

Green Homes Sheffield Spring 2014 Summary Report

Who we are

Green Homes Sheffield is a network to help homeowners make their homes more comfortable, affordable and energy-efficient, through eco-retrofit. The organisation was formed in late 2013 by a team of volunteers, all with some involvement in energy improvement of existing homes – as consultants, installers, advisers, students, homeowners and community project leaders. We successfully secured funding from the national Green Open Homes network to develop our network and run open home events across Sheffield.

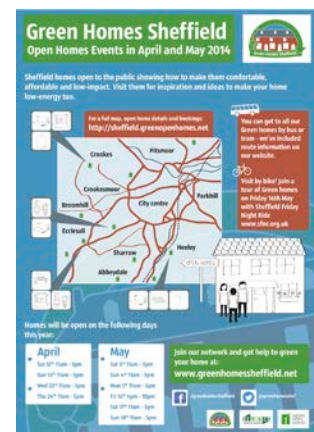


What we have achieved

We set a target to have 20 open homes, to attract 200 visitors and to collect feedback from the events to enable us to improve what we do. We have collected and evaluated feedback from visitors, hosts and volunteers. We attended 4 network events - a Transition Cafe evening, a church open evening for environmental projects, the celebration event for Sheffield University's Big Energy Upgrade project, and a skill-sharing session on energy at home. We appeared 3 times on Sheffield Live! community radio, and were featured in our local newspaper and 'Now Then' independent magazine. Our new website had 3,800 visits to the end of May.



Our open home season in Sheffield recruited and supported 17 homeowners who have made low carbon improvements to their homes, and enabled them to open their home to visitors, over 10 days in spring 2014. The aim of the events was to give hosts an opportunity to show their low carbon improvements and share their experiences, to enable visitors to learn about how to address eco-retrofit themselves. Our hosts' homes were open for a total of 41 days and attracted 209 visitors, with 13 volunteers helping as 'welcomers'.



Green Homes Sheffield's open homes events were enjoyed by attendees and hosts, who showed interest in taking part again. Feedback shows that attendees found the events informative and appreciated "the hosts' generosity in passing on their knowledge".

Hosts appreciated how "people found it interesting and useful to look at the work we've done, even though it is by no means complete or perfect in all respects!" Attendees found it particularly useful seeing "practical examples of what could be done in a home just like our own". Postcard invitations to neighbours proved a good marketing strategy, and some felt the events "are developing a community".

Where we go from here

After these successful events, Green Homes Sheffield want to run another season. Next time we will consider more focus on the groups of open homes in specific neighbourhoods, working more with local community associations on publicity. We would also like to try out different types of event including skill-sharing sessions. We would like to boost our presence in mainstream media as well as building on our success with social media. We would like our website to become a hub of information for homeowners and enable knowledge sharing.



Evaluation

To evaluate the impact of the Green Homes Sheffield events, we used feedback cards provided by Green Open Homes network to collect feedback on visitors' satisfaction with the event and intentions to make changes at home. We took web bookings using Eventbrite and have used these, and postcards, plus feedback from hosts to collate attendance figures.

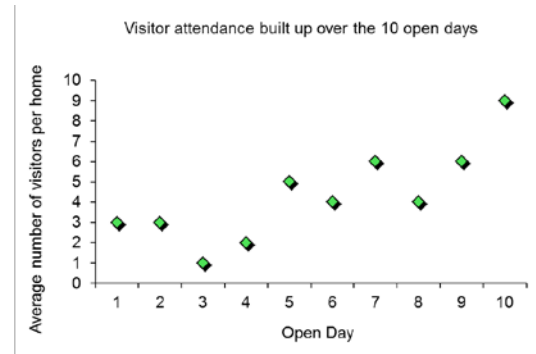
How useful did visitors find the open homes events?

Overall, visitors found the open homes events inspiring, useful and educational. This graph shows ranges from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree, and the average score.



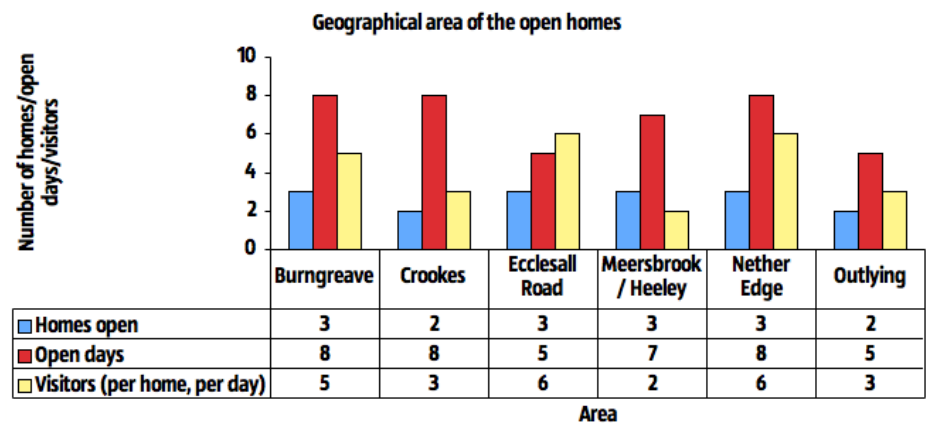
How did our events develop through April and May?

