

Nest

Annual Report

2019 – 2020



Rhan o raglen Cartrefi Cylid Llywodraeth Cymru
Part of the Welsh Government Warm Homes programme



Ministerial Foreword

Good homes support the creation of cohesive and well-functioning communities in which all can play a part.



Our Warm Homes Programme continues to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of our homes, supporting people who struggle to meet the cost of their home energy needs, as well as contributing to our ambitions to reduce harmful carbon emissions into our natural environment.

As part of the Welsh Government Warm Homes Programme, the Nest Scheme has been improving the energy efficiency of homes since 2011, making them warmer and more comfortable places to live. Our scheme has continued to support some of the most vulnerable people in our society by improving their resilience to avoidable ill health so reducing premature deaths. Creating a comfortable home also gives our children the best start in life to help them better realise their full potential.

In 2019, I approved proposals to extend and expand the Nest Health Conditions Pilot to help people living with a respiratory, circulatory or mental health condition. The changes I approved, which came into effect in July 2019, have made it easier for people living on a lower income and with a health condition to access the Nest Scheme. This has resulted in more than 1,000 people being helped, who otherwise would not have received assistance from this scheme.

In 2019-20, Welsh Government provided funding of £20.6m to deliver the Nest Scheme to help improve home energy efficiency and tackle fuel poverty. Improving the energy efficiency of our homes can make a big difference to energy bills and help people become more resilient to future energy price rises. Through this scheme, we have also provided access to energy advice and other support to help people make the most of their hard earned money.

Nest has provided 15,823 people with help and support by signposting to a number of third party services, such as benefit entitlement checks to maximise income, money advice management and helping people to claim their entitlement to a Warm Homes Discount from their energy supplier. People living in more than 4,500 homes have benefited from home energy efficiency measures during this reporting period.

The Nest Scheme is also important in reducing carbon emissions. Achieving near zero carbon emissions from buildings is one of the biggest decarbonisation challenges we face in the next three decades. Whilst Nest is not predominantly a decarbonisation scheme, the immediate carbon benefits contribute to this objective. The learning, both of Welsh Government and the supply chain, will be applied to schemes to deliver decarbonisation of buildings in the future.

Taken together with other programmes and schemes supported by the Welsh Government, this is further evidence we are meeting our obligations to tackle fuel poverty, which continues to blight the lives of people struggling to make ends meet.

In this reporting period, we have witnessed unprecedented challenges for the people of Wales. The flooding experienced in some of our communities followed by the

COVID-19 global pandemic has presented new uncertainties and challenges. I will be working with our key partners delivering the Nest Scheme in the coming year to ensure we are able to support people in need of help during these difficult times.

Lesley Griffiths AM

Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs



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Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs
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Executive Summary

The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme provides energy efficiency improvements to low income households and those living in areas of deprivation across Wales. In 2019-20, £20.6 million of Welsh Government funding was invested in the energy efficiency of housing stock across Wales, helping to reduce fuel bills and improve the health and wellbeing of households most in need.

During 2019-20, the Nest scheme provided 15,823 households with free, impartial advice and signposting to a range of support services.

More than 4,500 of the 15,823 households helped during this year had their homes improved with a package of free home energy efficiency measures such as a central heating system, a boiler or insulation.

This report sets out the achievements of the Nest scheme in providing advice and support to fuel poor households in 2019-20.

In 2019-20, the Nest scheme's main achievements were:

- 15,823 households received free and impartial energy saving advice
- 4,544 households received a home energy improvement package, with a modelled average energy bill saving of £282 per year
- Average modelled increase in energy efficiency rating of 43 SAP points
- Average modelled reduction in energy units of 17,934 per household
- Benefit Entitlement Checks resulted in a household average £2,202 potential increase in benefit take-up
- 100% of installations were completed by Wales-based installers
- The scheme directly supported 28 new jobs and apprenticeships

The Nest scheme is managed by British Gas, working with the Energy Saving Trust, on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Priorities for the Nest scheme in 2019-20 were:

- Working with a range of partner organisations to ensure the scheme reached the most vulnerable households in Wales.
- Develop engagement with the health sector to fully test the professional health referral process for a further 12-month period for people suffering from chronic health conditions affecting their circulatory or respiratory system which are often made worse by living in a cold or damp home.
- Investigative work exploring the range of mental health conditions affecting the people of Wales and whether householders with specific mental health conditions would benefit most from receiving a package of energy efficiency measures through the Nest scheme.
- Continue to contribute to Welsh Government's energy and poverty strategies.
- Operate within the values set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act including collaboration, integration and prevention.

