

€500,000 for energy refurbishment of 100 Dublin city centre flats

Funding part of €21.1 million House of Tomorrow Programme

Funding of €500,000 has been granted to Dublin City Council towards the energy efficiency refurbishment of 100 Dublin city centre flats, in order to make them more energy efficient. That is according to Tom Halpin of Sustainable Energy Ireland who was announcing details of the funding today in Dublin during Energy Awareness Week.

The funding is part of the House of Tomorrow Programme, under which €21.1 million is being made available to the Irish construction sector to encourage the widespread uptake of sustainable energy planning, design and construction practices in the built environment. The House of Tomorrow Programme is by Sustainable Energy Ireland.

As part of the Dublin City Council refurbishment project, 100 flats in Bridgefoot Street, Queens Street and Ballybough, will be upgraded to include high performance wall insulation, controlled ventilation and high efficiency natural gas condensing. The project aims to achieve more than a 50% reduction in energy use and Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions, above the current building regulations.

Funding of €45,000 has also been granted to Camphill Communities of Ireland for the construction of a 12-bed home in Ballybay, Co. Monaghan for people special needs. This project aims to achieve a 60% reduction in energy use and CO₂ emissions, over the current building regulations.

Commenting on the funding, Tom Halpin of SEI said, "The housing sector has been identified as a key area requiring major innovations to improve its energy performance and to help reduce Ireland's levels of harmful greenhouse gas emissions. One of the main objectives of the House of Tomorrow Programme is to encourage and develop sustainable energy practices in Irish homebuilding. The Programme will contribute to workable least-cost solutions which can improve energy performance and reduce environmental emissions from Irish housing and help to meet our national commitments arising from the Kyoto Protocol".

Under the UN Kyoto Protocol, Ireland must limit the amount of greenhouse gases, of which CO₂ is a significant contributor, to 13% above its 1990 level by the period 2008 to 2012.

The House of Tomorrow Programme is one of a number of programmes operated by Sustainable Energy Ireland which, over time, should help householders potentially reduce their exposure to the proposed carbon / energy tax in 2004 by increasing the energy efficiency of Irish housing stock and by improving the standards that builders use. Given the many systems and services that go into a new

house or the refurbishment of an old house, SEI is also actively pursuing the development of standards and certification schemes for heating systems, fabric insulation, and other technologies impacting on energy performance.

Another important SEI initiative is the development of a Home Energy Rating scheme that would give occupants at the point of sale or rental, clear information about the potential running costs and energy performance. This scheme is backed by EU legislation due to come into effect January 2006.

Energy Awareness Week, which is organised by Sustainable Energy Ireland, is the single most important platform for promoting energy efficiency in Ireland. The week aims to raise awareness of how important it will be for individuals to change their purchase and usage patterns in relation to energy in order to benefit the global environment.

Sustainable Energy Ireland is a statutory authority charged with promoting and assisting the development of sustainable energy. Sustainable Energy Ireland is funded by the Irish Government under the National Development Plan 2000-2006 with programmes part financed by the European Union.

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For further information please contact:

Diarmuid O'Neill
Edelman
01-6789333 / 087-6699933

Editors Notes:

The House of Tomorrow funding programme will offer support for research, development and demonstration projects aimed at generating and applying technologies, products, systems, practices and information for greater sustainable energy performance in Irish housing. Projects from the social and private housing sectors throughout Ireland will be eligible under the new programme. The geographical groupings for the purposes of the programme will be: Dublin region; Rest of Leinster (excluding BMW countries); Cork catchment; Rest of Munster; and BMW counties.