

RISE

Retrofit information,
support & expertise

Transition from ECO and GBIS to the Warm Homes Plan

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Introduction

This article explores the evolving role within the UK's retrofit and Warm Homes landscape. Using a case study from [InstaGroup](#), the article outlines how the organisation's long-established expertise, accredited installer network, and extensive service offering, position it as a stabilising force during a period of significant policy and funding uncertainty.

As the ECO schemes wind down and new funding programmes, such as the Warm Homes Plan, emerge, installers are facing challenging stresses in decarbonising the UK's housing stock.

Through an integrated model, technical oversight, and collaborative approach with government, local authorities and RISE, InstaGroup highlights both the challenges and the opportunities ahead. With an emphasis on the need for clearer policy direction, stronger supply-chain coordination, and a renewed commitment to high-quality, resident-focused retrofit delivery.

Readers that would like this document in a more accessible format should contact rise@turntown.co.uk.

Transition from ECO and GBIS to the Warm Homes Plan


Disclaimer: This publication aims to share insights, good practices, and lessons learned from relevant retrofit, sustainability and warm homes projects. It is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute recommendations or endorsements of specific suppliers, products, or services within the sector.

Transitioning with confidence – How Installers can thrive under the Warm Homes Plan

A new chapter for the UK's retrofit supply chain

Accredited contractors delivering energy-efficiency measures under the **Energy Company Obligation (ECO)**, known as '**ECO installers**', have long been an important key stakeholder within the Warm Homes Supply Chain.

The UK's retrofit landscape is now entering a transformative phase. As the established ECO schemes wind down and the government's new Warm Homes Plan takes centre stage, installers across the country are preparing for a more



structured, locally driven and quality focused way of working. Business models that were optimised for supplier-led delivery are being replaced by locally commissioned, procurement-led programmes. This shift requires installers to pivot quickly, often at pace and at scale, while continuing to operate in an already pressured market. The Warm Homes Plan will provide direction, greater long-term stability, and a stronger foundation for high-quality retrofit delivery.

Organisations such as InstaGroup, with decades of technical and operational experience, are playing an important role in supporting this transition. Their accredited network, in-house expertise, and commitment to collaborative working are helping to ensure that installers can adapt smoothly and continue to deliver for households, local authorities and the wider sector. **Alongside RISE, InstaGroup are supporting businesses to adapt to new procurement routes, governance expectations and delivery models, ensuring that valuable skills and capacity are retained within the sector.**

Local delivery at the heart of Warm Homes

The Warm Homes Plan, delivered nationally by DESNZ and rolled out locally by councils and housing associations, is designed to place decision making closer to communities. This approach ensures that investment reaches the areas that need it most and that residents receive high-quality, well-coordinated, place-based support.

Local authorities and housing providers oversee the procurement of their delivery partners. This is typically achieved through structured tendering processes, regional frameworks, and approved supplier lists. For installers, this represents a significant change from previous ECO-style delivery. Because procurement is handled locally, installers are encouraged to engage directly with councils and housing associations in the areas where they wish to work, opening up new partnership opportunities and helping to build long-term pipelines of activity.

Under ECO, installers were largely insulated from public-sector procurement rules. Under Warm Homes, compliance with the Procurement Act, framework onboarding, bidding cycles and governance processes is now a prerequisite, a landscape which many ECO installers may not have experience in navigating. The Local Grant model is well aligned to the skills of many ECO installers, but its success relies on ensuring local contractors are supported to develop the procurement, knowledge and framework access required for council-led delivery.

Many authorities are already using established frameworks, which provide installers with transparent routes to apply, participate in mini competitions, and access upcoming retrofit programmes. For smaller and medium sized companies, this creates accessible entry points into a previously supplier dominated market.

Strengthening quality, skills and oversight

With an emphasis on quality and resident experience, all Warm Homes funded work must be lodged through TrustMark, ensuring strong oversight from the outset.

Installers who are TrustMark accredited are able to take full advantage of the opportunities within the programme.

As well as quality installation, council-led delivery introduces enhanced expectations around CDM regulations, health and safety management, site supervision, programme assurance, social value commitments and resident engagement. These requirements reflect the reality of delivering retrofit as a large-scale public infrastructure programme rather than a supplier-led obligation. For many installers, this represents a step-change in the operating model. Delivering under Warm Homes often requires new management structures, strengthened health and safety systems, enhanced reporting, and the ability to operate within multi-contractor, multi-site environments.