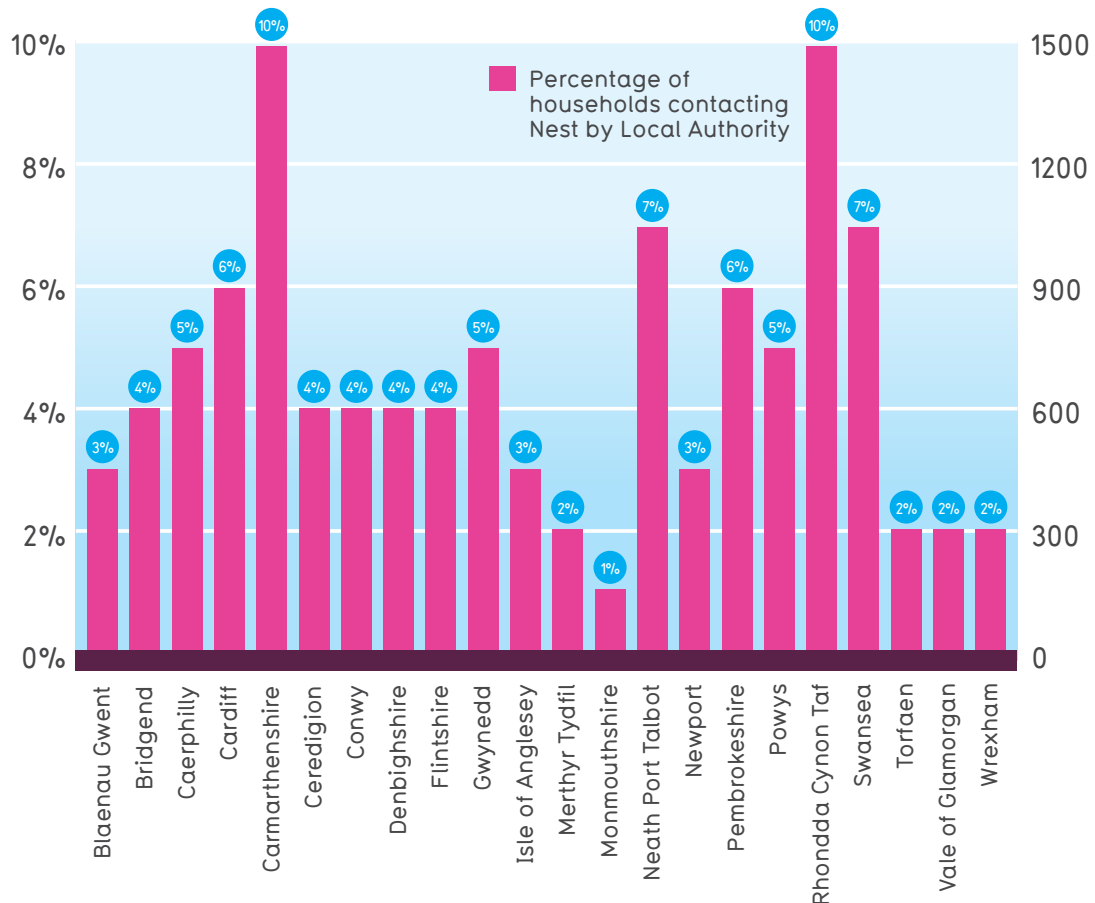
Marketing Approach

The marketing approach for 2019-20 built on the extensive knowledge and expertise gained from delivering the scheme since 2011. Customer analysis and data insights were used to inform marketing, incorporating demographic and geographic indicators, to ensure customers that are most in need of support were reached with the most appropriate communication.

The range of promotional activities used to engage customers included Wales-wide advertising campaigns, partnership engagement and publicity activities targeted specifically to areas across Wales where there are the highest levels of deprivation.

The use of Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) to strategically engage with external stakeholders provides the opportunity to raise awareness of the scheme to audiences who are the most difficult to reach.

Enquiries by Local Authority

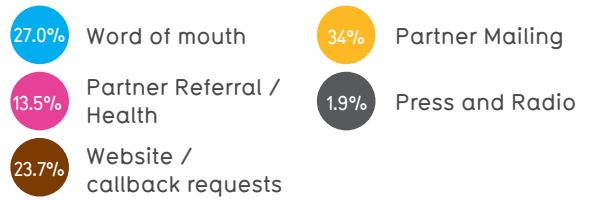
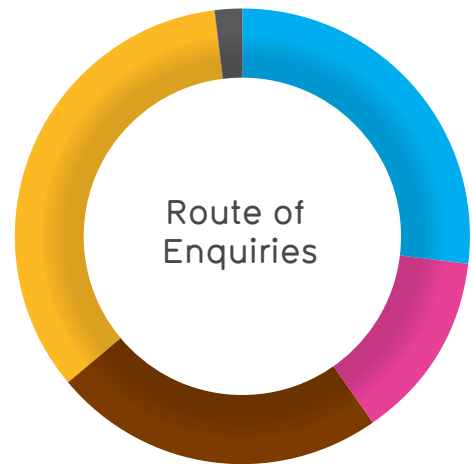


The focal point of all of the marketing activity is the Nest website which received 83,570 visits in 2019-20.

During the year, the marketing activity saw a considerable increase in the number of enquiries received through the website and digital activity (including Google Adwords, Search Engine Optimisation and paid Facebook adverts) with enquiries increasing from 16% to 23.7%.

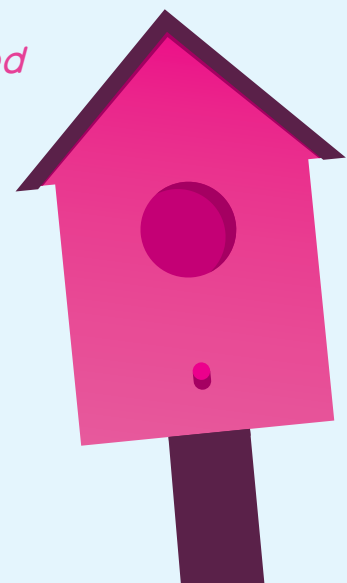
A combination of targeted marketing activities and partner engagement provides an opportunity for the scheme to directly reach audiences where there is the greatest potential to reduce fuel poverty in Wales.

A strong emphasis on partner marketing mailings helped to directly generate the largest percentage of enquiries with 34% during the year. This was followed by 'word of mouth' which contributed towards 27% of initial enquiries. Activities delivered by the partnership development managers and the partner organisations directly generated 13.5% of enquiries during the year and 1.9% of enquiries were generated through media activity.



“Dealing with Nest has been so easy, from that initial phone call it was all dealt with! I was kept informed of everything, but I didn’t have to run around making calls or sort things out, that helps more than anything. My home is so much warmer, and it makes such a difference when you just turn on the tap and there’s hot water! For many years, before the system stopped working, I got used to having to warm the water for hours first and then it wasn’t as hot as the water is now. It is magic and more people should know about Nest and how the scheme can help them.”

Rhondda Resident



Partnerships

The Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) work with local authorities, health boards, charities and community organisations across Wales to help reach households who may benefit from the Nest scheme's advice and support.

These partnerships play a crucial role in allowing the scheme to access those most vulnerable and hardest to reach.

- Local Authorities (e.g. housing, carer's services, financial inclusion and energy officers)
- Socially excluded people (e.g. Carers Association, Foodbanks and Home Start Wales)
- Older People (e.g. Red Cross, Age Cymru, Warm Wales, Care and Repair and Age Connects)
- Health sector (e.g. Local Health Boards, Community Pharmacies Wales and Wales Ambulance Service Trust)
- People with long-term illnesses (e.g. Parkinson's UK, Macmillan, Stroke Association, Carers Wales)
- People recovering from mental illness (e.g. Hafal, Community Forums)
- Advice-services (e.g. Citizens Advice, DWP, Money and Pensions Service, CISWO The Coal Mining Charity)

Partner organisations are trusted by customers, particularly by vulnerable and socially excluded groups who need reassurance that the scheme is legitimate or who have multiple needs for which Nest is part of the solution.

Building and strengthening relationships through the PDMs with key partners such as Age Cymru, Warm Wales and Care & Repair allows the scheme to significantly increase the reach to key audiences by tapping into their platforms, channels and networks.

PDMs adopt a strategic approach to stakeholder engagement. This allows for more regular communications with the same organisation, helping to build lasting relationships and develop activity to help achieve the scheme's objectives.

Local authorities also provide a key strategic relationship for the scheme. PDMs work closely with local authorities across Wales. These partnerships provide Nest with an opportunity to publicise the scheme to staff and residents across different local authority areas. This is achieved through events, local authority websites and targeted promotions such as direct mailings.

The following case studies illustrate examples of successful partnership working:

Local Authorities

Neath Port Talbot Council

Following meetings with Neath Port Talbot Council's housing strategy team and in partnership with the benefits team, PDMs delivered a targeted mailing to NPT residents and held a public advice session, attended by around 40 residents at Neath Civic Centre. Overall, joint direct mailing campaigns were undertaken in partnership with eleven local authorities including Caerphilly, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Isle of Anglesey, Neath & Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea.

