Agenda item 8

For information – Green Open Homes 2026

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Summary

Frome Town Council's climate action team is launching Green Open Homes: Frome, a programme designed to inspire and support residents to make their homes healthier, more comfortable, more energy efficient and cheaper to run.

The programme launches on Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 November 2026, with further opportunities to visit participating homes through to 14 March 2027.

The dedicated website - https://frome.greenopenhomes.net/

Introduction

10 households across Frome are taking part, showcasing a range of energy efficiency improvements, from simple, low-cost measures such as draught proofing and window shading to larger investments including insulation, solar panels and air source heat pumps.

Visitors will be able to see improvements first-hand, speak directly with homeowners about their experiences, understand the costs and benefits, and explore what might work in their own homes.

Participating properties include homes at different stages of their retrofit journey, including those that have received free Home Energy Plans through the Healthy Homes programme.

Visits will be available through a combination of pre-booked appointments and drop-in sessions. 7 of participating households will offer ongoing opportunities to visit throughout the winter, extending the programme's reach beyond the launch weekend.

Supporting Residents

- Energy advice via phone or email as well as drop-in events with our trained Energy Champions
- Home visits from Energy Champions, who can provide advice and practical support including contacting energy suppliers, helping residents to use heating controls effectively, or helping to install FREE draught proofing, radiator panels and hot water tank covers (funded by Frome Renewable Energy Community FRECo)
- Solar and Beyond - Frome Town Council
- Retrofit – Home Energy Plans and ongoing support
- Advice and support for individuals and businesses in accessing grants, funding schemes and low-interest loans for energy efficiency improvements
- Advice for homeowners, tenants, social tenants, landlords and community buildings

Community Benefits and Inclusion

Our existing advice programme has had feedback from Frome residents that even though they are keen to consider home energy upgrades, they would like to experience the installed measures and speak to people who have done it already about their experiences before they progress their own projects.

Green Open Homes aims to build local knowledge, confidence and connections by enabling residents to learn directly from their neighbours.

The programme is designed to be accessible to residents with different housing circumstances and budgets, including tenants and those unable to invest in major improvements. By showcasing affordable measures alongside larger retrofit projects, and connecting residents with free advice and support, the programme aims to encourage wider participation.

It will help households identify practical ways to reduce energy costs, improve health and wellbeing, increase resilience to changing temperatures, and reduce carbon emissions.

The programme also supports the Town Council's wider climate and community wellbeing objectives, encouraging local action and making home energy improvements more accessible.

Target Outcomes – November 2026 to March 2027

Measure	Target
Households participating in Green Open Homes	10 confirmed
Households offering ongoing visits throughout winter	7+ anticipated
Total visits to participating homes	150–200
Residents receiving energy advice or information	100
Households referred for further Healthy Homes support	30
Households taking up further advice, Home Energy Plans or retrofit support	20
Visitors reporting increased knowledge and confidence about home energy improvements	80% of survey respondents
Visitors planning to make energy efficiency improvements following their visit	60% of survey respondents

Monitoring and Evaluation

Visitor numbers, participation, and referrals will be recorded throughout the programme. Short visitor questionnaires aim to measure changes in knowledge, confidence, and intentions to take action.

Where possible, follow-up contact will establish whether residents have made improvements or accessed further support.

The findings will help evaluate the programme's impact and inform future Green Open Homes and Healthy Homes activities.

Outcomes

Beyond the immediate programme, Green Open Homes aims to develop a network of local residents willing to share their experiences, encourage neighbourhood learning and support wider uptake of energy efficiency improvements across Frome.

By connecting residents with practical advice, local expertise and ongoing support, the programme aims to build lasting community capacity for improving homes and reducing carbon emissions.

Frome Green Open Homes 2026 will be an opportunity to showcase some of the energy efficiency and home improvement measures being taken in town. Assuming this event is successful it could be repeated annually to keep pushing forward the improvement of Frome's housing stock in line with our climate action objectives. More energy efficient homes save residents money and support better health outcomes.

Other options considered	To not proceed with the event
Key considerations for the Council	This event will showcase successful eco upgrades in Frome and support the objectives of our Healthy Homes and retrofit support work.
Consultation and feedback	We have learned from the last Green Open Homes Frome event which happened about ten years ago. We have made contact with colleagues at Bath and North East Somerset Council who have successfully run similar events. We are making use of a national available platform – with advice and resources provided https://www.greenopenhomes.net/
Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan	Aim three
Financial and Risk Implications	The programme will be delivered through existing Council resources, with no additional event insurance being purchased. FTC's public liability insurance covers only the Council's own legal liabilities and does not extend to participating homeowners or their volunteer helpers. Claims arising from injuries to visitors within private homes would only fall under FTC's policy where the Council is legally liable. Hosts are being advised to check their own home insurance for appropriate liability cover during organised public visits, including accidental damage and theft. A programme-wide risk assessment has been completed, alongside individual household risk assessments, to identify and reduce potential risks.
Legal / HR Implications	Homeowners are responsible for taking reasonable care to ensure visitors are safe within their properties, while FTC retains responsibility for its own activities as programme organiser. Hosts and their volunteer helpers are not covered by FTC's insurance. Although home insurance is

	not a legal requirement for participation, appropriate liability cover is strongly recommended. Hosts will receive clear guidance on their responsibilities, including visitor safety, safeguarding, incident reporting and insurance.
Equalities Implications	The programme aims to be accessible to residents with different abilities, housing circumstances and budgets. Accessibility information will be collected for each participating property and communicated to visitors wherever possible. Alternative opportunities to access energy advice will be available for those unable to attend home visits.
Community Safety Implications	Hosts will receive guidance on managing visitors, protecting personal belongings, restricting access to private or unsafe areas and responding to inappropriate behaviour. Hosts living alone will be asked to arrange a volunteer helper to be present during visits. Safeguarding guidance and incident reporting procedures will be provided.
Climate Change and Sustainability Implications	The programme supports the Council's climate objectives by showcasing practical home energy improvements, encouraging household energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and helping residents create warmer, healthier and more resilient homes.
Health and Safety Implications	A programme-wide risk assessment has been prepared, covering visitor safety, fire, accessibility, safeguarding, emergencies, property security and winter conditions. All participating households are being asked to complete individual risk assessments, with Council support available where needed. FTC will review these before visits commence. Hosts will receive safety guidance, emergency and incident reporting procedures, and visitor notices. Hosts will also be asked to check for changing hazards before each visit and postpone visits where conditions are unsafe.
Constitutional Requirements	The programme will be delivered in accordance with relevant Council policies and procedures, including safeguarding, health and safety, data protection and risk management.
Background Papers	None
Report Sign-Off	Peter Wheelhouse, Town Clerk 21/10/26