Surrey County Council – Case study

Surrey County Council received end-to-end support for renewable and insulation installations including 186 Solar PV and over 300 variations of insulation upgrades. InstaGroup's case study of their project in Surrey highlights the relationship that has been built with councils:

“Action Surrey has partnered with InstaGroup for several years and the longevity of the partnership demonstrates the value of the working relationship that has been developed.” Action Surrey – Partner of Surrey County Council

InstaGroup has a model which allows them to build trust into their partnerships whilst allowing local, smaller installers to gain valuable experience. Their appointment from their approved network of installers makes InstaGroup liable to workmanship that does not meet the standards. Surrey specifically were impressed with their clear communication around government grant funding, project timelines and deliverables through their PAS standard hub, uniquely developed for InstaGroup's clients.

The move to a council led model also brings consistency in standards and new accountability mechanisms. Enhanced inspection regimes, clearer documentation requirements, and strengthened technical expectations ensure that work is completed to a high standard the first time. This renewed focus on quality reflects the government's commitment to delivering warmer, healthier homes while supporting a more professional and confident supply chain.

A positive shift from ECO to Warm Homes

The transition from ECO to Warm Homes marks a shift from supplier funding to a centrally funded, locally delivered model. For installers, this shift brings significant benefits. The Warm Homes Plan provides a stable, long-term national pathway and removes the uncertainty associated with short funding cycles. This clarity helps businesses plan investment, train staff and maintain workforce continuity with confidence.

Warm Homes also supports deeper and more ambitious retrofit work. With grant values typically ranging from £15,000 to £20,000 per home, installers can undertake

whole house retrofits and deliver measures that were rarely funded under earlier schemes. The introduction of updated EPC rules, new RdSAP10 methodologies and revised measure categories ensures that the scheme remains modern, robust and aligned with the UK's net zero ambition.

Navigating eligibility and engaging with councils

Under Warm Homes, local authorities lead on household eligibility checks. This ensures that support is targeted effectively using EPC criteria and income thresholds, offering a transparent process that prioritises fairness. Installers will need to familiarise themselves with each council's verification systems and referral pathways, as these may differ from region to region.

Early engagement with local authority retrofit teams will be key to securing a place in procurement rounds and establishing future workstreams. Building relationships, understanding local priorities early will be critical for installers seeking to secure a sustainable pipeline of work under Warm Homes.

Opportunities for growth and collaboration

As ECO4 continues to operate until December 2026, installers can maintain existing pipelines while preparing for Warm Homes to expand. This helps smooth the transition period, allowing businesses to grow capacity gradually while adapting to the expectations of council led delivery.

RISE is working to support installers through this period by offering technical guidance, masterclasses, training and best practice resources. This collective effort is already helping to strengthen the supply chain and ensure a confident, capable workforce is ready to meet the needs of Warm Homes in the years ahead.

A confident future for UK retrofit

The Warm Homes Plan provides an optimistic and forward-looking foundation for the sector. With clearer market signals, stronger oversight, higher-quality standards and a more stable funding model, it will create an environment where installers can grow, innovate, and build long-term partnerships with local authorities.

InstaGroup remains committed to working collaboratively with government, grant recipients and the wider sector to help deliver a fair, scalable and high-quality retrofit programme that benefits residents and supports the UK's decarbonisation goals.

Next steps and further support

RISE are focusing efforts on upskilling the supply chain to meet the required standards and improve retrofit delivery-quality across the sector.

Installers wishing to learn more about Warm Homes, upcoming opportunities or training programmes can access a range of free resources, including technical masterclasses, procurement guidance and supply chain development sessions.

The RISE Knowledge Hub and Website shares up to date information on the programme, see link below.

InstaGroup is committed to working collaboratively with government, grant recipients, and RISE to ensure the UK maintains momentum toward a fair, scalable and high-quality decarbonisation pathway.

Links to resources referenced:

[InstaGroup](#)

[InstaGroup – Surrey Case Study](#)

[RISE Knowledge Hub](#)



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