Health Boards

Swansea Bay University Health Board

PDMs delivered training presentations to Occupational Therapy and Macmillan Teams in Singleton Hospital in Swansea. There is ongoing engagement with individual health teams across all seven Health Boards in Wales, enabling staff to assist patients with respiratory, cardiovascular and mental health conditions to receive Nest support.

Third Sector Partnerships

Age Cymru

PDMs deliver training and regular updates to Age Cymru teams across Wales. Age Cymru is a trusted partner, playing a key role in enabling older people to access Nest support and ensure their homes are safe and warm.

Advice Services

Citizens Advice

The PDMs have continued to work closely with Citizens Advice across Wales and regularly provide briefings and updates to management, permanent staff and volunteers across the regions. Citizens Advice provides a drop-in surgery service, a pan-Wales telephone advice service, as well as community-based face to face events. The PDMs have regularly supported

and collaborated on a number of these events, particularly ‘open door’ events at various community locations across Wales. PDMs supported Citizens Advice during their Big Energy Saving Week campaign in January. This included drop in events at their local offices, community centres, local supermarket and foodbanks.

Warm Wales

PDMs have worked closely with Warm Wales frontline staff to enable their service users to receive support through Nest. Initially with Nest training delivered to staff, the partnership development managers have worked closely with the teams

to support individual referrals made via the Warm Wales, Healthy Homes Healthy People Project funded by Wales & West Utilities and supported by local authorities. The project was launched in Cardiff in September 2017 and is delivered by Community Workers who visit vulnerable households to provide face to face advice, support and referrals to ensure residents have a safe, sound, warm and secure home. The project is also delivered in North Wales where the team receive referrals for support from front line staff.

Advice and Support

In 2019-20, Nest provided 15,823 households with tailored advice and referrals to third party services.

Every customer that calls the Nest helpline receives tailored advice and support from the Nest advice team to ensure they are receiving the most appropriate help to match their specific needs. This includes energy saving and water efficiency advice, a package of free home energy efficiency improvements, and signposting and referrals to a range of support services.

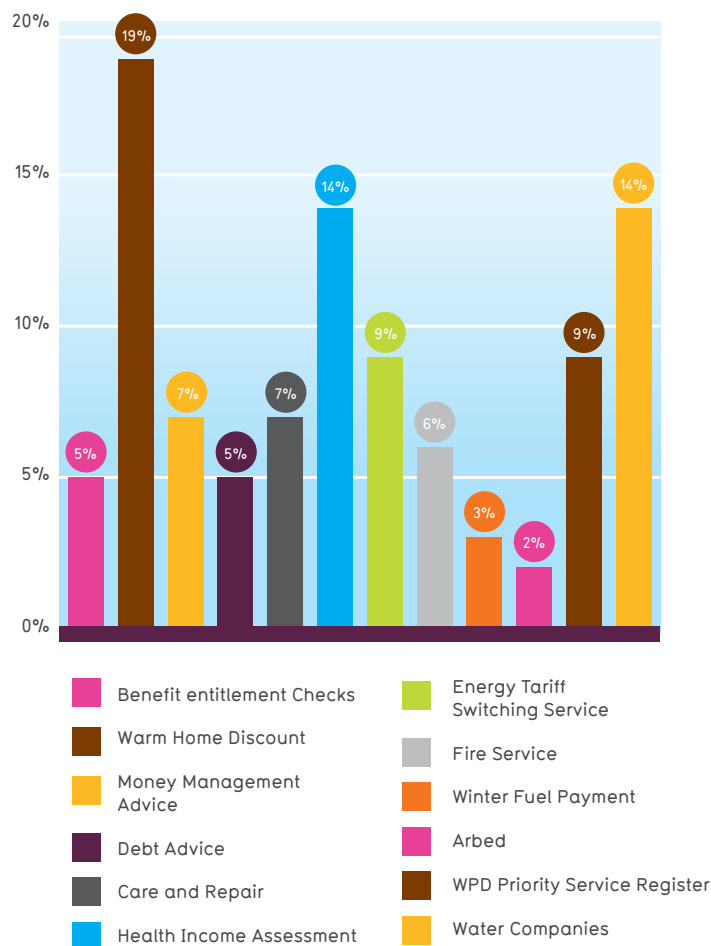
- **Other advice services** – customers not eligible for a Nest home energy efficiency improvement package are directed to other appropriate organisations

Third Party Support

8,828 households were referred or recommended to contact one or more third party service in 2019-20. These services include:

- **Benefit entitlement checks** – Riverside Advice provides a review service for Nest customers to help them maximise their income.
- **Money management advice** – the Money Advice Service provides customers with independent advice about debt management and handling their income and outgoings more effectively.
- **Care and Repair services** – Care and Repair provide eligible customers with access to a ‘handyman’ service, caseworker service, help with grants and temporary heating.
- **Energy tariff advice** – Simply Switch provides customers with independent advice regarding the most effective tariff and supplier for the customer’s circumstances.
- **Warm Home Discount** – the major energy suppliers provide eligible customers with a discount on their energy bill.
- **Priority Service Register** – eligible customers are referred to Western Power Distribution to receive additional support in the event of a power cut.
- **Fire and Rescue Services** – vulnerable households are able to access an in-home fire safety check through North and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services.
- **Water affordability schemes** – Nest refers customers to a range of affordability schemes operated by Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water.

Households receiving a Third Party Referral / Recommendation



Benefit Entitlement Checks

During the year, 706 households were referred for a benefit entitlement check and 238 households were found to be eligible for new or additional benefits averaging £2,202 per household. This equates to £524,076 in benefit take-up this year, an increase of £248,076 from 18-19.

Benefit Entitlement Checks	
Number of householder referrals	706
Number of householders claiming new/ additional benefits	238
Average increase to annual income	£2,202

Care and Repair Services

Care and Repair agencies provide a range of services to help older people live in homes that are safe, secure and appropriate to their needs. Nest signposted and referred 1,048 households to Care and Repair in 2019-20, an increase of 175 from 18-19.

Care & Repair Services	
Number of householder referrals	1048
Number of households using disabled service	172
Number of householders using Handyman service	59
Number of householders using Temporary Heating service	0
Number of householders using Grant Help	160
Number of householders using Caseworker service	228
Number of householders receiving advice only	21

Warm Home Discount

In total, 2,875 customers were referred to their energy supplier for the Warm Home Discount in 2019-20 with 453 Nest customers qualifying for the discount, amounting to total savings of £63,280. This is an increase of £1,260 from the previous year.

Warm Home Discount	
Number of householder referrals	2875
Number of householders receiving Warm Home Discount	452
Value of Warm Home Discount	£63,280

Fire and Rescue Services

Nest referred 862 customers to North Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services of which 116 received a home fire safety check, an increase of 61 from 18-19.