We chose to open over 10 days with the intention that publicity and attendance would build up during April and May, through both media exposure and word-of-mouth. This appears to have been successful, with the final open day average number of visitors per house standing at 9.

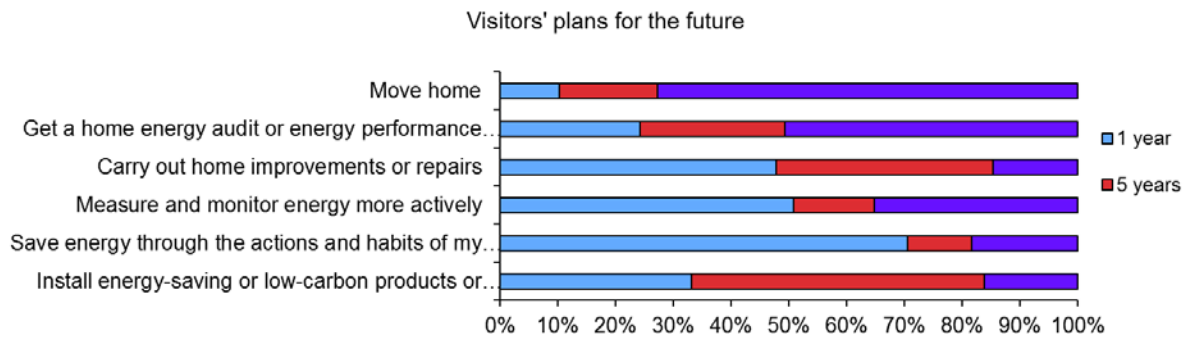


Where in Sheffield were our open homes?

The spring 2014 events covered a wide geographical area with 2 or 3 homes in each of five neighbourhoods, plus two homes in the rural outskirts of Sheffield. There was a good spread of attendance, though a surprisingly low numbers in Heeley/Meersbrook.

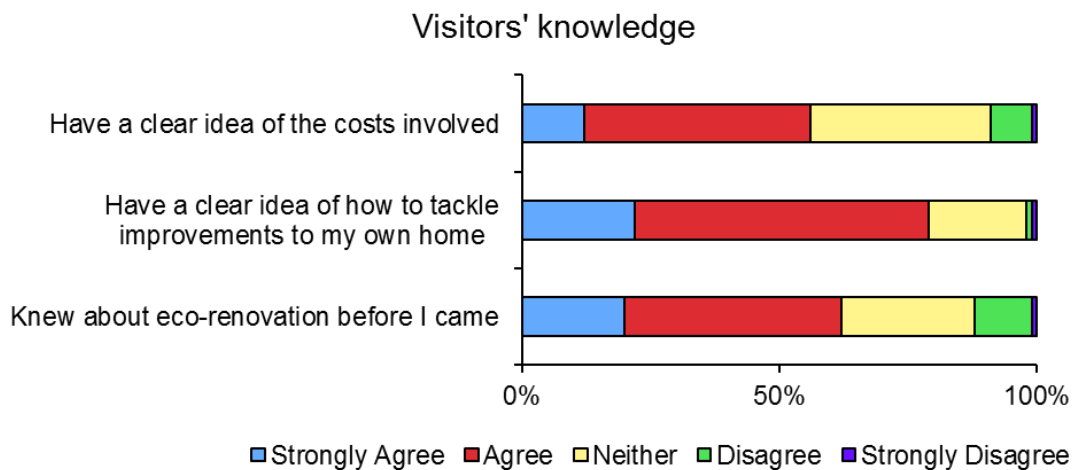


What plans do visitors have for eco-retrofit?



Most attendees plan to save energy through changing their behaviour, and over 80% of them plan to install energy-saving or low carbon products or technologies in the next 1-5 years.

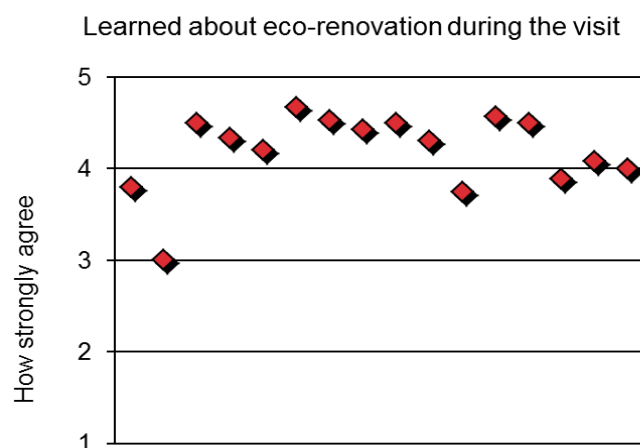
What did the visitors know about eco-renovation already?



Visitors had varying degrees of confidence to tackle improvements to their own home and know the costs involved, and in their level of prior knowledge about eco-renovation.

How much did the visitors learn from their visit?

With an average rating of 4, visitors mostly 'Agreed' that they learned about eco-renovation during their visit. This graph shows how this varied amongst the homes that were open.



Contact details

Jenny Patient

jenny.patient@regather.net

07760 174 335

www.greenhomessheffield.net

www.facebook.com/greenhomessheffield

www.twitter.com/greenhomesshef

Regather Co-operative Ltd,

57-59 Club Garden Road,

Sheffield, S11 8BU

