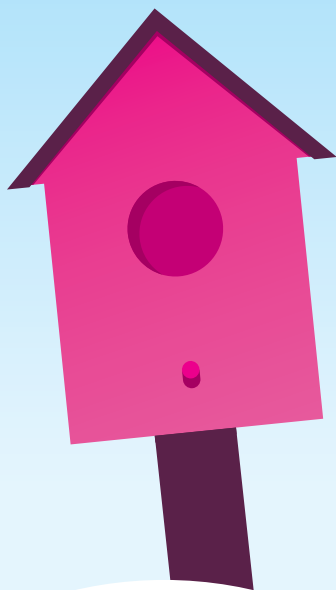




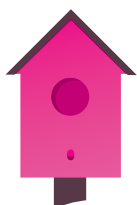
Nest

Annual Report

2020-21



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



**Nyth
Nest**
Gwneud
Cymru'n
Glyd
Making
Wales
Cosy


**Cartrefi Cylid
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government
Warm Homes**


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ministerial Foreword

As in previous years, our Warm Homes Programme continues to make a significant contribution to improving the quality of Welsh homes.



It supports people who struggle to meet the cost of their home energy needs, whilst contributing to our ambitions to reduce harmful carbon emissions into the natural environment.

In the last year the people of Wales have endured unprecedented challenges. The COVID-19 global pandemic has seen our lives turned upside down overnight with each and every one of us impacted. However, throughout the pandemic, our Welsh Government Warm Homes Programme Nest Scheme has continued to support some of our most vulnerable households. Emergency work for those facing the greatest hardship was prioritised.

In 2020-21, Welsh Government provided funding of £20.1m to deliver the Nest Scheme. Our investment has helped improve home energy efficiency of lower income households. It made a big difference to energy bills and also helped people become more resilient to future energy price rises. More than 4,500 lower income households have benefited from home energy efficiency measures during this reporting period. Better targeting of support this year means more than 16% of households

benefitting through the scheme were living in severe fuel poverty and 35% in fuel poverty. This delivers on our principled approach of helping the worst affected first in our efforts to tackle fuel poverty.

Through the Nest scheme, we have also provided access to energy advice to more than 14,700 people alongside other support to help them make the most of their hard earned money. This advice has included signposting to third party services such as benefit entitlement checks and money management advice.

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

The current uncertainty in the energy market and rising energy costs highlights, more than ever, the need to improve the energy efficiency of homes across Wales to reduce energy use and associated costs. This is the focus of the Warm Homes programme.

As the country recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, I will continue to work with key partners delivering the Nest Scheme to ensure we keep supporting and assisting those people most in need.

Julie James MS

Minister for Climate Change



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About Nest

Since 2011, the Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme has provided free, impartial advice and energy efficiency improvements to low-income households and those living in areas of deprivation across Wales.

We know 2020-21 was a challenging year for all households in Wales, in particular those most vulnerable. £20.1 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 low-income households and those living in deprived communities.

Our priorities:

- Providing households with free, impartial advice and signposting to a range of support services.
- Supporting eligible households with a package of free home energy efficiency measures such as a central heating system, a boiler or insulation.
- Working with a range of partner organisations to ensure the scheme reaches the most vulnerable households in Wales during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supporting the Welsh Government's fuel poverty strategy to help people struggling to meet the cost of their domestic energy needs.

Our successes

Despite the challenges created by COVID-19, in 2021 we provided:

- 15,557 households with free, impartial advice of which 4,559 households received free home energy efficiency measures.
- A modelled average energy bill saving of £305 per year.
- Benefit entitlement checks that resulted in a household average £2,091 potential increase in benefit take-up.
- 100% of installations completed by Wales-based installers, including 23 apprentices working on the scheme.

Take a look at this short video to see how we supported Mrs Keogh, a resident in Pontypridd, in lowering her energy bills and improving her quality of life.



Reaching Vulnerable Households During COVID-19

With a series of COVID-19 lockdowns implemented throughout Wales during 2020-21, the scheme had to adapt to reflect an ever-changing situation.

Our advice service remained open throughout the year, and installations in the first lockdown in April - June moved to an emergency-only operation, prioritising vulnerable customers with no heat, hot water or any risk of life.

