



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

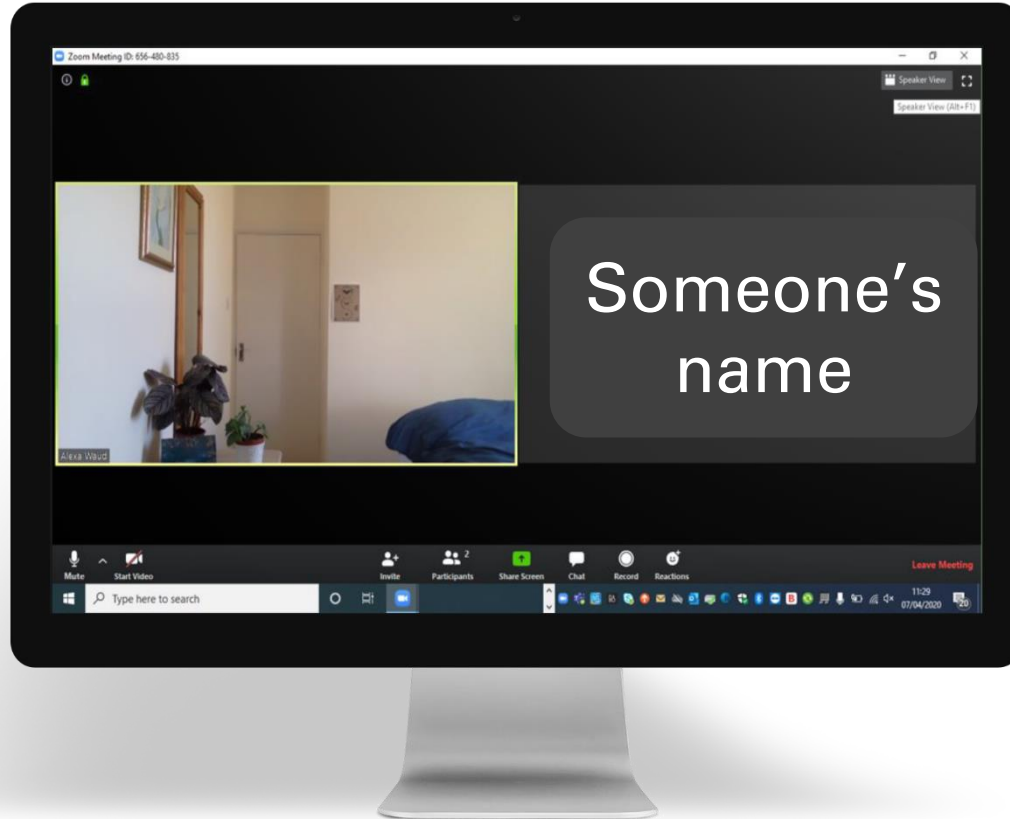
# WEST MIDLANDS GREENER TOGETHER PANEL

West Midlands Combined Authority

# Welcome back!

- **Involve:** the UK's public participation charity, on a mission to put people at the heart of decision-making
- **West Midlands Combined Authority:** led by the directly-elected Mayor of the West Midlands. Combined Authorities are set up to invest in their regions through collaboration with partners, including local councils.
- **Facilitators: Rob, La Toyah, Paul, Shanaka and Amanda**
- **Subject matter experts: George and Alex from WMCA**

# Using Zoom



- Don't worry about children, pets, or backgrounds!
- Tell us if there's a problem
- Use the chat function for comments and questions
- Raise hands
- Allow everyone time to speak
- Re-name yourself

# Recap: ground rules

- There are no right or wrong answers
- If you don't understand something, just ask
- Respect each other and our different views and experiences
- Be mindful how you phrase things to avoid others taking offence or feeling singled out
- Give each other time to speak – the facilitator will help with this
- Give each other your full attention – stay engaged
- Stick to one conversation at a time
- Respect confidentiality
- Try to stay on topic

# Today's programme

TIME	ACTIVITY	PURPOSE
09.30	Welcome and recap from last time	Get warmed-up, remind panel of main points from first retrofit session
09.45	Presentation(s) on what devolution could mean	Help panel members to be as clear as possible about the sorts of schemes devolution could enable and the relative costs and impacts associated with these
10.15	Deliberations in groups	Small group discussions: where do you think the WMCA should focus its energy and resources. Individuals invited to apportion a budget across the options then discuss why.
11.30	BREAK	Extended break to allow time for facilitators to feed in their final budget positions to lead facilitator.
11.55	Whole group comes back together	We share each group's position and look at the overall picture. Opportunity to ask questions of experts.
12.30	Looking back and looking forward	Rounding off the first year of the panel – reflections – and communicating plan for year 2, inviting topics to consider?
13.00	Close	

# Today's big question

The Trailblazer Devolution Deal for the West Midlands will create an opportunity for us to invest in our retrofit ambitions in the years ahead – but there are different ways we can do this.

