

Orbit welcomes Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, to showcase energy efficiency improvements for West Midlands' homes

3 years ago



Orbit Housing recently welcomed Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands and chair of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to a site in Coventry, to view the progress of some of the 282 homes it is retrofitting in the West Midlands as part of the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Waves 1 and 2.1.

During the visit the Mayor visited a selection of homes that have been made more energy efficient under Wave 1 of the SHDF project. In this phase, Orbit, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and [VINCI Facilities Building Solutions](#) are working together to improve the energy performance of 70 properties across the West Midlands.

The programme is taking a deep, fabric first, retrofit approach using energy efficient doors and windows, along with loft and wall insulation, some low carbon heating and solar PV to increase the energy performance of the homes.

As well as visiting homes currently undergoing retrofit, the Mayor also met with customers to discuss their experiences, hearing how the project will enable them to warm their homes more affordably.

The project is one of four successful bids for funding that Orbit submitted as part of the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF). This Wave 1 scheme has secured a total of £1.4m of SHDF

funding, which coupled with £4.6m of investment from Orbit will provide customers across the region with a more energy efficient homes using the latest technology and insulation. Orbit is also working in partnership with WMCA to upgrade the energy performance of a further 212 properties across the West Midlands, after securing further funding from the SHDF Wave 2.1.

The Mayor said: “It was great to see the progress we’re making with Orbit – and all our local authority partners and housing providers – to identify and upgrade the homes that are most in need of better insulation and to use the latest green heating technology.

“So far, we’ve secured £35 million from central Government to retrofit almost 4,000 homes across our region – saving local people money on their bills and reducing domestic emissions in line with our #WM2041 net zero commitment.

“After this encouraging start, we’re keen to do even more to deliver warmer, more energy efficient homes for our residents.

“In March 2023, we concluded a new Deeper Devolution Deal with Government that will open up more sustained funding from Whitehall. Simultaneously, we’re doing more to upskill engineers via free training as we work to progress towards retrofitting entire streets and neighbourhoods in the months and years ahead. We will also be using additional funding from the private sector.”

Paul Richards, Group Director of Customer and Communities at Orbit, commented: “We were delighted to welcome Andy Street and our colleagues from WMCA to see how our retrofitting works in Coventry are progressing.

“Committing to a deep retrofit while customers remain living in their home is a complex undertaking, but it plays a key role in delivering on our net zero carbon targets and keeping bills affordable. Despite the complexities and challenges of upgrading older properties, we are working at pace and have already completed 205 of the 346 energy efficiency measures planned to be installed in the 70 properties included under Wave 1, meaning we’re almost 60% complete.

“Showcasing our progress as well as discussing our learnings with the Mayor will help us all to continue to work together to ensure our customers enjoy the benefits of a more energy efficient home which is warmer and more affordable, and help us on our collective journey towards achieving net zero.”

Barry Boxall, Regional Director VINCI Facilities Building Solutions said; “We are delighted that our successful partnership with Orbit has facilitated the delivery of retrofit solutions to 70 properties increasing the warmth and energy efficiency of residents’ homes. We have built a trusted relationship with all stakeholders that enables us to deliver retrofit at scale. We are working in collaboration with our supply chain partners to develop local skills to meet the pipeline of projects in Coventry and the surrounding areas. This showcase event demonstrates the willingness of all stakeholders to truly work together to build thriving communities.”