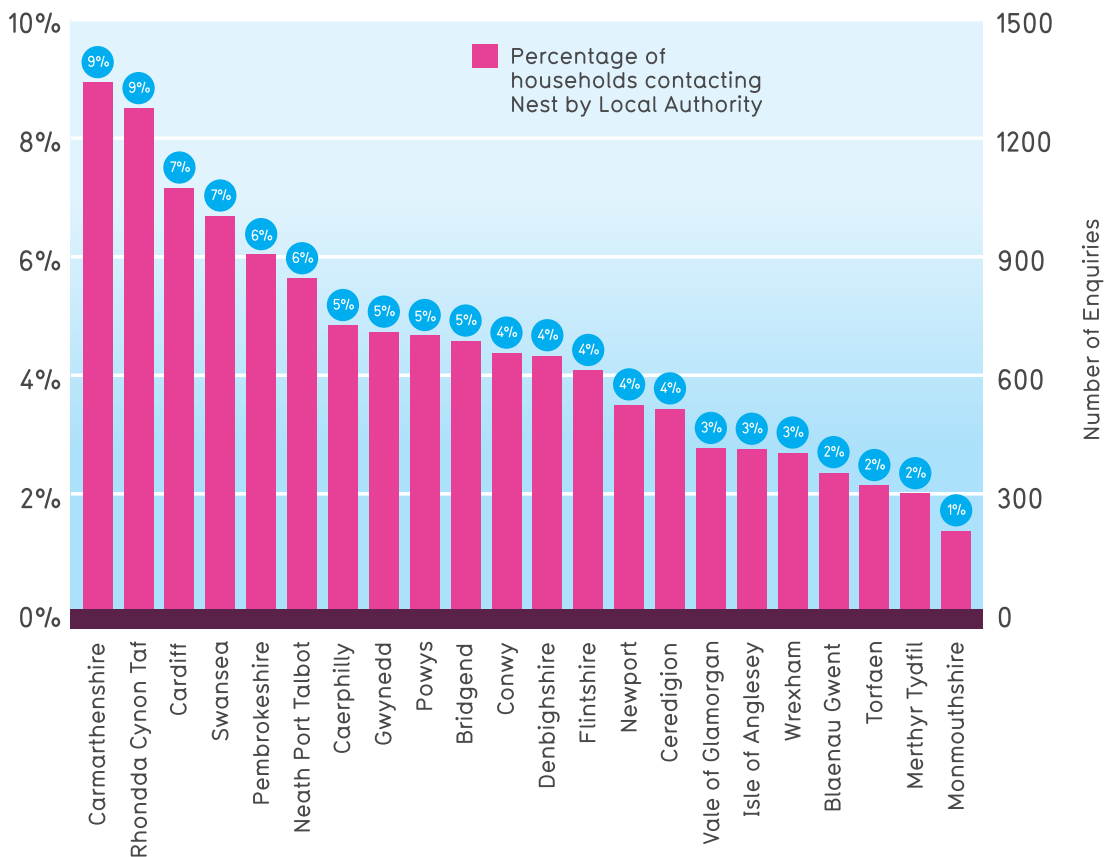
A range of promotional activities were used to engage customers across Wales with marketing and communications tailored to specific audiences. This included:

- Promotion of **Nest website** with over 125,000 visits during 2020-21.

- Working with local authorities to deliver a direct mail campaign that reached over 60,000 vulnerable households.
- Paid Facebook and Google adverts targeted at eligible customers throughout Wales.
- Supporting health boards, charities and community organisations across Wales to help reach households who may benefit from our advice and support.

The graph below shows the percentage of enquiries made by each local authority in Wales.

Enquiries by Local Authority 2020-21



Building Partnerships Across Wales

Our Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) work with local authorities, health boards, charities and community organisations across Wales to help reach households who may benefit from our advice and support.

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

- Local Authorities (e.g. housing, carers' 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 & 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, and 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 with key partners such as Age Cymru, Warm Wales and Care & Repair allows us to significantly increase the reach of Nest to key audiences by tapping into their platforms, channels and networks.

As a consequence of COVID-19, our PDMs were unable to meet organisations and customers face-to-face, however, they were still able to connect via video conferencing, email communication and over the phone. They presented and attended 385 partner meetings in 2020-21.

Below are some examples of the partnerships built:

Local Authorities

Direct mailing campaigns were undertaken in partnership with eleven local authorities: Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Swansea and Torfaen. PDMs were able to work closely with Caerphilly, Flintshire, Newport and Wrexham to enable further partnership campaigns to support residents within these authorities.

Health Boards

Hywel Dda University Health Board

PDMs delivered separate training presentations to specialist Admiral Nurses who provide support to dementia patients in their own homes and to Alzheimer's Advisor teams covering the Hywel Dda region. PDMs also worked with Community Mental Health, Lifestyle and Smoking Cessation teams who will be supporting patients with respiratory, cardiovascular and mental health conditions to receive Nest support. In addition, there is ongoing engagement with all seven health boards across Wales to raise awareness of Nest support.

"Throughout my application I was treated with respect. Having worked for over 30 years and now finding myself unable to work due to poor health, I am grateful to Nest for supporting me in my time of need."

Denbighshire resident

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

PDMs have supported Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board with continued attendance at their Engagement Practitioners Forums, a network of organisations where we have shared information on Nest and identified opportunities for collaboration. We have also been able to share common challenges, highlight concerns and support each other.

Third Sector Partnerships

Scope Disability Energy Hub

PDMs have provided training and support to the Disability Energy Hub advisers, a new **Energy Redress Scheme** funded project that offers energy advice for disabled households and helps address any extra costs they may experience. Signposting to Nest services has been made to Welsh households.

Care & Repair 70+

PDMs have been working closely with Care & Repair's newly appointed Home Energy Officers and Project Manager to help them identify customers who will be eligible for Nest. We have delivered several in depth training sessions with them and offer support on individual cases, holding regular meetings for updates and Q&A sessions. We have added them onto the **Nest Partner Portal** where they can refer and follow the customer journey.

Advice Services

Citizens Advice

PDMs continued to work closely with Citizens Advice offices across Wales and regularly provide briefings and updates to management, permanent staff and volunteers. They are working closely with a range of regional and local energy support schemes delivered by Citizens Advice in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Monmouthshire, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Ynys Môn. PDMs have also delivered presentations to all-Wales advisor forums to support projects such as **Warmer Wales**. They are also working with Citizens Advice Cymru Partnership Team to create bespoke referral arrangement with **Advicelink Cymru** service, which provides a link to quality debt advice and referral to local casework specialists. PDMs also supported Citizens Advice during their **Big Energy Saving Winter** campaign. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year's events took the form of online energy workshops and public drop in events, working together with Citizens Advice Regional Energy Champions.

"I was very nervous when I called Nest, but the young lady I spoke to was outstanding. I felt like she cared and that I was being listened to. I received support on how to get a better deal on my home energy bills and energy saving advice for around the home, which I did and I'm now saving money off my bills."