Fire Service	
Number of householder referrals	862
Number of householders receiving home safety report	116

Water Companies

Nest refers customers to affordability schemes from Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water including HelpU, Water Direct, Customer Assistance Fund and Water Sure. This year, 2,160 customers were referred with 159 benefiting from support and arrears reduction, an increase of 17 from 18-19.

Water Companies	
Number of household referrals	2160
Customers benefiting from HelpU	132
Customers benefiting from Water Direct	13
Customers benefiting from Customer Assistance Fund	3
Customers benefiting from Water Sure	11

Money management advice

Customers who received money management advice totalled 1,074 and additional 693 customers received debt management advice, an increase of 299 from 18-19.

Other Advice Services	
Money management advice	1074
Debt advice	693



Home Energy Improvement Packages

The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme provides assistance to households in fuel poverty by reducing household energy bills through providing free energy efficiency improvements in the home.

Customers contacting Nest for advice and support are assessed for their eligibility to receive a package of free home energy efficiency improvements which may include a replacement boiler, central heating system and / or insulation.

The criteria for home improvements are that a household member is in receipt of a means tested benefit and that the property is privately owned or rented with an indicative energy rating of E, F or G or living with a health condition (in a D, E, F, G rated privately owned or rented property) and in receipt of an income below defined thresholds.

Nest health pilot

The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme health criteria were introduced in September 2017 to reach households living with a health condition made worse by cold or damp housing and living in fuel poverty or at risk of fuel poverty. The initial pilot was extended in January 2018 until July 2019 when a new set of criteria were introduced following a detailed evaluation of the initial pilot in April 2018 and further review and evaluation.

Following the initial pilot and evaluation, a period of consultation was undertaken between Welsh Government and the scheme administrators. It was recognised that the policy drivers, specifically to support people living with a health condition made worse by a cold home and on a low income who were at risk of being in fuel poverty, remained important to the Nest scheme. The criteria, delivery mechanisms and communication approach were therefore revised, and a new health criteria pilot was launched in July 2019.

A total of 5,692 households were assessed through the health criteria between July 2019 and February 2020 having failed to meet the scheme's means tested benefit criteria. Of these, 2,460 (43%) met the health condition and property criteria and were referred for an income assessment with 1,329 (23%) passing and therefore meeting all health criteria – 1,066 of these have had measures installed.

The majority of health criteria referrals were vulnerable households:

- 71% aged 60 years old or more.
- 41% in single income households aged 60 years old or more.
- 28% in two adult households aged 60 years old or more.
- 60% of households were living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of E, F or G.
- 40% of households were living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of D.
- 55% of households have an income below 80% of the income thresholds and 15% less than 50% of the income threshold.

Working in partnership

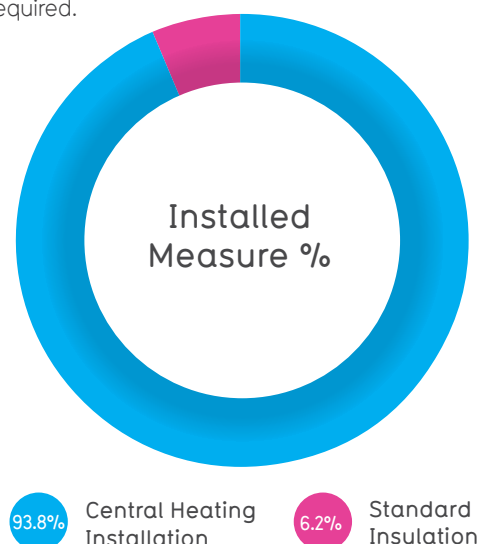
Nest works in partnership with Rent Smart Wales to ensure that all private landlords are officially registered before being allowed access to support from the scheme for their rented properties.

A fully qualified assessor will visit the customer's home to complete a whole house assessment, identify the most appropriate and cost effective measures for the property and confirm the eligibility of the customer. The Nest team ensures that all required permissions and consents (landlords, planning etc.) and third party requirements (gas connections, asbestos removal etc.) are completed prior to agreeing the installation dates with the customer.

Under the supervision and management of the Nest team, a network of Wales-based installers provides the installation services. An inspection of the work is undertaken once the Nest team receive confirmation that the package of measures has been installed. Should the Nest inspector identify any defects in the works, they ensure any required remedial work is completed quickly and effectively.

Nest home energy efficiency improvement packages are designed for individual properties so there is no standard package of measures but could include a new boiler, central heating system, loft insulation or cavity wall insulation and some may include newer technologies like air source heat pumps and external wall insulation.

The majority of works undertaken by the Nest scheme continue to be central heating systems. These installations include multiple measures e.g. boiler, radiators, room thermostats, heating controls, thermostatic radiator valves and pipe work where required.



Household and Property Characteristics

Nest aims wherever possible to bring people out of fuel poverty.

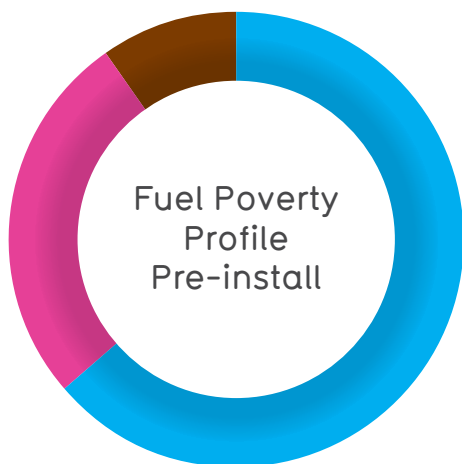
During the initial application process, householders are asked to provide their income. This information is assessed against modelled running costs for their household. This allows the Nest Advice Team to assess whether the customer is living in fuel poverty.

Households which spend over 10% of their income on energy bills are regarded as living in fuel poverty and households spending over 20% are classed as living in severe fuel poverty.

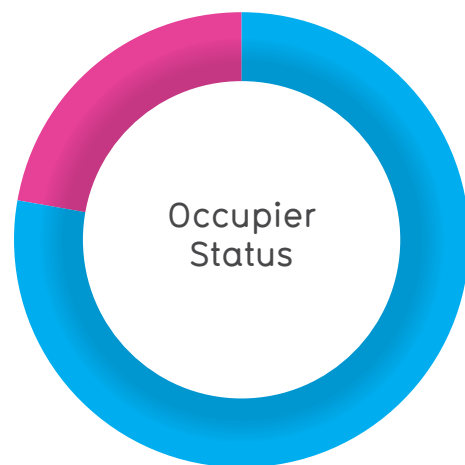
Prior to receiving home energy efficiency improvements, 36.3% of households contacting Nest were found to be living in fuel poverty. This includes 9.6% of households living in severe fuel poverty.

After the installation of home energy efficiency measures, the number of houses in fuel poverty dropped from 26.7% to 16.8%, with households in severe fuel poverty dropping from 9.6% to 5%.

The chart below shows the breakdown of tenure for households receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package; 77.8% were owner occupied and 22.2% were privately rented.

