

East Midlands Combined Counties **RETROFIT STRATEGY** **2025-2028**



Graphics coming soon

To Be Provided by EMCCA Comms Team

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1. Forwards

Text coming from EMCCA and Notts County Council

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2. Executive Summary

The East Midlands Combined Counties (EMCC) Local Retrofit Strategy sets out a systems-led, place-based roadmap to accelerate home retrofit. This will support the reduction of fuel poverty, increase health of local housing and increase environmental sustainability across the EMCC region. Developed through the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) Pilot, this strategy unites a range of local stakeholders around a shared understanding of the need to reduce fuel poverty, delivering local economic and social benefits and cutting emissions from heating and cooling homes. The EMCC is one of four 'localities' that participated in the LARA Pilot, convened by the MCS Foundation.

Why a system, place-based approach? Tackling home retrofit at scale demands more than isolated projects, it requires systemic change. The approach takes a whole-system view across six pillars: community, skills and training, homes, low carbon technology, financial resourcing and governance. It recognises that stakeholders need to collaborate and coordinate to create lasting, scalable impact. It is grounded in the unique characteristics and challenges of the East Midlands as a region, leveraging the expertise and energy of local partners while aligning with national net zero ambitions.

Between February and July 2025, over 58 organisations collaborated through a structured co-design process involving workshops, working groups, and stakeholder interviews. This included representation from local authorities, community groups, supply chain, social landlords, training providers, financial sector, and national partners. Together, they developed a shared vision and mission, agreed principles, determined strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to accelerating retrofit in the region and developed a suite of coordinated goals and actions.

Early delivery of priority actions will be an important first step to kick start the delivery of the strategy including improving public advice services, workforce development, and coordinated use of existing funding streams (e.g., the government's Warm Homes scheme).

The EMCC Retrofit Strategy is a catalyst for action, not just on home energy efficiency, but for building a more resilient, prosperous, and inclusive region. With coordinated leadership, collaborative delivery, and ongoing support from government, industry, and communities, the region can become a model for retrofit at scale, delivering real-world benefits for households, the local economy, and the environment

The collective vision is:

"A just future in which we're all living in healthy, energy-efficient homes within sustainable communities."

The mission is:

"We will improve our homes faster, prioritising confidence, quality, affordability and collaboration, and grow skills and jobs in our region."