Swansea resident

Advice and Support

In 2020-21, Nest provided 15,557 households with tailored advice and referrals to third party services.

Every customer that calls the Nest helpline receives tailored advice and support from our 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 (if eligible), and signposting and referrals to a range of support services.

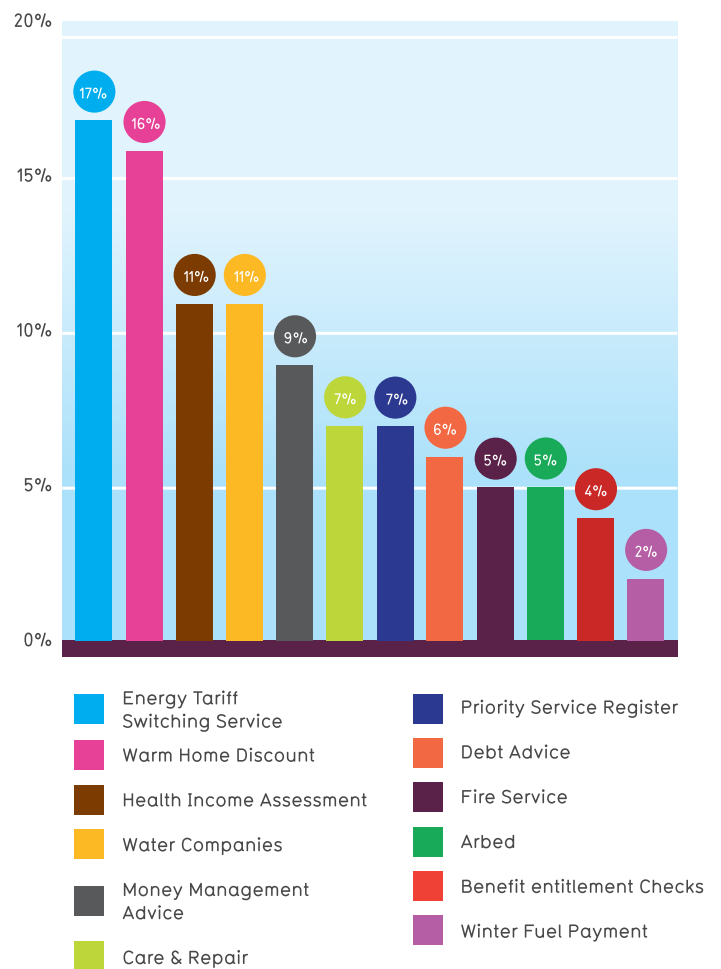
- **Other advice services** – customers not eligible for a Nest home energy efficiency improvement package are directed to other appropriate organisations. They're also given advice and support on behavioural changes that can save money on their energy bills.

Third Party Support

8,821 households were referred or recommended to contact one or more third party services in 2020-21. 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 & Repair services** – Care & 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 2020-21



Benefit Entitlement Checks

During the year, 917 households were referred for a benefit entitlement check of which 203 households were found to be eligible for new or additional benefits averaging £2,091 per household (this equates to £424,473 in benefit take-up).

Benefit Entitlement Checks	
Number of householder referrals	917
Number of householders claiming new/ additional benefits	203
Average increase to annual income	£2,091

Care & Repair Services

Care & Repair agencies provide a range of services to help older people live in homes which are safe, secure and appropriate to their needs. Nest signposted and referred 1,616 households to Care and Repair in 2020-21, an increase of 568 compared to 2019-20.

Care & Repair Services	
Number of householder Referrals	1,616
Number of households using disabled service	311
Number of householders using Handyman service	70
Number of householders using Temporary Heating service	0
Number of householders using Grant Help	15
Number of householders using Caseworker service	242
Number of householders receiving advice only	21

Warm Home Discount

In total, 3,458 customers were referred to their energy supplier for the Warm Home Discount in 2020-21 of which 366 Nest customers qualifying for the discount, amounting to total savings of £51,240.

Warm Home Discount	
Number of householder Referrals	3,458
Number of householders receiving Warm Home Discount	366
Value of Warm Home Discount	£51,240

Fire and Rescue Services

Nest referred 1,143 customers to North Wales and Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Services of which 120 received a home fire safety check.

Fire Service	
Number of householder referrals	1,143
Number of householders receiving home safety report	120

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, 2,295 customers were referred of which 91 benefiting from support and arrears reduction.

Water Companies	
Number of household referrals	2,295
Customers benefiting from HelpU	27
Customers benefiting from Water Direct	11
Customers benefiting from Customer Assistance Fund	3
Customers benefiting from Water Sure	11
Customers added to Priority Services Register	39

Money management advice

A total of 2,025 customers received money management advice, while an additional 1,274 customers also received debt management advice from MoneyHelper.

Other Advice Services	
Money management advice	2,025
Debt advice	1,274

Home Energy Improvement Packages

Welsh Government's Warm Homes Nest scheme provides assistance to vulnerable households in fuel poverty. We offer free energy efficiency improvements in the home, helping to reduce household energy bills.

Vulnerable households are households where the occupants include one or more of the following:

- a person aged 60 and over,
- a dependent child or children under the age of 16,
- a single person aged under 25,
- a person living with a long term illness or who is disabled.

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.