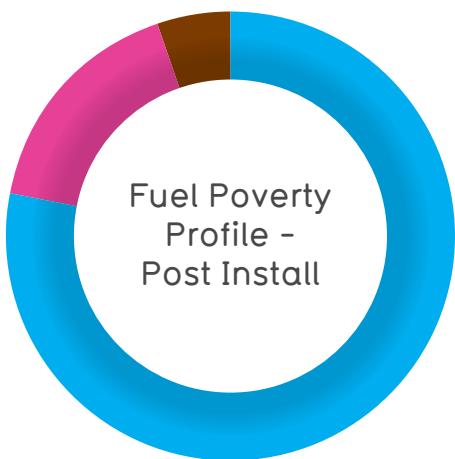


63.7% Not in Fuel Poverty 26.7% In Fuel Poverty 9.6% In Severe Fuel Poverty

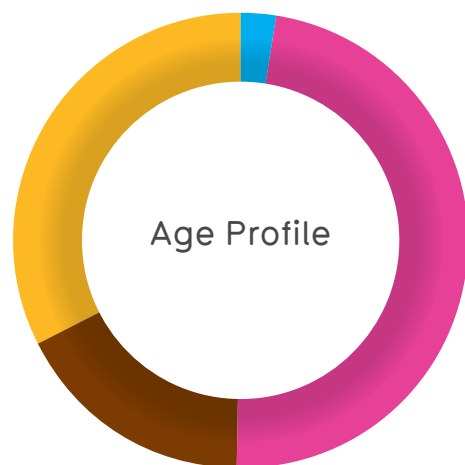


77.8% Owner 22.2% Privately rented

The chart below shows the breakdown by age of householders receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package. The biggest changes are between the age demographics 24 – 59 (down from 53.3% in 2018-19 to 47.9%) and 70 and over (up from 28.1% in 2018-19 to 32.3%)

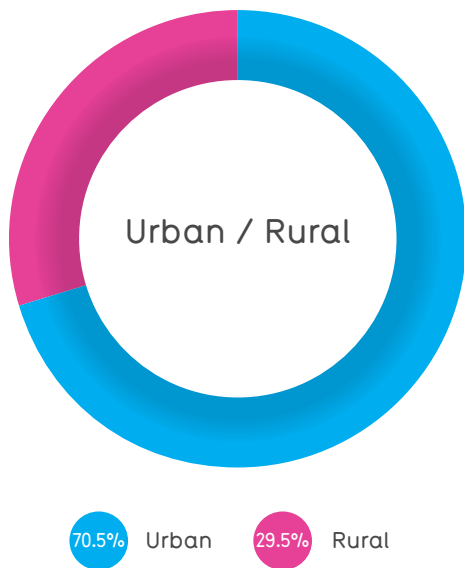


78.1% Not in Fuel Poverty 16.8% In Fuel Poverty 5% In Severe Fuel Poverty

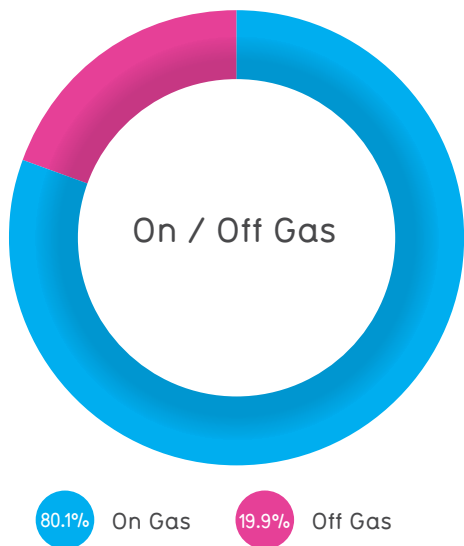


2.6% Under 24 47.9% 24-59 17.3% 60-69 32.3% 70 and over

The breakdown by urban and rural¹ classification of customers receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package is shown in the chart below and indicates that 70.5% of households were living in urban areas, a 2.5% increase from 2018-19, and 29.5% living in rural areas, which is a 2.5% decrease from the previous year.

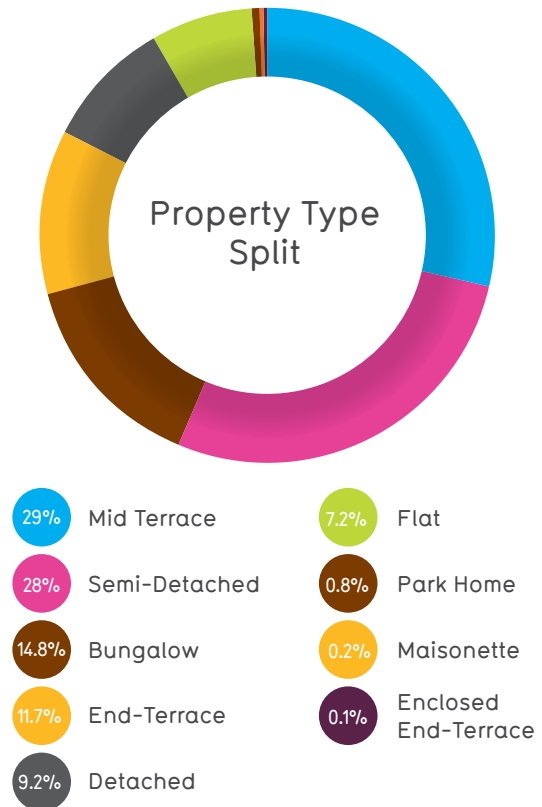


The proportion of customers who were not connected to the mains gas grid prior to receiving measures under the scheme was 19.9%, a slight decrease from 21.1% in 2018-19, as illustrated by the chart below.

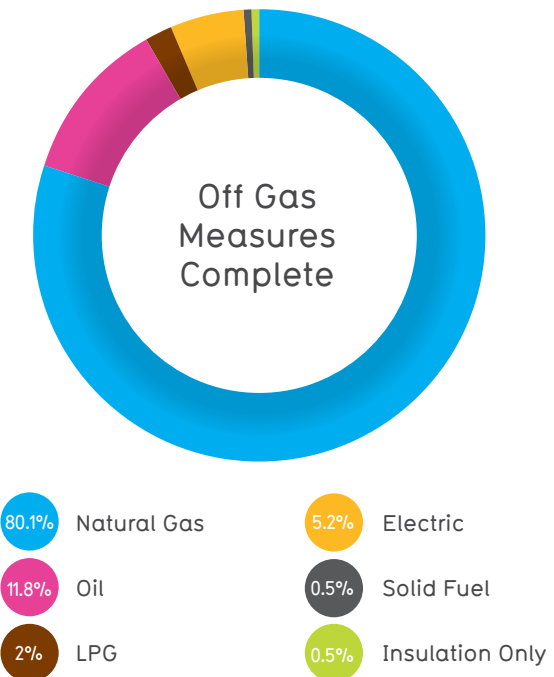


The breakdown by property-type of households who have received a home energy efficiency improvement package is shown in the graph below. Terraced (mid and end) properties continue to be the largest single property type treated under the scheme, accounting for 40.7% of all installations, a slight decrease from 41.4% in 2018-19. The number of semi-detached

properties receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package remained the same as 2018-19 at 28% whereas detached properties increased slightly from 8.9% in 2018-19 to 9.2% along with flats from 6.9% in 2018-19 to 7.2%.