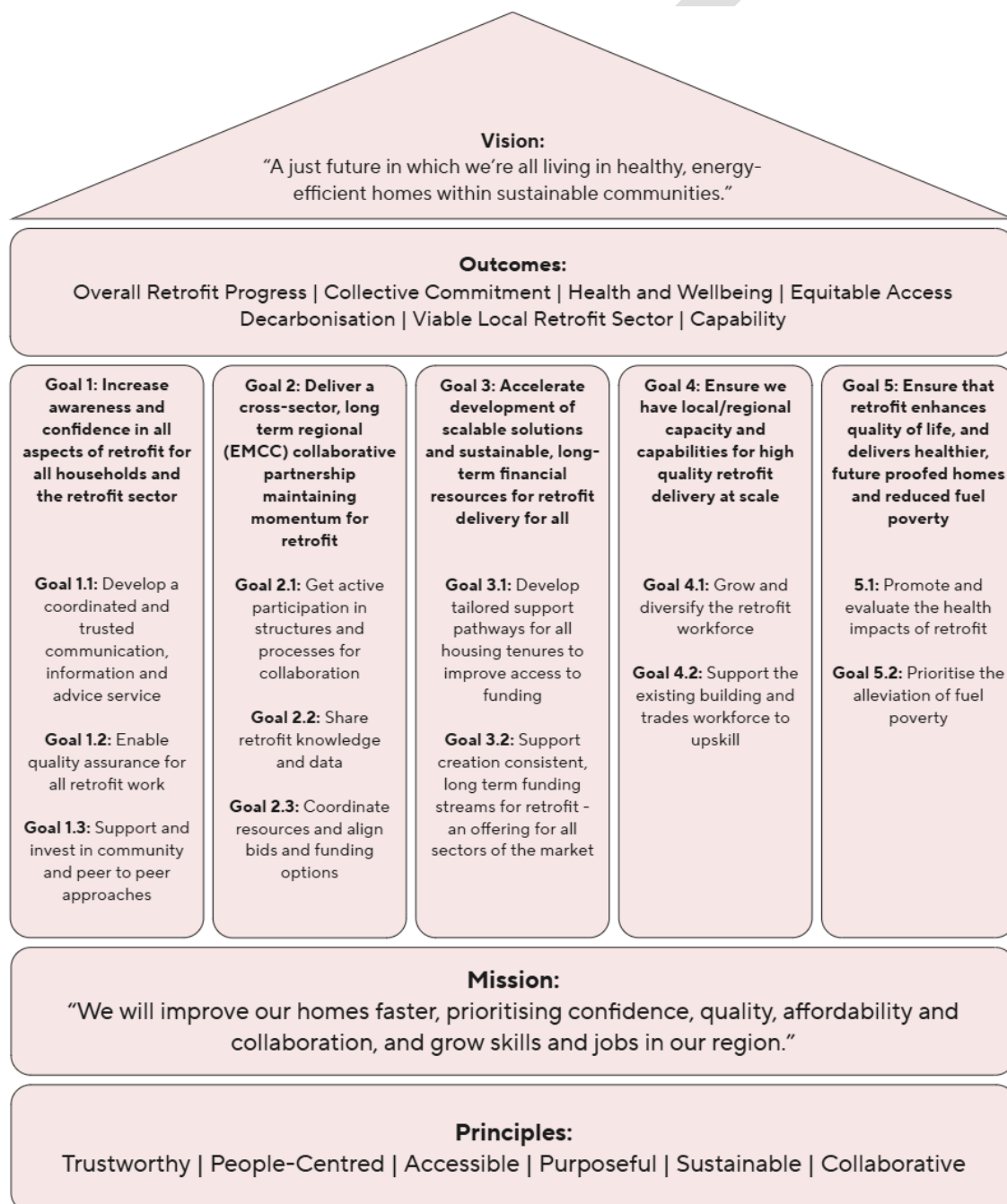
The approach is underpinned by Six shared principles:

- **Trustworthy**
- **People-centred**
- **Accessible**
- **Purposeful**
- **Sustainable**
- **Collaborative**

3. The Strategy House

The 'Strategy House' visually captures the core outputs of the co-design process in a familiar and relevant structure. It also reflects the systems approach needed to accelerate retrofit, that the house is only as strong as the sum of its parts.

- **The foundations**, our mission and principles provide stability and direction, anchoring and guiding our collective action.
- **The pillars** represent the goals and sub-goals, holding the structure upright.
- **The roof** contains the vision and outcomes, which protects and provides a clear sense of purpose, uniting and covering all our efforts beneath it.



4. Introduction

The EMCC Local Retrofit Strategy (the strategy) primarily sets out how the region can make progress in improving the efficiency of heating and cooling of domestic buildings and alleviating fuel poverty. But it is more than that. It's a plan to increase good health outcomes from living in decent homes, support growth within the sector, to create skilled and well-paid jobs. It's about making decisions that balance economic, social and environmental considerations. It has an eye on the future and ensuring we're prepared for the climate to come. This aligns well with the East Midlands Combined Counties Authority (EMCCA) Corporate Plan supporting the following themes the plan focuses on:

Regional strategy, investment and devolution

Business growth and innovation

Skills and employment

Net zero transition and climate resilience

Housing and regeneration

This strategy was developed as part of the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator pilot (the pilot). This initiative aimed to take a systems approach to tackling retrofit. A systems approach thinks about problems and solutions by considering the entire system, rather than individual parts. It's a holistic and interdisciplinary method that emphasizes how different elements interact. The pilot takes a place-based approach using a collaborative process to address the needs of a community by working together to improve the quality of life. It involves understanding a place's social context and physical setting. In this context the place was Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire and stakeholders from across the retrofit system were invited to co-develop the strategy.