**How do you think can we most effectively deliver retrofit schemes across the region?**

# Devolution - Recap

## March 2023 - Trailblazer Devolution Deal:

- Government commits to piloting a single, multi-year funding settlement for the West Midlands region
- Commitment to explore innovative funding models

## Why ask for devolved funding for retrofit?

- Not progressing fast enough to meet net zero targets (1 home every 2 minutes)
- Regional LA's bid against each other for grant funding – taking up a lot of resource
- Greater flexibility of funding required to meet needs of local areas
- Difficult to mix funding from multiple streams
- Many barriers that can't be overcome by grant funding installation of improvements alone
- Need to focus on wider outcomes and benefits from retrofit – for example improved health, opportunities for local companies
- Local authorities need more capacity to deliver projects
- Better coordination with skills and training initiatives

# What happens if we're successful?

## Funding

- Single sum of funding made available to be spent within a fixed period (2-5 years)

## What will government want us to achieve?

- Government targets:
  - Reduced fuel poverty
  - Reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
- Certainty that money will be spent - likely to be negative reaction to not spending all of the money
- High quality of work



# Broad structure of funding pot

Full funding  
pot from  
Government

Majority of funds spent on **installing measures** for **low-income households**. For households that are not fuel poor, it is expected that private funding (finance or savings) will need to cover most of the cost of work

Smaller pot for **innovation** – making it more appealing for people to retrofit their homes (improving services, financial offers, etc.)

Smaller pot for **Local Authority Capacity** to help design and deliver retrofit projects

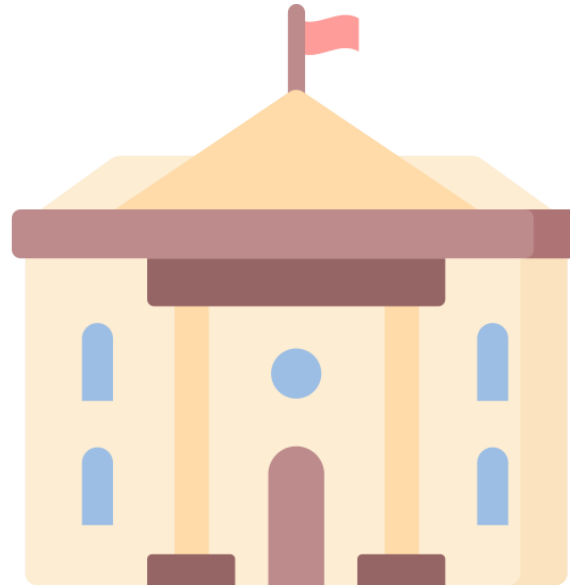


**How do you think can we most effectively deliver retrofit schemes across the region?**

# Three types of approach



**Individual household-led**



**Local authority-led**



**Community-led**

# Individual household-led



## Description

Individual households across the region undertake their own retrofits, supported by advice services, trusted supplier schemes, and means-tested grant funding. For households exceeding the funding limit, works will be paid for upfront, or through vetted financial packages.

- **Who Pays:** Grant funded or privately funded, depending on household income
- **Wider benefits:** Empowers homeowners to make their own decisions. Trusted supplier schemes encourage market growth and higher standards.
- **Drawbacks:** No action takes place beyond the household level. Difficult to integrate retrofit with wider green space or travel improvements. No economies of scale.

## What's needed to make this work?

- A resident advice service would need to be developed, paid for and rolled out.
- A strong local supply chain with people able to deliver high quality work - performance guarantees could be put in place to ensure this happens
- A good range of financial packages to pay for measures would need to be developed and vetted
- All of the above need to be joined together in a way that makes it easier for individuals to take action – e.g. a “one stop shop” service

# Individual household-led



## What could 'financial packages' mean?

**Pay as you save** where utility companies invest in the bill-payers home and recoup the funds through an increase to the regular billing

**Property linked finance:** PLF is a loan that is linked to the property, rather than the property owner, which results in repayment obligations transferring to the new owner when a property is sold.

**Green Equity release:** allows homeowners over the age of 55 to unlock the equity in their property without the requirement to move home. A Green Equity Release product would unlock cash for investment into energy efficient improvements, with favourable terms to incentivise retrofit and the ability to protect the property's value for posterity.