The chart below further details the types of off gas measures that were completed during 2019-20.



¹The definitions of Urban and Rural are based on accepted classifications available from the Office of National Statistics

Improving Energy Efficiency

Nest home energy efficiency improvements have delivered estimated energy bill savings averaging £282 per household per year, making a real difference to fuel poor households.

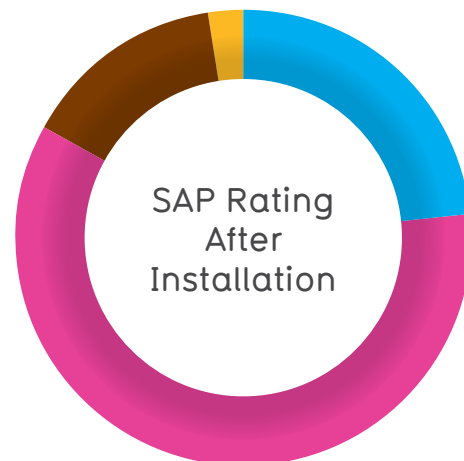
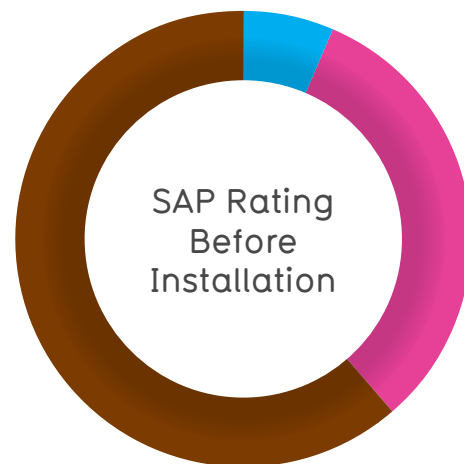
These charts show the breakdown by SAP band for households both before and after receiving home energy efficiency improvement packages. All of the properties receiving measures were very energy inefficient households - rated E (6.3%), F (32.1%) or G (61.6%).

After the installation of the home energy improvement package, 83.2% of properties were increased to a C to D-rating (an increase of 3.2% from 2018-19), and a further 14.4% to an E-rating and 2.4% F-rating. Some properties which received improvements may remain in an E rating because it has not been possible to demonstrate value for money for the more enhanced measures required. In 2019-20, no properties remained in a G-rating.

The Nest scheme calculates the effects of energy efficiency improvements on the homes using an RdSAP² rating. The software measures the SAP rating before and after suitable measures are installed. The aim is to install a package of measures to increase the energy rating of a property towards a SAP rating of C where possible and when it is cost effective to do so. The actual measures installed are remodelled to account for any amendments to the original package due to technical issues or customers changing their mind.

The Nest assessor establishes the current SAP rating of the property and the potential SAP rating if a home energy efficiency improvement package is installed. Band A properties are very energy efficient and will have the lowest running costs whereas band G properties have poor energy efficiency ratings and consequently will have higher running costs to maintain the same standards of heating and lighting.

Benefits are based on modelled outcomes and the actual reductions and savings will depend on the individual customer's behaviours. It is often the case that households in fuel poverty do not heat their homes effectively and therefore in some cases the benefit to the customer will be increased comfort and wellbeing through the ability to heat the home more effectively rather than a reduction in fuel bills.



² RdSAP and SAP – The Standard Assessment Procedure is the UK Government's methodology for assessing and comparing the energy and environmental performance of dwellings. The reduced data SAP (RdSAP) was introduced later as a more cost effective tool to assess existing dwellings.

The chart shows the breakdown of modelled energy savings per household receiving measures by local authority, with an estimated average saving of £282 per year or 17,934 megajoules per annum (up from 17,744 in 2018-19).

It also shows the breakdown by lifetime carbon emission reductions for households receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package. Total lifetime emissions are modelled to reduce by 96k tCO and vary from 1.4k tCO in Monmouthshire to over 13k tCO in Carmarthenshire.

Local Authority	Sum of CO ₂ Lifetime Saving (tCO)	Average of Energy Use Saving (megajoules)	Average of Fuel Cost Annual Saving
Blaenau Gwent	2117	19133	£230
Bridgend	4023	17566	£226
Caerphilly	5331	18411	£249
Cardiff	4956	16838	£219
Carmarthenshire	13045	19378	£323
Ceredigion	5066	19877	£519
Conwy	3421	16627	£223
Denbighshire	3535	14817	£202
Flintshire	2414	15571	£211
Gwynedd	5941	19904	£500
Isle of Anglesey	4608	18754	£402
Merthyr Tydfil	1713	18508	£246
Monmouthshire	1364	16394	£294
Neath Port Talbot	2576	19193	£250
Newport	2034	15884	£184
Pembrokeshire	5369	17809	£386
Powys	5197	18287	£402
Rhondda Cynon Taf	10520	18496	£233
Swansea	7331	18125	£240
The Vale of Glamorgan	2272	17712	£238
Torfaen	1746	16157	£239
Wrexham	1689	15259	£212
Grand Total	96267	17934	£282

"Thank you very much for everything, it was great to know I could ring you back all the time whilst I was worried. I very much appreciate that you didn't give up and have solved the problem!"