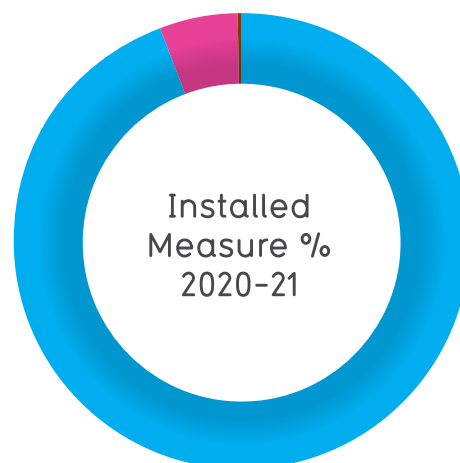
The criteria for home improvements are:

- A household member is in receipt of a means tested benefit and the property is privately owned or rented with an energy rating E, F or G; or
- A household member is living with a health condition (respiratory, circulatory and mental), is in receipt of an income below defined thresholds and the property is privately owned or rented with an energy rating of D, E, F or G.

Working in Partnership

We work 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 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 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.



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. A new health criteria pilot was launched in July 2019.

From July 2019 to June 2021, 12,089 households were assessed through the health criteria, having failed to meet the means tested benefit criteria. Of these, 6,000 met the health criteria and were referred for an income assessment. A total of 3,486 households passed the income assessment, therefore meeting all the criteria (2,146 of these households had measures installed).

Most health criteria referrals were vulnerable households:

- 69.4% aged 60 years old or more.
- 62.2% in single income households aged 60 years old or more.
- 37.6% in two adult households aged 60 years old or more.
- 89.5% of households were living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of E, F or G.
- 10.5% of households were living in a property with an energy efficiency rating of D.
- 67.6% of households have a monthly income below the health eligibility income threshold for 1 or more adults (£1,342) and 32.4% have an income below the threshold for a household with one or two dependants (£1,779).

Household and Property Characteristics

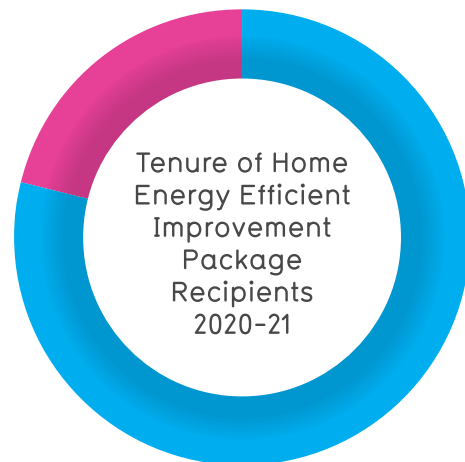
Nest aims wherever possible to bring people out of fuel poverty.

During the initial application process, householders are asked to provide details of their income. This information is assessed against modelled running costs for their household. This allows the Nest Advice Team to estimate whether the customer is likely to be 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.

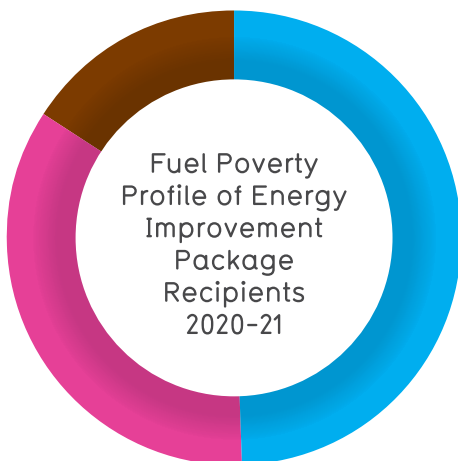
Prior to receiving home energy efficiency improvements, 50.4% of households contacting Nest were estimated to be living in fuel poverty. This includes 15.7% of households living in severe fuel poverty.

The chart below shows the breakdown of tenure for households receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package; 79.4% were owner occupied and 20.6% were privately rented.

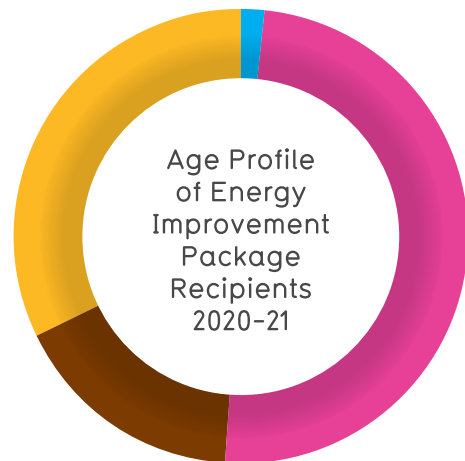


79.4% Owner Occupied 20.6% Privately Rented

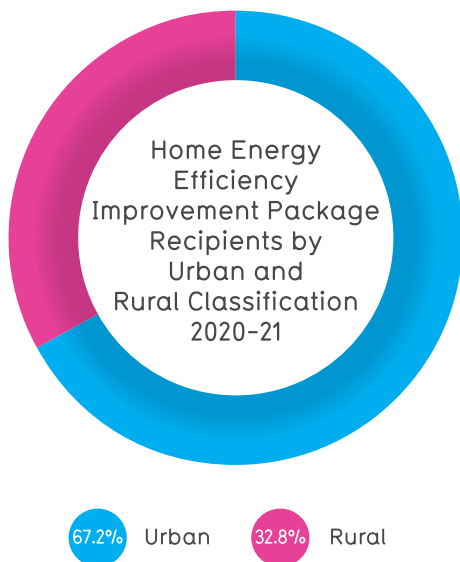
The chart below shows the breakdown by age of householders receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package.



