



HOW TO MAKE YOUR HERITAGE HOME
GREENER, **A GUIDE.**

Lycetts

Insurance Brokers
and Financial Services

**“THE GREENEST
BUILDING
IS THE ONE THAT’S
ALREADY BUILT.”**

Carl Elefante. Architect

We couldn't agree more. That's why historic homeowners need to embrace green initiatives which will preserve their heritage properties and the environment for generations to come.

As we have all become more concerned about climate change, it's important to understand the impact our household energy consumption has on the environment. Buildings are the third largest emissions producers in the country, with homes contributing 13% of all the UK's greenhouse gas output.





**Retrofitting with
energy - saving
interventions could
reduce carbon
emissions by up to**



Historic England's Heritage Counts 2021 report estimates that 'greening' our homes through retrofitting them with energy-saving interventions could reduce carbon emissions by up to 84% (based on a detached victorian home).

There is a widespread misconception that sustainable homes can only be achieved through new eco-builds with modern technology and alternative heating solutions, but that is not the case. New buildings need new materials - and new materials need a lot of resources, money and energy to produce. Plus, they often have a shorter lifespan than older materials.

There are many ways to 'green' your historic home whilst preserving its historic integrity and beauty and at the same time reducing environmental impact, energy consumption and costly bills.

GREEN IS THE FUTURE FOR HISTORIC HOMES

Here are **7 STEPS** to ensuring that sustainable living and historic preservation can live harmoniously in the same world.



1 CONDUCT AN ENERGY AUDIT

To make your historic house more energy and eco-friendly, first, you need to establish where and what needs attention. The best way to do this is to conduct an energy audit (a blower door test can be commissioned) to detect cracks, drafts, damaged masonry and woodwork or unsealed openings.

2 SPECIALIST HOMES NEED SPECIALISTS

It's essential to make sure that any work you commission is carried out by reputable experts who specialise in heritage homes and listed buildings so that repairs, renovations and retrofits respect the celebrated craftsmanship and will last for decades.



3 NEW WINDOWS NOT ALWAYS NEEDED

People often assume that old houses are cold and drafty because of their old, outdated windows and that the only solution is to replace them. According to the National Trust's Saving Windows, Saving Money report, historic windows rarely need to be completely replaced. A more cost and eco-effective solution is to weatherstrip them or install minimally invasive storm windows. Old growth wood found in historic windows lasts longer than modern day wood, so by preserving rather than replacing your historic windows means they will last much longer – and preserve the nostalgia and traditional aesthetics.

4 INSULATION IS INVALUABLE

Heating makes up for 65% of carbon emissions from our homes, so making sure they are well-insulated and draught-proof is crucial. Basements and attics should be insulated but refrain from insulating walls which need to breathe in historic homes to avoid issues resulting from trapped moisture. You should also draught proof chimneys in each room whether functional or decorative. Every historic home is unique, and they may demand different or even bespoke types of insulation for different spaces, so it pays to consult an expert.

In addition, even simple lifestyle changes can help. Try closing shutters to keep your home cool in summer or turn down your thermostat in winter - even one degree can save up to 6.5% of your home's annual carbon emissions.



5 RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS

Consider installing solar, wind, or geothermal renewable energy sources on your historic property which are more cost-efficient than environmentally damaging fossil fuels.

6 IN WITH THE OLD, OUT WITH THE NEW

Today's society has a tendency towards 'if it's broken, buy a new one'. We need to change this mindset and appreciate that many things can be fixed using recycled or upcycled and reclaimed, low carbon materials.

If you're renovating or restoring a historic house and are looking to replace doors, radiators, crown mouldings, flooring or panelling, check out salvage companies before you buy new.



7 LET NATURE PLAY ITS PART

Trees are an excellent way to conserve energy in your house providing natural shade in the summer and warmth from sunlight as the leaves fall.

Although renovating and restoring a historic home can be costly and time-consuming, prioritising and phasing the works to spread the costs and minimise the upheaval could greatly help the greening process.

Following these simple steps will help make your home more eco-efficient while maintaining the beauty, integrity and comfort of your heritage home for years to come.

Lycetts has a wealth of experience and a deep understanding of the responsibilities that owning a historic building entail.

Our experts can provide specialist insurance and invaluable advice on mitigating the risks associated with owning or renovating such unique buildings.



For a complimentary review of your insurance needs, highlighting any gaps or unnecessary cover, please contact us.

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