The co-design delivery involved three key stages:

- **Shared Understanding:** Mapping the local retrofit system, stakeholders, policies, and data to establish a clear baseline
- **Vision and Planning:** Facilitating stakeholders to agree a shared vision and action plans and draft the strategy which sets out to improve the local retrofit system
- **Review & Endorsement:** Senior stakeholders review and formally endorse the strategy, launching it publicly to mobilise collective action

5. Vision & Mission

Vision



“A just future in which we’re all living in healthy, energy-efficient homes within sustainable communities.”

Mission



“We will improve our homes faster, prioritising confidence, quality, affordability and collaboration, and grow skills and jobs in our region.”

6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

The SWOT was developed over several phases. The project team conducted qualitative and quantitative research published in the Locality Assessment with data gathered through desk-based research and stakeholder interviews. The Locality Assessment informed the workshops and set a baseline understanding of the EMCC regions local retrofit system. The Locality Assessment report details specific geographic and demographic information about the locality and provides insight into activity within the locality.

Each element of the SWOT has fed into the goals and actions developed by the project team to ensure there is a strategic fit.

Strengths

- Rich experience of local retrofit delivery
- Local training centres
- Local partnerships and advice centres
- Best practice examples to build
- Local Area Energy planning underway
- Retrofit Employers Forum
- Green skills programme

Weaknesses

- No list of recommend suppliers.
- Not an offering for everyone (in terms of grants and support)
- Grants don't take account of differential costs for rural areas
- Lack of coordination between housing associations
- The community sector varies across the region
- A lot of the contractors working local are based outside the region.
- Need better ways to measure benefits of retrofit

Opportunities

- Coordinated action through East Midlands Combined Counties Authority (EMCCA)
- Coordination of future skills development
- Pilot of mine water heat scheme in ex-coalmine.
- Energiesprong, FurbNow and other models can be replicated
- Public health support in retrofit
- Midland Net Zero Hub signposting
- Digital space opportunity building on the Green Rewards app
- Archetype guides

Threats

- High levels of deprivation
- Lack of incentive for SMEs to invest in training staff
- Lack of trust and disinformation
- Complex retrofit projects are not cost-effective for installers
- Short term government grant schemes

7. Principles

These Key principles for a better retrofit system were identified by the region

Trustworthy – demonstrating competence and quality

People-centred – focus on the customer and giving them agency

Accessible – providing clarity and making retrofit easy and inclusive

Purposeful – pragmatic idealism, action orientated and brave

Sustainable – a long term, future proofed approach

Collaborative – alignment, with everyone included and involved

These shared principles will help inform and guide retrofit activity undertaken by organisations who endorse the strategy. The governance agreements between signatories to the strategy will formally ensure their importance. The principles have influenced the goals and actions and are critical in achieving the vision.

8. Outcomes

Participants in the region develop the following set of desired outcomes:

Equity - Improvement in people's life outcomes

Regional collaboration - Working together as a region for better outcomes

Healthy homes - Improved physical and mental outcomes

Resident benefiting/people-centred – putting residents needs first

These outcomes will be delivered by achievement of the goals. Progress towards delivering the outcomes will be monitored and the project team propose the following metrics

Overall progress KPIs:

- Percentage increase in number of homes per year retrofitted well
- Average EPC increased rating across the EMCC region
- Improved Indices of fuel poverty
- Increase of people employed in retrofit careers
- Increase of accredited installers (e.g. MCS)
- Increase of collaborations and partnership in the retrofit system
- Increase of community energy organisations
- Increase of MCS accredited low carbon technology installations per year
- Increased level of investment in retrofit

Collective commitment

- Growing commitment to working together as a region

Health and wellbeing

- Reduction in number of people suffering poor health due to damp and/or mould via GP referrals
- Improvements to health and wellbeing, quality of life

Equitable access

- Reduction in fuel poverty and increase in accessibility of funding/finance

Environmental Sustainability

- Reduction in carbon emissions from domestic properties

Viable local retrofit sector

- Local retrofit supply chain works and delivers quality retrofit

Capability

- Strong local skills base

Some KPIs may rely on proxy measures where direct measurement is challenging – for example, assessing the impact of 'knowledge sharing'

9. Goals & Actions

The following goals and sub-goals have been determined by the region.

