

NORWICH CASTLE

ESCAPING THE CASTLE DUNGEON

Britain's electricity system currently favours the 'Big 6' generators. This means Norwich's families and communities are missing out on the energy revolution that is taking place elsewhere in the world.

A key message underpinning the imagery created here, is that Norwich's heritage buildings invariably have poor energy efficiency ratings. Sadly the UK is rated as having many of the worst insulated homes and buildings in western Europe.

A warm and comfortable home is the most important environment for everyone. Changing demographics mean that 200,000 homes a year are projected to be built over the course of the next Parliament. In reality this is very likely to occur, but all these homes should be zero-carbon, affordable (social housing) and located close to the places where people work. Expanding our cities outwards moves lower income people further away from where they work. This stresses incomes, health and family life and adds to congestion on public transport and the roads. Norwich City Council is undoubtedly restrained by central government in terms of investment finance. However this has allowed the planning and conservation department to ignore the need to promote, assist and actively support the transformation of the City's heritage, in order to prepare and secure a zero-carbon emissions future.

Tackling climate change will actually create economic and social prosperity. For example, insulating every home in Britain to EPC Band C level by 2035 would cost £2.7 billion/year in public expenditure, stimulate £3.7 billion/year in private investment and pay for itself through increased tax revenues by 2024.

It would also significantly reduce what cold homes cost the NHS, currently standing at £1.3 billion/year. It would reduce and eventually eliminate £2 billion/year in Winter Fuel Payments. Over 100,000 net jobs could be created across 2020-2030 and every household in Britain would be protected from the volatility of global fuel prices by a significant reduction in its need to purchase gas.

The cost of photovoltaic modules has fallen by more than 80% since 2008. They are expected to fall another 40% in the next two years. Deutsche Bank estimates that solar will attain grid parity with existing generation in 80% of countries in the next two years.