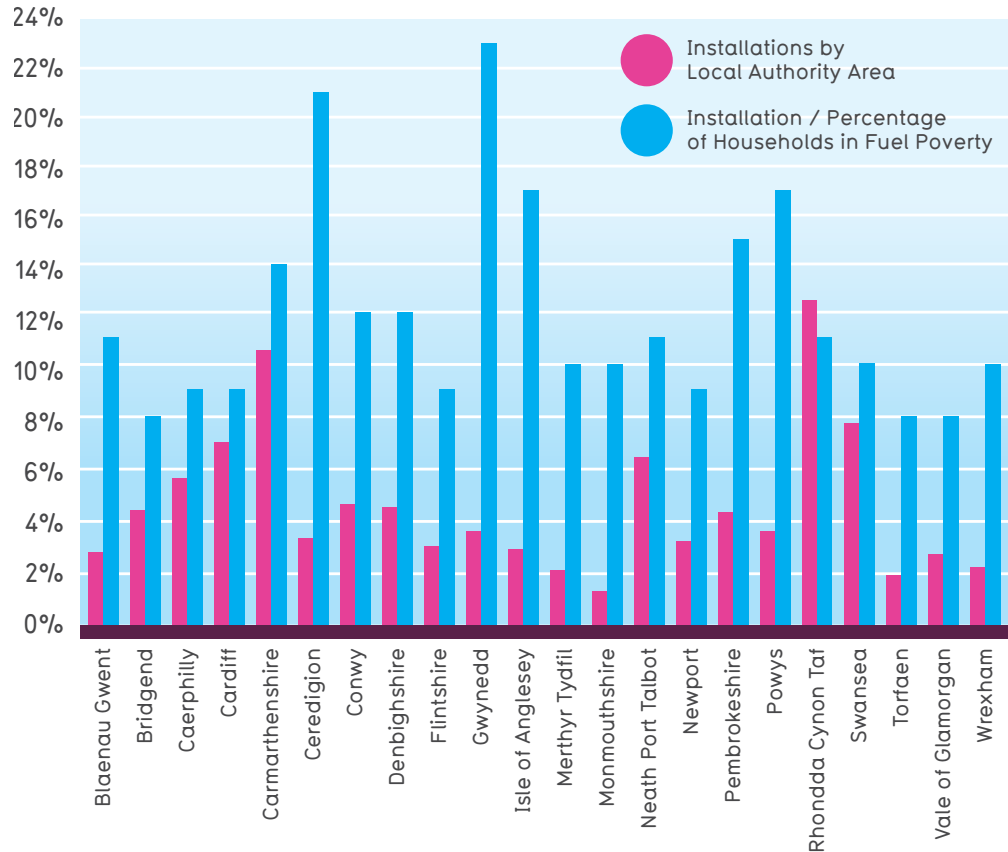
Cardiff Resident

Welsh Government Investment

During 2019-20, the Welsh Government invested £20.6 million through Nest measures.

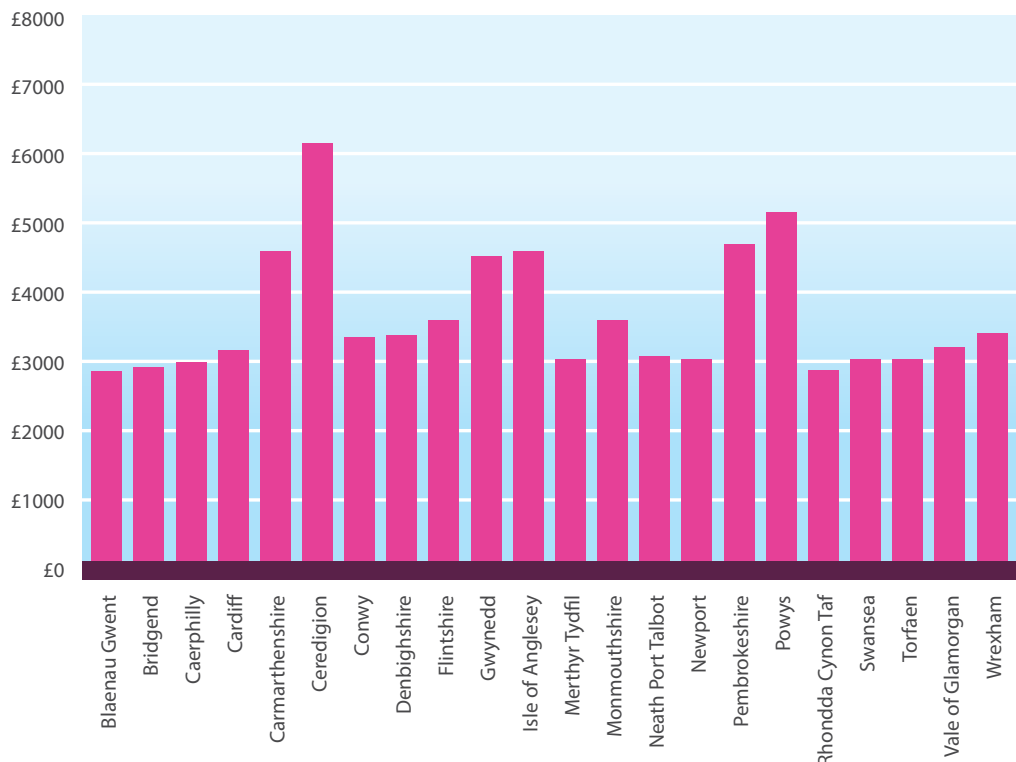
Installations by Local Authority Area / Percentage of Households in Fuel Poverty

The graph illustrates the percentage of installations completed by local authority area along with the estimated percentage of households in fuel poverty, based on the Welsh Housing conditions survey of 2017-18.



Local Authority Average Spend Profile

This chart shows the average spend on home energy efficiency improvements by local authority.

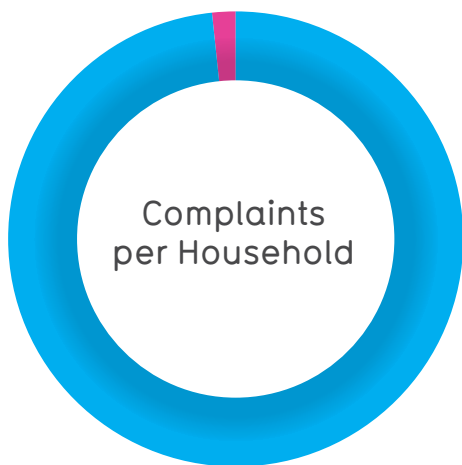


Householder Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction with Nest has been consistently high over the life of the scheme. In 2019-20, 98.4% of customers reported satisfaction with the advice services and installations provided by Nest.

All householders advised by the scheme are issued with a postal survey and asked to rate the service according to their satisfaction. Householder satisfaction is recorded and managed including any complaints relating to each stage of the customer journey.

The charts below show the complaint volume represented just 1.65% of all customers receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package and the majority of customers (98.4%) were satisfied with the installation service provided.



98.3% No 1.65% Yes



1.6% Not Satisfied 98.4% Satisfied

"Knowing that the heating now works has given us peace of mind - we also have constant hot water which is more eco-friendly. Our income hasn't increased but because of the saving, we have more accessible money. Thank you for sorting out the reduction in water rates, we have saved a huge sum of money."

Flintshire Resident

Equality and Diversity

The Nest scheme aims to reach all parts of society to ensure that households in need of support are aware of the services available and are able to access the scheme.

The work of the PDMs, in particular, positions the scheme alongside a range of partners delivering essential support to households across Wales. The advice and signposting available from Nest often contributes to a multi-agency solution for families facing multiple challenges.

The Nest team works with local health boards, discharge teams and GP surgeries and community hospitals. The Nest PDMs have developed existing and new partnerships within the health sector recognising the impact a cold home can have on a person's health and wellbeing.

The Nest PDMs established relationships with a number of third sector organisations working with people with specific communication needs including Parkinson's UK, Headway, Mind Cymru, Stroke Association and Deafblind.

