

CASE STUDY

Mrs B Case study



GREEN
DOCTOR



NOVEMBER 2024

Imagine living in a home where the chill indoors was colder than the autumn air outside, a home without hot water, and no means to change it. This was Mrs. B's challenging reality in Hull, a vivid example of the debilitating human cost of fuel poverty. Facing a broken immersion heater, damp, mould, and living with long-term health conditions, Mrs. B, like many vulnerable people, felt trapped by her circumstances. She had initially sought help from Citizens Advice, who then connected her with Groundwork Yorkshire's Green Doctor Programme.



***Incredibly this
process took just
three months***

On October 16, 2024, our experienced Green Doctor, Chris, visited Mrs. B. What he found painted a stark picture of a home struggling to provide basic comfort. Mrs. B had bought her house in the 1970s, and it was still single-glazed, lacked cavity wall insulation, and had only a thin layer of loft insulation. Critically, she didn't even have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) for her property, a common barrier that prevents many from accessing vital funding.

Beyond the immediate crisis of no hot water, Chris observed the profound impact of the cold on Mrs. B's living conditions. He also proactively checked her energy supplier tariff, meter type, eligibility for Warm Homes Discount, and the Priority Services Register. He discussed water meters versus rateable value, identified pervasive damp and mould, and noted the absence of working smoke alarms. This thorough, 'Making Every Contact Count' approach meant Chris was able to identify numerous ways Groundwork's Green Doctor service could offer holistic support.

A Swift Path to Transformation

Understanding the urgency, Chris immediately referred Mrs. B to Groundwork's Green Doctor retrofit team for an EPC assessment and to the fire service for smoke alarm installation. He also reached out to Age Concern to explore options for repairing the broken immersion heater and assured Mrs. B he would follow up in a few weeks to monitor progress.

A critical step was completing a fully funded EPC via Northern Powergrid's Low Carbon Technologies funding. As Mrs. B's property had never had an EPC before, this assessment was the quickest way to unlock significant funding streams that had previously been inaccessible to her. Fiona, our domestic energy assessor, swiftly completed and lodged the EPC, revealing the property's very low G-1 rating.

With the EPC in hand, Groundwork Yorkshire partnered with PUREATOM Energy, a trusted installer for funded measures. Their data match confirmed Mrs. B's eligibility for a comprehensive package of improvements through ECO4 funding, all completed to government standards (PAS2035 & PAS2030) ensuring a compliant installation:

- A new heating system (Air Source Heat Pump)
- Loft insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- New hot water cylinder
- Ventilation upgrades (in line with Part F of building regulations)
- Solar panels

The transformation was astonishingly rapid. Incredibly, this entire process, from Chris's initial visit to the completion of all installations, took just over a month. The contractor and Groundwork Retrofit team worked closely with Mrs. B to ensure the installation was seamless, especially important as she was undergoing chemotherapy appointments.

A Warmer Home, A Brighter Future

On November 26, 2024, when Chris returned for his follow-up visit, Mrs. B greeted him at the door with a radiant smile. "She greeted me at the door smiling and was happy to show me what had been done in such a short space of time." Her home, once colder inside than out, was now a haven of warmth and comfort. She had reliable heating and hot water, improved indoor air quality, reduced condensation risk, and a future-proofed home thanks to the solar panels. The fire service had also completed their visit, installing a smoke alarm and ensuring her safety.

Mrs. B's story is a powerful testament to the Green Doctor programme's holistic impact and Groundwork Yorkshire's unwavering commitment to empowering individuals and creating better, more sustainable communities. We believe no one should suffer the debilitating effects of fuel poverty.

Do you know someone in need?

Mrs. B's journey from despair to a warm, healthy home is a powerful example of how the Green Doctor service transforms lives. If you know someone struggling with fuel poverty, facing similar challenges, or simply needing support to make their home warmer and more affordable, please encourage them to contact Groundwork's Green Doctor service today. Together, we can help more vulnerable people access the support they deserve and build stronger, healthier communities.