Cork City Council and Retrokit Tackle Energy Efficiency in the Social Housing Stock

Challenge

Cork City Council seeks to improve the energy efficiency of their social housing stock in line with national and local authority retrofit targets.

Solution

RetroKit was engaged by Cork City Council to support the identification of priority dwellings and the most effective retrofit measures.

Result

Through applying RetroKit's advanced analytics software, 123 properties have now been selected to progress in this project phase.

Cork City Council is the authority responsible for local government in the City of Cork and provides a range of services including housing, planning, economic development, placemaking, environment, transport, and culture.

> "We were able to examine the social housing stock and from there to prioritise. RetroKit enabled us to complete this as a desktop study. Where once this would have been a resource-heavy undertaking, we are now able to complete a detailed analysis of our housing stock at the tap of a button that gives us highly detailed information".
>
> Brian Cassidy, Senior Executive Engineer, Cork City Council

Gaining momentum

With a retrofit target of 2,700 social houses by 2030, Cork City Council is working to assess and undertake the improvements needed to enhance the energy efficiency of its social housing stock while improving the health and wellbeing outcomes for social housing tenants.

The 2021 Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme for Social Housing issued through the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) is the key funding mechanism supporting the retrofit of Ireland's social housing stock.

Scaling the solution

The energy efficiency measures explored in the Government programme cover three main areas including insulation whether attic, cavity wall, internal dry lining or external wall.; window and door upgrades, and heat pump installation.

Discussing Cork City Council's progress in meeting its targets, Brian Cassidy, Senior Executive Engineer, Cork City Council confirms that "123 properties were selected for retrofit under the 2021 Energy Efficiency Retrofit Programme to be funded by DHLGH and Cork City Council. These properties include a broad selection of housing archetypes, and are located throughout the City".

Elaborating on how this was achieved, Brian highlights the support from RetroKit in assisting Cork City Council with the property selection, "through using RetroKit's software we've been able to undertake a detailed assessment of our social housing stock, developing our baseline starting point, and allowing us to identify the houses that will benefit the most".

RetroKit software supports teams to move from planning to action in much shorter time frames. Xavier Dubuisson, CEO of RetroKit points out "that RetroKit can reduce the cost of planning a large-scale energy

> *"The software can work alongside other systems too. For example, RetroKit can talk to the asset management system,or surveying software supporting budgeting, the bill of quantities assessment, and the tendering process."* Xavier adds.

retrofit project significantly in terms of staff time resulting in better and more efficient investment decisions".

Managing the diversity of social housing stock

RetroKit's groundbreaking software uses BER energy datasets, integrates these onto the one data management system, and applies advanced analytics to develop a highly detailed analysis of retrofitting measures with the highest potential, which are evidence-based and can underpin the development of a retrofitting strategy at scale while taking account of project-specific considerations.

In Cork City alone, 50% of the social housing stock was constructed pre-1970 with a percentage dating as far back as the 1800s. Homes vary between apartments, semi-detached homes, and terraced houses to support a range of tenant occupancy requirements.

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Through the use of RetroKit, *"Cork City Council is now able to see what further improvements can be made to achieve the energy efficiency necessary to support Ireland in reaching its climate action targets",* Brian adds.

Agile and dynamic

The RetroKit software can prioritise based on the specific project parameters such as - BER rating, Heat Loss Indicators, CO_2 emissions, energy costs; and dwelling archetype. It supports location-based analysis, for example assessing options for particular communities, or electoral divisions, giving the user a very targeted analysis as required.

Commenting on the functionality of the software, Brian emphasises how *"the software has enabled a community effort, by allowing us to review the possibilities of what can be achieved in a specific location. It can also support funding applications where you might need to supply specific types of information, for example, where you might be targeting fuel poverty. This is very useful."*

"The software can work alongside other systems too. For example, RetroKit can talk to the asset management system or surveying software supporting budgeting, the bill of quantities assessment, and the tendering process," Xavier adds.

As Senior Executive Engineer with Cork City Council, Brian *"highly recommends the Retrokit software platform for any large landlord, or community association,"* adding *"that it will be very useful for One Stop Shops."*

Supporting teams to move from planning to action

Xavier adds that the goal is to "support our clients to upskill and use the RetroKit software themselves. The software interface has been designed to be an intuitive, easy-to-use interface, supporting and empowering multi-disciplinary teams."
As Senior Executive Engineer with Cork City Council, Brian "highly recommends the RetroKit software platform for any large landlord, or community association," adding "that it will be very useful for One Stop Shops."

RetroKit supports local authorities, building contractors, engineers, and One Stop Shops with integrated planning, decision-making, and project prioritisation. Please get in touch for more information.