert-led presentations attended by 74 people were:

- *Getting into the details: Practical considerations for heat pump installs*
- *Introduction to Retrofit.*



***"It is really useful to see at first-hand how others have tackled these issues and get practical tips."***

Tour participant

We worked with Abbey People who represent Abbey Ward in Cambridge, focussing on cheap and easy ways to reduce energy bills and increase comfort within the home. During this in person workshop volunteers demonstrated simple energy-saving techniques, such as draughtproofing and using thermal imaging equipment to identify where heat was being lost.

*“The hosts gave us a very instructive tour, answering questions well and really demonstrating that switching to an air source heat pump is not too daunting and definitely doable.”*

Tour participant

## Eight Open Eco Homes

A wide range of small to large homes of different ages and construction



Case studies of the eco-homes and those from previous years are on the CCF website.

- Victorian terraced house with internal insulation, underfloor heating and new windows in a conservation area
- 1920s mid-terrace in Trumpington with solar PV and battery
- 1930s detached house with an energy-efficient conservatory, external insulation and triple-glazing
- 1930s detached house, reroofed with extra insulation, solar PV and mechanical ventilation and heat recovery
- 1970s detached house in Linton with solar PV, external wall insulation and triple glazing
- 1980s detached house in Milton which had a deep retrofit including more insulation and mechanical ventilation and heat recovery
- Well-insulated late 1990s terrace with solar PV and batteries
- Cambridge Building Society retrofitted 1930s semi with solar PV, underfloor heating, mechanical ventilation and heat recovery.

More eco homes will be open for visitors in autumn 2026, between 19<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> October 2026. Details will be on the CCF website at <https://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/what-you-can-do/open-eco-homes-events/>

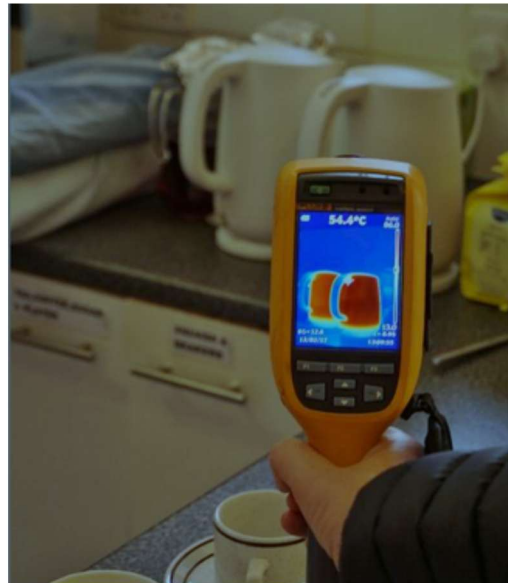
Many thanks to all the hosts who so willingly showed visitors around their homes and talked about the work they had done and to the experts who presented online talks and helped with the workshops.



# Thermal Imaging

Thermal imaging (TI) shows vividly where heat is leaking from buildings. Cambridge Carbon Footprint has run a Thermal Imaging Training and Camera Loan scheme every winter since 2010. After free online training on understanding the images etc., camera borrowers investigate their own home and often those of friends and neighbours.

Good images are engaging, informative and motivating. People with images are more likely to fix the revealed draughts, poor insulation, heating system problems etc, with DIY for simple problems or with professional help. These homes become more comfortable and better for occupants' health with reduced energy use, cutting bills and carbon emissions.



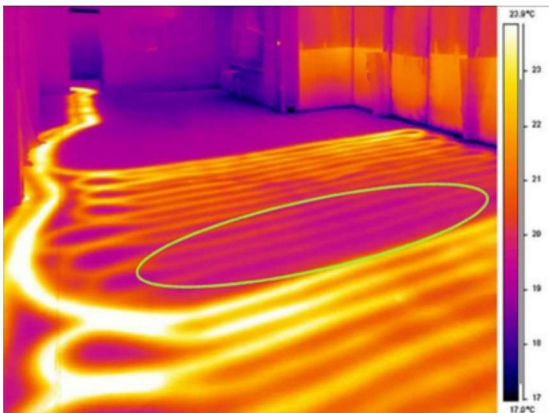
Hand holding thermal imaging camera pointing at two kettles containing hot water.

***"Very worthwhile activity, simple to use and training, camera loan is superb."***

***"This is a fantastic way to improve the energy efficiency of your home!"***

During the recent December to March season:

- 312 people (some from afar) attended one of our 4 free online training sessions
- 194 free camera loans were booked
- 90% of Survey responders planned home energy improvements as a result Sustainable Cottenham again offered TI surveys, which they did for 11 homes and
- Warboys Climate & Environment Group, new to this scheme, surveyed 9 Homes.



Thermal image of a floor with underfloor heating, showing a defective patch not as warm as elsewhere. The bright yellow areas are hottest, purples cooler.

16 Thermal cameras were available for loan, hosted by volunteers, most from their homes, with 5 at local organisations. This enables most borrowers to collect and return a camera with a local host and their conversations help build an eco-community. Cameras were hosted for the first time this season at Anglia Ruskin University, and Warboys & Great Paxton in Huntingdonshire, extending the reach of the scheme. Two cameras have needed repairs, with help from repairers from CCF's Repair Café project.

**"Go for it. it's so helpful."**

**"Easy to use. Fascinating and useful."**

Borrowers

Only 5 of the 16 cameras are owned by CCF, with others belonging to local councils, individuals and a business, who've lent them into this scheme so they are widely used. Examples of planned fixes, resulting from camera use:

**"Images confirmed heat loss from external garage door and will look at getting that replaced."** Borrower



In this outdoor scene the dark purple areas are cold while the people show up as warmer (yellows and oranges). It shows heat escaping from the shopfronts.

**"Immediately address cold spots (sharing data with insulation company); longer term plan underfloor insulation and air-tightness work."**

Borrower



The cat is sitting in front of a cold window (dark blue) above a hot radiator (red). Its face is much warmer than its well-insulated body.

In November Fran Sutton and Tom Bragg delivered special TI Training to Peterborough area community groups organized by PECT, helping them to start their own TI Camera loan schemes.

Thank you to all the volunteers, borrowers, donors and funders who made this project possible and so worthwhile. Special thanks to Fran Sutton who has managed this project and Open Eco Homes for 3 years. We're delighted that William Orme, a camera borrower and retrofitter, is now CCF's Home Energy Officer.