49.6% Not in Fuel Poverty 34.7% In Fuel Poverty 15.7% In Severe Fuel Poverty

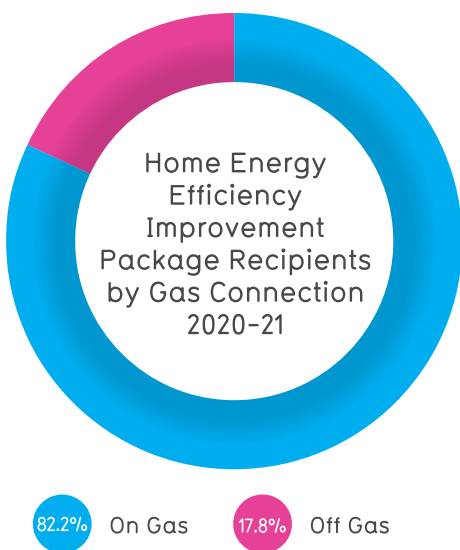


1.8% Under 24 49.4% 24-59 16.6% 60-69 32.2% 70 and over

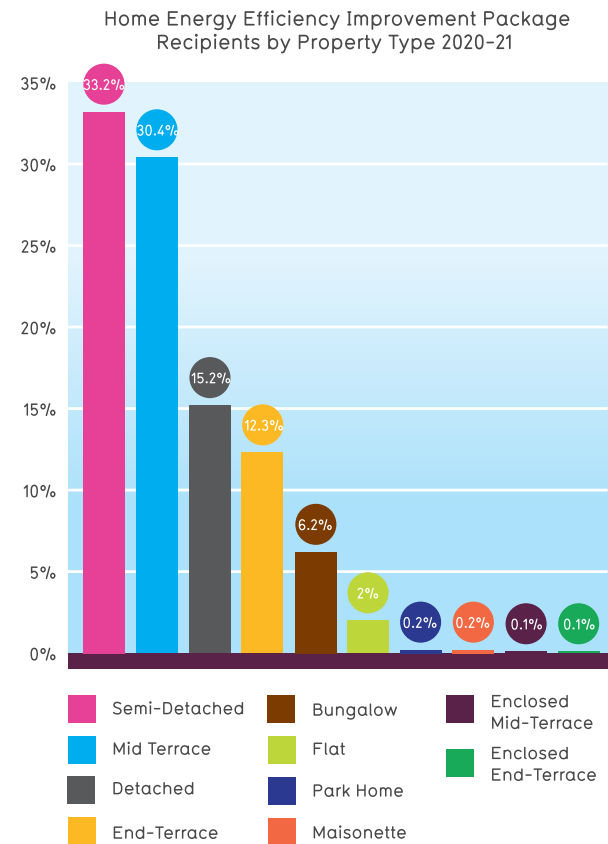


The breakdown by urban and rural² classification of customers receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package shows 67.2% of households were living in urban areas, and 32.8% living in rural areas (an increase of 3.3% compared to the previous year).

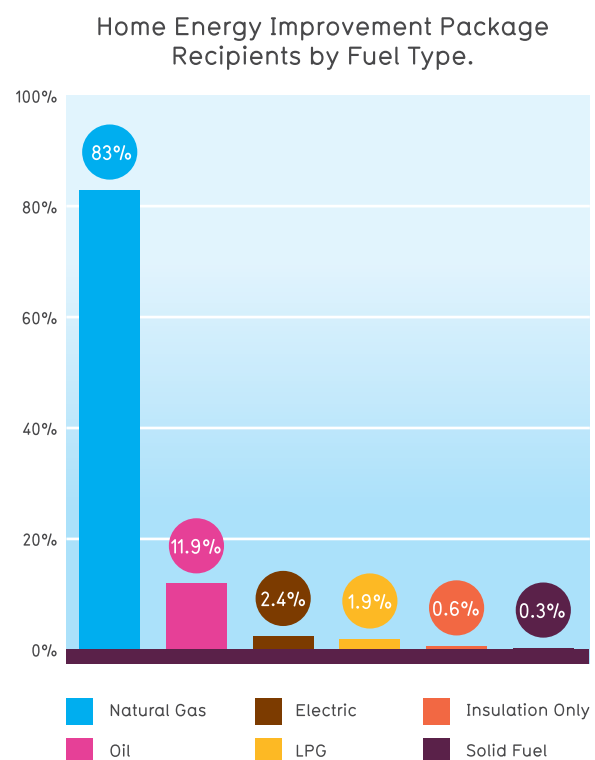
The proportion of customers who were not connected to the mains gas grid prior to receiving measures under the scheme was 17.8%, with those connected 82.2%



The breakdown by property-type of households who have received a home energy efficiency improvement package is shown in the graph below.



The types of fuel used by home energy efficiency package recipients in 2020-21 are detailed below.



2. The definitions of Urban and Rural are based on accepted classifications available from the **Office of National Statistics**. The Classification defines areas as rural if they are outside settlements with more than 10,000 resident population.

Improving Energy Efficiency

In 2020-21, Nest home energy efficiency improvements have delivered estimated energy bill savings averaging £305 per household per year, making a huge difference to fuel poor customers.

The chart below shows 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 before improvements - rated E (6.1%), F (31.6%) or G (62%).