West Midlands  
Combined Authority

# Local authority-led

## Description

Local authorities use data and knowledge of area to identify priority projects, which could be area-based, or focused on particular groups of people or homes. Some projects might focus on social housing estates and wider regeneration, but also include private homes in an area. Area-based projects could cover improvements to other local amenities, regeneration and improvements to transport, subject to funding

**Who Pays:** Grant funded or self-funded, dependant on household income

**Wider benefits:** Support is easier to target. Local authorities have greater capability to co-ordinate and undertake work. Area-based approaches benefit from economies of scale. Local authorities are well trusted.

**Drawbacks:** Limited amount of funding means that local authorities will always have to make decisions to prioritise one group/area over another



## What's needed to make this work?

- Local authorities would need resources to develop, deliver and monitor project process – probably paid for through our devolved funding pot
- A fair system for allocating funding between councils would be needed e.g. so that smaller authorities with less resource aren't disadvantaged
- A strong local supply chain with people able to deliver high quality work - performance guarantees could be put in place to ensure this happens
- Private finance offers, and the ability to combine multiple funding sources on a single projects

# Community-led

## Description

Community groups identify groups of households that would be interested in retrofitting their homes, and are supported to develop projects in a local area. This could be at the level of a street, or a bigger neighbourhood, and include wider neighbourhood improvements, subject to funding, such as local amenities, green spaces and transport.

**Who Pays:** Grant funded or privately funded, dependant on household income

**Wider benefits:** empowers communities to collectively improve their homes and their area through independent action. Communities likely to have a greater understanding of their needs and develop projects specifically to address these.

**Drawbacks:** Requires strong local leadership and engaged communities to drive forwards. Complex projects will need lots of external support.




**WEST MIDLANDS**  
Greener Together


## What's needed to make this work?

- Leadership within the community to engage and organise people – and time to develop proposals and get agreement
- Trusted advice to help people make decisions
- Support and training for community organisations to develop projects
- A strong local supply chain with people able to deliver high quality work - performance guarantees could be put in place to ensure this happens
- Access to wider funding or finance to fund retrofit and wider improvements and an appropriate governance arrangement to access both public and private funds

# Some things to think about...



**Individual household-led** could be more effective at reducing the region's carbon emissions as more affluent households are the biggest emitters and this approach offers most to them

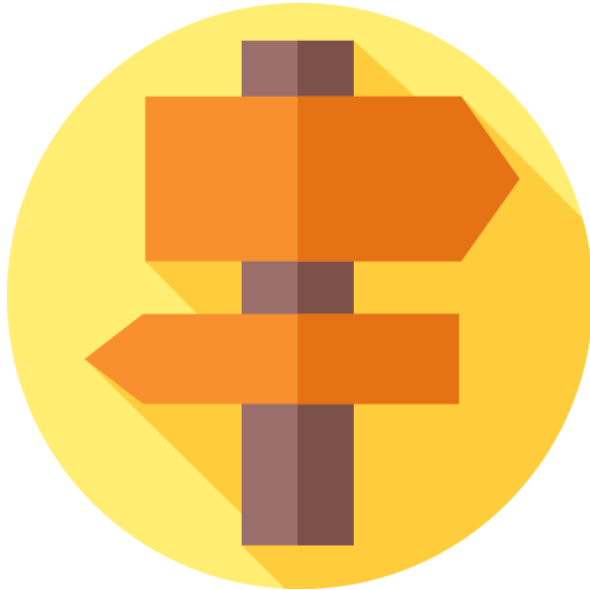


**Local authority-led** could be more effective at tackling fuel poverty as councils would be best able to target their retrofit activity – and could choose to focus on places and schemes with this priority in mind



# **BREAK-OUT GROUPS**

# WHAT CAME OUT OF YOUR DISCUSSIONS?



# Looking back and looking forward

# What's the plan?

- The panel will reconvene in 2024
- We will set workshop dates well in advance and share these with you in the next month or so
- At that point we will invite you to decide whether or not you would like to remain part of the panel – it'll be important that you can make the dates!

# What's the plan?

- In the meantime, the WMCA will keep in touch – for instance, about the Air Quality Framework you contributed to, or letting you know about any non-panel events you might want to attend.

# To finish off today...

- We're going to go into our break-out groups one more time for a last conversation looking back on the work so far and looking forward to topics you would like to explore next year
- Then we'll come back together just before 1pm to say goodbye



+

**See you next  
year!**

○