

Warmer Bedford Cottages – An Overview

Overall goal for TEC: Cost effective enhancement of older homes in Tavistock and wider area

Background

About 164 Bedford Cottages were built in Tavistock in the 19th Century as healthy homes for industrial workers. There are about another 140 Bedford Cottages in the surrounding area. Most, but not all, of these are listed properties. Today, many of these homes require enhancements to be healthy, comfortable and economic in the 21st Century.

In the last decade national organisations for conservation, building standards, and the planning, conservation and building control staff of many city and local authorities, have been investigating the best ways to enhance the energy efficiency of older buildings. Their aims are to meet modern requirements while safeguarding their historic fabric and character.

New technologies of home repair, insulation, heating, ventilation, lighting and control systems are making greater efficiencies possible. Older homes will remain a significant proportion of our housing stock and we need to maintain their value to the wellbeing of our community.

West Devon Borough Council (WDBC), Tavistock Town Council (TTC), Tavistock Heritage Initiative (THI) and Tamar Energy Community (TEC) are working together to develop a guide for enhancing Bedford Cottages and similar properties in ways that are both consistent with good conservation practice and affordability.

Benefits

The guide will address the key issues raised by households, such as; dealing with damp, ventilation, insulation, heating, lighting, repair and maintenance. Often problems are made worse by poor or inappropriate repairs. Good conservation practices can deliver improved performance.

Households will be able to check what is worth doing in their property, the performance benefits and the details of such enhancements. The guide can also provide links to approved specifications and methods for measures that would receive a Listed Building Consent.

Approach

We are inviting Bedford Cottages households across the parish of Tavistock to complete a survey about the present condition of the building fabric and energy services of their home, and any known problems. Householders will also be asked if they would like to participate in an energy efficiency assessment and/or a more detailed technical survey of their home. In return the householder will receive a summary report and advice.

Householders responses will inform our team about the problems and challenges that most affect them and their homes. They will also help indicate the proportion of homes that would benefit from improvements and the opportunities to achieve these.

The conclusions will be discussed and agreed with stakeholders including householders, TTC, THI, WDBC including planning and conservation offers and used to prepare recommendations and advice to householders in the form of Guidance leaflets to support our goal of cost-effective enhancement for warmer and healthier Bedford Cottages.

Participation

TEC welcomes participation by Bedford Cottage residents in this work, and particularly in completing the survey. You can find a link and more information here:

<http://tamarenergycommunity.com/warmer-bedford-cottages>. You can also get in touch by contacting Andy Coulson by calling 0822-233-5414 or emailing andy@tamarenergycommunity.com.