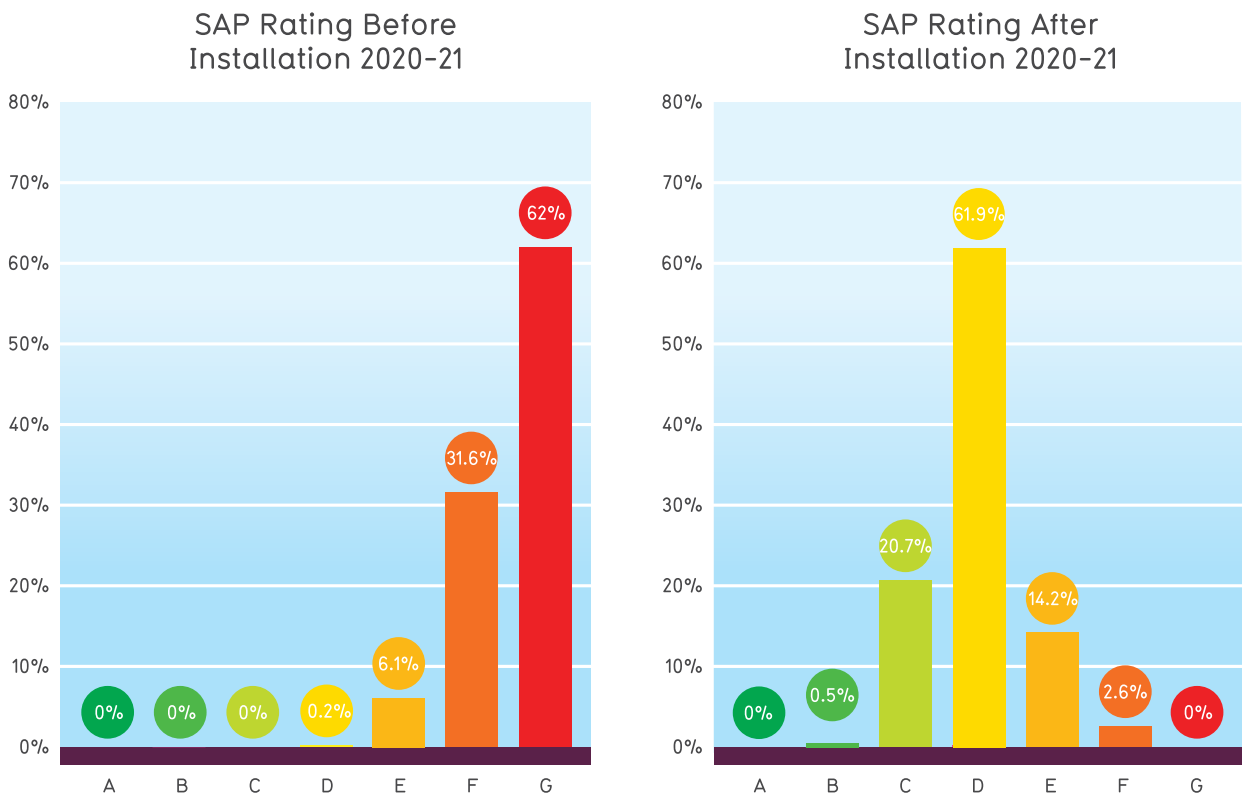
After the installation of the home energy improvement package, 83% of properties were increased to a C or D-rating, and a further 14.3% to an E-rating and 2.7% F-rating. Some properties which received improvements may remain in an E rating because it has not been possible to demonstrate value for money for the more enhanced measures required. In 2020-21, 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, 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 customers' 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.

Household Savings

The chart below shows the breakdown of modelled energy savings per household receiving measures by local authority, with an estimated average saving of £305 per year or 20,323 megajoules (units of energy) per annum. That's an increase from 17,934 in 2019-20.

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 CO₂ by over 94,000 tonnes.

Savings equivalent to taking **40,000 cars**



off the road for a year.

Local Authority	Sum of CO ₂ Lifetime Saving (tCO)	Average of Energy Use Saving (megajoules)	Average of Fuel Cost Annual Saving
Blaenau Gwent	2,495	22,511	£262
Bridgend	4,758	20,715	£294
Caerphilly	5,305	21,090	£250
Cardiff	4,618	18,969	£198
Carmarthenshire	9,600	20,621	£344
Ceredigion	3,995	22,477	£477
Conwy	3,434	19,394	£288
Denbighshire	2,455	18,228	£173
Flintshire	2,553	18,985	£199
Gwynedd	5,486	23,224	£711
Isle of Anglesey	2,954	22,053	£323
Merthyr Tydfil	2,220	22,253	£257
Monmouthshire	1,212	21,322	£239
Neath Port Talbot	7,136	18,997	£296
Newport	3,195	19,824	£253
Pembrokeshire	7,189	19,909	£427
Powys	4,623	21,589	£415
Rhondda Cynon Taf	10,208	21,618	£338
Swansea	5,096	18,326	£217
The Vale of Glamorgan	1,830	19,739	£237
Torfaen	1,828	20,051	£266
Wrexham	2,196	18,800	£222