Each goal has an example of linked actions, further actions and additional information including alignment to SWOT analysis can be found in the accompanying action plan.



Goal 1

Increase awareness and confidence in all aspects of retrofit for all households and the retrofit



Goal 2

Deliver a cross-sector, long term regional (EMCC) collaborative partnership maintaining momentum for retrofit



Goal 3

Accelerate development of scalable solutions and sustainable, long-term financial resources for retrofit delivery for all



Goal 4

Ensure we have local/regional capacity and capabilities for



Goal 5

Ensure that retrofit enhances quality of life, and delivers healthier, future proofed homes and reduced fuel poverty





Goal 1: Increase awareness and confidence in all aspects of retrofit for all households and the retrofit sector.

This goal aims to increase retrofit activity and the number of installed measures locally, enabling residents to 'live in healthy, energy-efficient homes. To achieve this, the focus will be on offering trusted advice, nurturing peer-to-peer communications and improving quality assurance by highlighting positive stories.

Sub-goal 1.1: Develop a coordinated and trusted communication, information and advice service

- Develop a comprehensive retrofit map featuring regional actors and networks to support providers and provide effective signposting to the best advice.
- Develop a trusted brand for regional advice and guidance providers to improve trust for public and suppliers.
- Create a Retrofit Support Service website for advice and to triage service via website, email, phone and events

Sub-goal 1.2: Support and invest in community and peer to peer approaches

- Create community engagement retrofit role or add to existing role to empower community organisations to support retrofit
- Develop a network of community champions and organisations and provide retrofit training
- Create a network of 'open homes' to demonstrate different technologies and support community groups to run events

Sub-goal 1.3: Enable quality assurance for all retrofit work

- Create retrofit supply chain role(s) or add to existing position
- Develop an agreed approach for grant commissioners to ensure good governance and quality of retrofit install
- Review ECO LA Flex practices and agree coordinated, minimum service level approach





Goal 2: Deliver a cross-sector, long term regional (EMCC) collaborative partnership maintaining momentum for retrofit

This goal builds on the collaboration developed by key retrofit stakeholders across the region. Working together to deliver more for less with better outcomes. To achieve this there will be improved structures and processes for regional retrofit activity and greater collaboration across sectors, particularly around data sharing and funding opportunities.

Sub-goal 2.1: Get active participation in structures and processes for collaboration

- Create role to coordinate stakeholder activity or allocate to existing position
- Facilitate cross-sector action group to drive partnership activity between local authorities and social landlords - convened by EMCCA-based strategic lead
- Set up cross-sector action group for skill development for employers and training providers convened by EMCCA-based strategic lead

Sub-goal 2.2: Share retrofit knowledge and data

- Create retrofit data and research role or allocate to existing position
- Facilitate data sharing and collaboration between organisations involved in retrofit to build understanding and map regional capabilities
- Collate and publish timely retrofit information and data and balance demand

Sub-goal 2.3: Coordinate resources and align bids and funding options

- Improve collaboration for grant scheme delivery between local authorities and social landlords
- Realise opportunities for collaboration and local supplier procurement from Warm Homes funding





Goal 3: Accelerate development of scalable solutions and sustainable, long-term financial resources for retrofit delivery for all

This goal highlights the need for economic stimulus to achieve a growth, including both private investment and institutional funding. A more technical and coordinated approach to regional retrofit will focus on the need for long-term financial products alongside developing specialist support services while ensuring the best use of grant schemes and the development of appropriate financial offers.

