



**Media Release: 14 February 2012**

## **£24k FOR ASHBURTON HOUSEHOLDERS TO SHOW US THEIR HOTSPOTS**

An Ashburton initiative has won thousands of pounds of Government funding to explore how local homes can go much greener.

Local residents are being urged to “Show us your hotspots” and take part in the study – which will arm all Ashburton householders with expert knowledge to help make their homes cosier and their energy bills smaller.

The money will also pay for 100 residents to take a day trip to a national green building centre to see for themselves the best way to improve their home’s energy efficiency.

Earlier this month, Ashburton Futures qualified for £24,000 worth of Department of Energy and Climate Change funding from the Local Energy Assessment Fund (LEAF) for a project called Making Ashburton-style Homes Fit For the Future (MASHFFF).

### **Launch Event**

Anyone who’d like to find out more is welcome to come to Ashburton Town Hall on **Saturday 18 February from 10am – 1pm**, when volunteers from Ashburton Futures will be available to explain more. Alternatively, anyone can email [info@ashburtonfutures.org.uk](mailto:info@ashburtonfutures.org.uk) or call Martin Parkes on 07886 118528.

**Launch Photocall:** Ashburton Town Hall, Saturday 18 February at 11.00am.

### **Show us your hotspots!**

MASHFFF will enable 12 free home-energy audits to be carried on out a cross-section of properties within Ashburton, using state-of-the art thermal imaging techniques to reveal where homes are leaking heat.

The audits, worth over £600 each, to be carried out by local energy efficiency and renewable energy advisors Anahat Energy, will discover:

- suitable energy-saving measures for each property – including listed buildings and those within the Conservation Area.
- the cost of those measures and how long they’ll take to pay for themselves
- the amount of potential fuel-bill savings
- what can be done for free or little money
- the availability of grant assistance



They'll help to demystify green home improvement jargon, whilst advising residents on contractors who can carry out this work. They'll also explain more about the Green Deal – the Government's new system of low-cost loans for home eco-improvements, due to be unveiled later this year.

As the average household fuel bill is around £1200 a year and rising – the timing of this initiative is ideal.

### **Who will be audited?**

MASHFFF needs to audit a cross-section of Ashburton properties to ensure that the data that's gathered can be shared with the widest number of residents.

Those participating must agree to being interviewed on camera during the audit and to be visited by children from Ashburton Primary School's Eco-Energisers team (who are working on their school's own energy improvements).

Participants must also be willing to take part in the sharing of the audits' information at a Results Reception planned for March 30 in Ashburton Town Hall.

Ashburton Futures is looking for houses in estates or streets where there are identical or very similar property types (including Westabrook, Home Park, Emmetts Park, Beverley Gardens, Higher Roborough and Long Park/Balland Lane) and older-style properties in the Conservation Area and town centre.

Anahat Energy's Ruth Leonard-Williams said: "We are particularly keen to have householders who are currently doing little to save energy – who do not have the time or inclination or who have not really thought about it.

"We are looking for a mixture of ages and occupier types and house sizes and also people who rent their properties as well as owners."

### **When will the audits take place?**

The audits will take place from Monday February 20th until Wednesday March 14th (preferably on Mondays and Wednesdays during the daytime).

### **What happens during the audit?**

The audits will be undertaken by local energy consultancy Anahat Energy and will take approximately 3-4 hours.

Participants will be asked about their home's heating, hot water and electrical equipment and bills over the last year or two will be analysed to gauge how much energy is currently being used.



The consultants will take measurements of walls, roof, doors, floor and windows and investigate what materials they are made from. They will look at levels of insulation and also sources of draughts.

They will also conduct an air-tightness test where a large fan sucks air out of the house to a certain pressure and then slowly re-pressurises, to measure how “leaky” the house is.

A thermal imaging camera will assess where heat is being lost from the building and to help the householders visualise where the draughts are coming from.

The consultants will assess the potential for all possible renewable energy technologies and compile a report of their findings.

### **Sharing the findings**

Once the 12 audits have been completed, the information will be shared widely to ensure that Ashburton residents easily understand how to make the right eco-improvements that reduce energy use and save money on heating bills.

**The findings will be shared at a Results Reception planned for Friday 30 March 2012, in Ashburton Town Hall, taking place from 6.30pm-9.30pm.**

Andy Williamson, of Ashburton Futures, said: “We’re delighted to have been given this money for the audits, which will help homeowners in Ashburton make the right choices on green home improvements.

“By seeing how a house like yours can best be improved to reduce its energy consumption, we all learn what to do to cut our household energy budget, whilst helping to reduce Ashburton’s carbon footprint at the same time.”

### **Building up green best-practice for local contractors**

If you’re a builder, contractor or do work installing insulation on other people’s houses, then MASHFFF wants to talk to you too.

The information from the audits will be shared amongst builders and contractors, to stimulate green best-practice amongst local professionals. Builders and contractors can contact MASHFFF to find out more about the fitting the best green home improvements.

Said Andy: “We’ll enthuse, educate and inspire local householders, plus builders and tradespeople so that they’re proud to work in the best possible way to really make homes that keep people warm and dry, using as little energy as possible.”



## Coach trip and workshops planned

The grant funding is enabling 100 Ashburton residents from the communities targeted in the audits to take a trip to the National Self Build and Renovation Centre in Wiltshire to see exactly what can be done and to speak directly to eco home-improvement experts. See [www.mykindofhome.co.uk](http://www.mykindofhome.co.uk).

The trip takes place on March 17 and anyone who'd like to come should email [info@ashburtonfutures.org.uk](mailto:info@ashburtonfutures.org.uk) or call Martin Parkes on 07886 118528.

Furthermore, the successful DECC bid has unlocked £2000 match funding from local planning authority Dartmoor National Park, to deliver neighbourhood workshops from April onwards that will bring residents together at the audited homes to discuss energy efficiency advice that's directly relevant to all their houses.

### Editor's notes:

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- Visit the National Self Build and Renovation Centre online at [www.mykindofhome.co.uk](http://www.mykindofhome.co.uk)
- Further information on Community Energy can be found at the Department of Energy and Climate Change's Community Energy Online portal <http://ceo.decc.gov.uk/>
- The [Local Energy Assessment Fund](#) is managed by a consortium of community networks administered by the Energy Saving Trust.