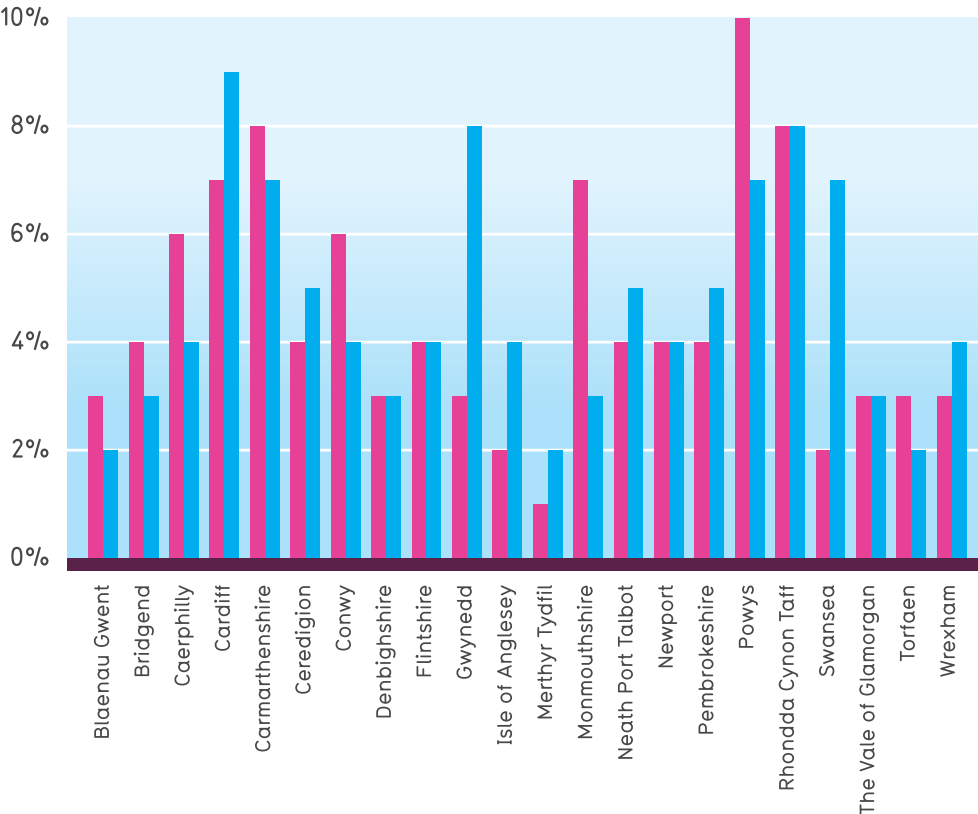
Welsh Government Investment

During 2020-21, the Welsh Government invested £20.1 million through Nest measures.

The graph illustrates the percentage of installations completed by local authority area along with the distribution of fuel poor households by local authority, 2017-18 (the most recent data available).

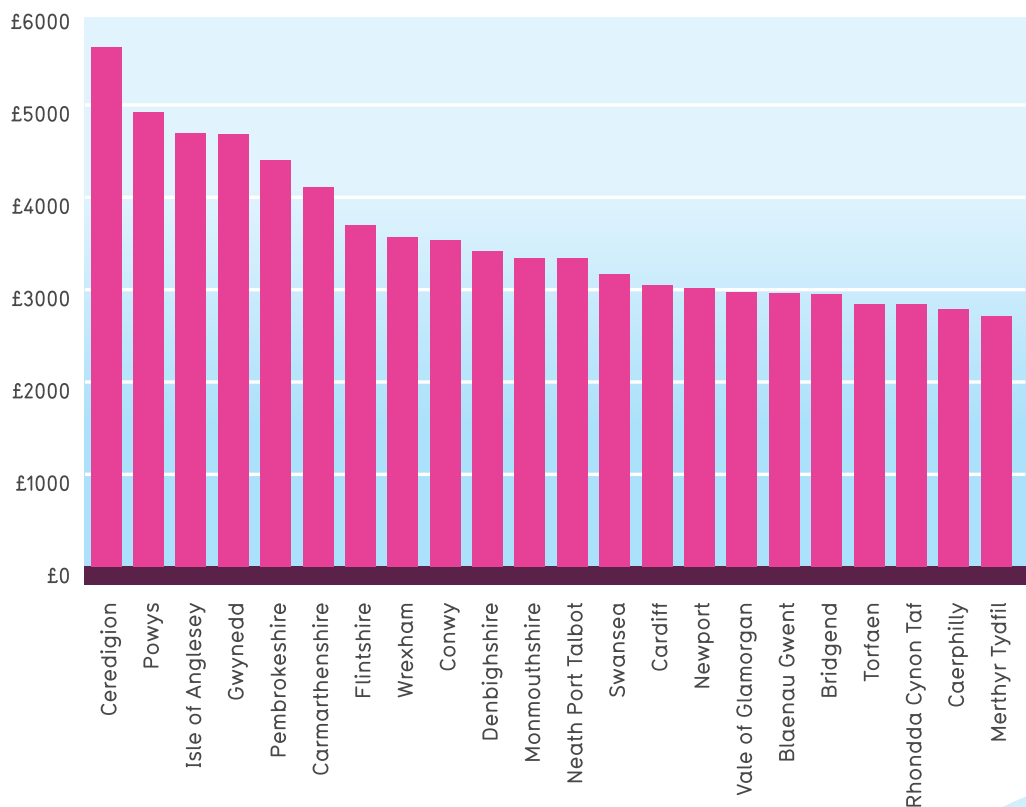
- Installations by Local Authority Area 2020-21
 - Distribution of Fuel Poor Households by Local Authority Area 2017-18
- Source: Welsh Housing conditions survey 2017-18

Installations by Local Authority Area 2020-21 / Distribution of Fuel Poor Households by Local Authority Area 2017-18



Local Authority Average Spend Per Household 2020-21

This chart shows the average spend on home energy efficiency improvements by local authority. The spend is higher in some local authorities due to the number of properties not on mains gas.



Householder Satisfaction

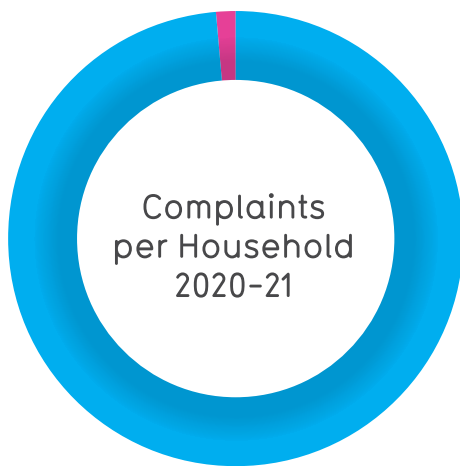
Customer satisfaction with Nest has been consistently high over the life of the scheme. In 2020-21, 99% of customers reported satisfaction with the advice services and installations provided by Nest.