Sub-goal 3.1: Develop tailored support pathways for all housing tenures to improve access to funding

- Create grant scheme support and coordination role or allocate to existing position
- Research retrofit facilitation provider/ specialist support service options
- Consult stakeholders to develop and implement a retrofit facilitation model

Sub-goal 3.2: Support creation of consistent, long term funding streams for retrofit - an offering for all sectors of the market

- Create retrofit finance coordination role or allocate to existing position
- Assess and compare local authority funding options, grants, loan schemes, carbon offsetting
- Consult with stakeholders on findings and determine preferred finance option(s) to develop and test.





Goal 4: Ensure we have local/regional capacity and capabilities for high quality retrofit delivery at scale

This goal helps to balance the demand-orientated actions of goals 1 and 3 whilst developing capacity within the local supply chain to support an increase in demand and diversification within the sector. This will ensure carbon-reductions are delivered and give consumers confidence in their needs/aspirations being fulfilled.

Sub-goal 4.1: Grow and diversify the retrofit workforce

- Create retrofit installer forum to provide upskilling, recruitment and retention support
- Create a retrofit trainer forum to develop and agree a plan for retrofit training in the region
- Secure funding to develop and deliver services to support new entrants and cross-training into retrofit careers

Sub-goal 4.2: Work towards a robust local/regional supply chain and a viable retrofit market

- Develop and deliver procurement strategy with focus on SMEs in local supply chain, to include advice on accessing finance
- Develop and deliver SME-friendly social impact standard for retrofit projects/procurement
- Boost communications within supply chain to promote opportunities, support with challenges, celebrate best practice and foster peer support





Goal 5: Ensure that retrofit enhances quality of life, and delivers healthier, future proofed homes and reduced fuel poverty

This goal reflects the vision and aspiration to deliver a range of benefits for all. Through improved housing retrofit we aim to deliver better life outcomes, including improved health and a reduction in fuel poverty.

This will be underpinned by further research, the delivery of new and coordinated services and processes and a collaborative approach to accelerate grant funding.

Sub-goal 5.1: Promote and evaluate the health impacts of retrofit

- Set up public health retrofit forum with social and integrated care representatives to improve collaboration and increase health outcomes through retrofit
- Evaluate the health benefits of different retrofit approaches to guide future health-based investment and co-develop guides for best practice
- Improved collaboration between health and housing sectors to develop pilot projects to improve health outcomes

Sub-goal 5.2: Prioritise the alleviation of fuel poverty

- Create retrofit fuel poverty role or allocate to existing role position
- Create a fuel poverty forum and conduct stakeholder assessment of those involved in fuel poverty work within locality
- Deliver place-based, fuel poverty alleviation retrofit project(s) and assess outcomes to ensure fuel poverty alleviation is prioritised and develop improvement plans where needed



10. Endorsement

The strategy has been endorsed by the following organisations:

Organisation Logos to go here once endorsed

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11. Definitions

The strategy has the following defined terms:

- **ACTIONS:** Things done by people and organisations in the East Midlands Combined Counties in support of goals, by individuals or groups
- **GOALS:** Something the East Midlands Combined Counties hopes to achieve which is formed of multiple actions and achieved by multiple parties
- **MISSION:** How the work needed to achieve the vision will be taken forward
- **OUTCOMES:** The result of something, or the consequence of it, is the outcome
- **STRATEGY:** A plan for the East Midlands Combined Counties made up of multiple goals (under which sit actions) toward a wider mission and vision
- **VISION:** One sentence that describes the future-facing, longer term ambition of the strategy and offers inspiration and motivation
- **SYSTEMS BASED APPROACH:** A systems approach thinks about problems and solutions by considering the entire system, rather than individual parts. It's a holistic and interdisciplinary method that emphasises how different elements interact
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12. Information sources

Links to relevant organisational strategies and supporting reports to go here

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