The team also worked with charities supporting people with long-term illnesses, including Macmillan, Alzheimer's Society, Mencap, Macular Society and Dementia Friends, recognising

the financial difficulties people with specific conditions can face.

Nest continues to maintain relationships with organisations which support older people in Wales. The PDMs have worked closely with Age Cymru and Age Connects agencies and with Care and Repair where a two-way referral process ensures that householders have access to the distinct services provided by both organisations.

Alongside the partnership engagement activities, information on the Nest scheme is available in a number of different formats including easy-read, braille, audio, large print and digital and in multiple languages. These resources are supported by Language Line to provide interpretation for those customers whose first language is not English or Welsh and through minicom or the Next Generation Text service for customers who are deaf or speech impaired to ensure that everyone has access to the scheme.

These activities underline the Nest scheme's commitment to operate within the values set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act including collaboration, integration and prevention.

"The engineers who attended did an absolutely fantastic job. They were extremely professional, knowledgeable, hardworking and made a most arduous task appear simple! They were even really good with me, I was anxious about having strangers in my home and they were just so lovely about that too, they really made me feel at ease and were empathetic to it all, I can't thank them enough."

Newport Resident

Delivering Additional Benefits

The Welsh Government's commitment to deliver community benefit outcomes from procurement activity is designed to ensure that wider social and economic issues are considered when spending public money.

The intention is to achieve the very best value for money in the widest sense. The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme ensures its community benefits strategy incorporates and delivers outcomes for each of the following:

- Generate employment and training opportunities for priority groups.
- Educational support initiatives.
- Vocational training and upskilling existing workforce.
- Equality and diversity initiatives.
- Build capacity in community organisations.
- Supply chain development.
- Sub-contracting opportunities to SME's, the third sector and supported businesses.

The Nest scheme continues to forecast a Welsh local multiplier of £2. This multiplier measures how Nest scheme spending generates local economic impact and benefit to communities - for every £1 spent on the Nest scheme, £2 has been returned in economic benefit. British Gas, the Nest scheme manager, is required to encourage the participation of Welsh SMEs when procuring site contractors and other suppliers. Nest continues to support contractors and encourages the intake of apprentices to work on the scheme.

As a Wales-based employer, Nest continues to support the communities it works in and inspire young people with a range of employment initiatives. Last year, Nest signed up to Disability Confident. The Disability Confident scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to the workplace. Disability Confident organisations play a leading role in changing attitudes for the better, changing behaviour and cultures within businesses, networks and communities, and reaping the benefits of inclusive recruitment practices. Building upon its L1 Disability Confident Employer status, Nest is proud have been recently recognised as a L2 Disability Confident Employer.

Demonstrating ongoing support and commitment to its contractors, Nest launched an apprentice funding program. This program has allowed contractors to access four funded apprenticeship placements, for a period of two years, additionally, providing the apprentices with funding for tools and training. This has enabled these contractors to build capacity within their teams and workforce, providing additional employment opportunities within their local area.

Nest is extremely proud to be an active member of Business in The Community's Business Class programme. Business Class is delivered by Careers Wales and as part of a continued partnership, during 2019-20, Nest provided engagement sessions to over 2,500 students by delivering:

- Employability workshops, focusing on CV writing and Interview skills.
- Facilitating an attendance recognition and reward programme across Merthyr Tydfil's five secondary schools. This was to support the Local Authorities campaign of 'Miss School, Miss Out'.
- Confidence and presentation groups work.
- Prefect expectations and preparation sessions.

Nest's annual Cre8 competition (an inter-school competition aimed at improving school pupils understanding of work and career choices, where students design an energy efficient product from recycled materials) was held in the region of north west Wales with the final event held at Bangor University, officially opened by Lesley Griffiths, Welsh Government Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs.

As an extension to Cre8, the concept has been adapted to fit into the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification and is an approved WJEC Employability and Enterprise challenge. The purpose of the Enterprise and Employability Challenge is to develop learners' skills, whilst providing opportunities for learners to develop enterprising skills and attributes and enhance employability. During the Enterprise and Employability Challenge, learners will explicitly develop skills in Creativity and Innovation, Personal Effectiveness and Digital Literacy. The challenge is to create a new product/ service that is both energy efficient and incorporated renewable energy sources. Students then work together for a set number of hours and present their final idea to an assessment panel from Nest. Students assessment scores contribute to their overall Welsh Baccalaureate grade.

It is widely recognised that girls are under-represented in STEM Industries so as part of Nest's equality and diversity initiatives, this year, Nest has worked with Technocamps. Technocamps is extremely proud to lead on an innovative new programme, designed to encourage young women towards STEM careers, GiST (Girls in Science and Technology) Cymru. Nest supported the official launch of GiST Cymru at the University of South Wales with over 130 girls from schools across south east Wales and the Valleys attending, to gain insight and understanding of the opportunities open to them in the field of Science and Technology.

Looking Ahead

As the current Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme enters its third year in 2020-21, the need to tackle fuel poverty and help those most in need is still as important as it has ever been.

The Nest Scheme has been working alongside Welsh Government to support households affected by COVID-19. Since the lockdown in late March until June 30th 2020, the scheme has been working as an 'emergency only' operation and assisted over 300 households in Wales that were without water, heating or where there was a risk of life. The Nest advice team has also continued to offer support to customers via its freephone number and email. As of July 1st 2020, the Nest scheme returned to 'business as usual' where all households eligible for home energy improvements are able to have work undertaken, with installers adhering to Welsh Government guidelines on managing the risk of COVID-19.

The Nest scheme will continue to tackle fuel poverty in Wales and will:

- Work with a range of partner organisations to ensure the scheme reaches those households in most need.
- Develop engagement with the health sector to fully test the professional health referral process for a further 12-month period for people suffering from chronic health conditions affecting their circulatory or respiratory system which are often made worse by living in a cold or damp home.
- Investigative work will be done exploring the range of mental health conditions affecting the people of Wales and whether householders with specific mental health conditions would benefit the most from receiving a package of energy efficiency measures through the Nest scheme.
- Leverage additional funding into the scheme from the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) to help more low income households to benefit from home energy efficiency improvements.
- Continue to contribute to Welsh Government's energy and poverty strategies.

- Act on recommendations from the Welsh Government Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee.
- Continue to assist Housing co-operatives and support the private rental sector.
- Operate within the values set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act including collaboration, integration and prevention.

The Nest scheme will continue to develop its community benefit activities. Working with our network of Wales-based installers and suppliers, Nest will lead a team of volunteers to undertake a community regeneration project and revitalise a community building or area in collaboration with local partners.

The Nest scheme will also increase opportunities to promote employment and learning, in partnership with local Job Centres and Careers Wales. Nest will continue its partnership with Business in the Community's Business Class programme supporting the Heads of the Valley and Wrexham Clusters.