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 1.2% of all customers receiving a home energy efficiency improvement package and the majority of customers (99%) were satisfied with the installation service provided.



1% Not Satisfied 99% Satisfied



98.8% No 1.2% Yes

"After speaking to someone about the urgency of my situation, an advisor managed to organise an assessor the next day for me. Thanks to this the work was completed within days! Thank you for understanding my situation, these changes will make a big difference."

Caerphilly resident

Equality and Diversity

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

The work of the PDMs positions the scheme alongside a range of partners delivering essential support to households across Wales. The advice and sign-posting 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 established 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 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.

In 2020-21, we sent a Diversity and Inclusion survey to our customers. The results showed the Nest scheme was engaging with a range of ethnic groups across Wales.

Delivering Additional Benefits

The Welsh Government Warm Homes Nest scheme continues to forecast a Welsh local multiplier of £2. This multiplier measures how the 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.

The intention is to achieve the very best value for money in the widest sense. We ensure our 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

Below is a summary of our key achievements with some of the projects that have been delivered in 2020-21.

Educational Support Initiatives



Responsible Business Champion Cymru 2020

Nest was named a responsible business champion at Business in the Community (BiTC) Cymru's **Responsible Business Awards 2020**. For over 20 years, Business in the Community's Responsible Business Awards has showcased transformational stories of businesses taking real action to build thriving communities. Each year, the Awards celebrate those businesses demonstrating strong, inclusive leadership, who continuously innovate to tackle pressing social issues and repair and rebuild our planet.

Through BiTC's Business Class programme, over 1,170 students and 39 schools have taken part in Nest's regional competition, Cre8. Cre8 focuses on energy efficiency and improves pupils' understanding of the world of work.

Now in its fourth year, our partnership with Ysgol Clywedog, Wrexham has seen Nest working with all of the school's year groups – delivering employability skill sessions, prefect training, assembly talks and an attendance and recognition reward programme. Most recently, Year 10 students were asked to focus on what good customer service means by completing the Agored Cymru Work Related Education Extended Certificate.

Nest has continued to support schools with adapting to education during COVID-19, redeveloping material and responding to the virtual requests of online learning.

- A suite of employability workshops has been designed and promoted.
- Nest's WJEC Enterprise and Employability challenge has also been adapted for delivery.

Supply Chain Development

Building on the success of our apprentice matched funding programme, this year has brought modifications to be more inclusive to our supply chain. Applications were based on the economic, social and business benefits to having new workforce members to train and upskill. Applications received detailed how much this development and investment would make to their companies.

“MCL Environmental is proud to invest in high quality plant and equipment for our operatives and supervisors. The money received from Nest, for training and upskilling our operatives will be reinvested back into the company on plant and equipment. The purchase of a self-contained Decontamination and welfare facility at a cost of £16,000 is the first of its kind within Wales”

For the next two years, Nest has committed to contribute funding to:

- Seven plumbing and heating apprentices
- Two electrical apprentices
- Two qualified / upskilled asbestos removal operatives
- One qualified / upskilled scaffolding operative
- In addition, nine apprentices will receive up to £1,000 for tools and training and the asbestos and scaffolding operatives will receive the necessary training to be qualified / upskilled.

Creating Employment and Training Opportunities for Priority Groups

As a Wales-based employer, Nest continues to support the communities it works in and inspire young people with a range of employment initiatives. In 2020-21, Nest committed to support Energy Saving Trust for their seasonal employment opportunities. Due to COVID-19, face to face workshops planned for April 2020 were adapted and we commenced virtual delivery of 1-2-1 sessions in June.

The sessions were tailored specifically to the candidate and not part of the application process with Energy Saving Trust. Seventeen potential candidates attended their session with ten applying for Energy Saving Trust vacancies. One candidate has been employed by Energy Saving Trust.

We have continued our employment support to Job Centre Plus (JCP) locations across south east Wales, conducting weekly employment workshops for JCP customers. Feedback from the sessions has been invaluable for these to continue. Our results for Q1 2021 are as follows:

- Fourteen workshops delivered virtually with 61 customers in attendance. Feedback survey highlights include:
- 100% respondents would recommend the workshop to others
- 95% of respondents have gathered answers to potential interview questions
- 91% of respondents made changes to their CV after the workshop
- 65% of respondents have obtained a positive outcome (either in employment or undertaking voluntary work experience)

Looking Ahead

The Nest scheme has been operating since 2011, but the need to tackle fuel poverty and help those most in need is still as important as it has ever been.

The scheme has been working alongside Welsh Government to support households affected by COVID-19.

The Nest scheme continues 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
- Contribute to Welsh Government's **2021-2035 fuel poverty strategy**
- 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

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

Community benefit activities will be increased by seeking new partnerships and supporting community organisations throughout Wales. A new energy efficiency education competition, **Home of the Future**, was launched in April 2021 in partnership with Technocamps, an organisation that looks to increase young people's engagement with STEM subjects.

Promotion of employment and learning opportunities will continue, in partnership with local JCP's, our schools partnerships and via Careers Wales' **School Valued Partner initiative** and **Communities for Work** programme.

Find out more about how the Welsh Government warm homes Nest scheme can help make your home warmer and more energy efficient:

Call freephone **0808 808 2244**

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