

INCOME GENERATING HOMES

The resources required to rapidly move away from fossil fuels and prepare for the coming weather challenges could lift huge swathes of humanity out of abject poverty, providing services now sorely lacking, from clean water to renewable electricity. These would be genuinely democratic and less centralised than those represented by the current owners and protectors of the feudal architecture and ideas that surround, control and destroy life.

The UK has among the worst insulated homes and buildings in western Europe. As a result, we waste huge amounts of energy, adding CO₂ to the atmosphere and increasing bills.

The Treasury plans to invest £100 billion in infrastructure over the next five years. Just a tiny proportion of this investment could help insulate millions of UK homes and drive down energy bills in the most cost-effective way. No other infrastructure investment could achieve so much. We need to make home energy efficiency an infrastructure priority and local government needs to commit to making every planning application a zero-carbon design.

Yet, even if enlightenment struck and the planning bureaucrats genuinely embraced the need for decentralised energy, the city is still crammed with buildings that would require radical (physical and conceptual) overhaul. We simply need to abandon the 'aesthetics' of the fossil fuel age.

“If an architect conforms to the conservation department’s whims to hide solar panels on buildings that reduce their efficiency, then the energy generation problems are automatically sent offsite to centralised coal, gas or uranium fuel power stations.”

“Worse, it is the current waste of fossil fuels on which international aggression for oil and gas reserves are centred.”

Bill Dunster, Zed Factory