BECCI HARD TO TREAT CHALLENGE WINNERS

Kidderminster based family business, Greengineering Limited, are delighted to have been selected as one of the winning finalists for the Hard To Treat Challenge. Judges reviewed entries and invited the eleven shortlisted companies to a Shortlisting Celebration Event on 16th Sept. The shortlisted companies were then required to "pitch" to the judges on 30th Sept, and the winners were announced on 14th Oct.

The Built Environment Climate Change Innovations (BECCI) is a three year, £1m project run by the University of Wolverhampton and Coventry University supported by the European Regional Development Fund. The aim of the project is to promote sustainable economic growth by using in-house expertise and working with West Midlands based SME's to develop innovative climate change solutions with a focus on products and services for housing retrofit.

Approximately 40% of UK housing was built more than 70 years ago and many of these homes have solid walls. Also rapid build housing, post WWII, was often built using steel and concrete, which can also be solid walled. There are around 1,500 of these system built and solid brick walled homes in the Staffordshire area and they are the focus of the first BECCI Challenge. The leading eleven ideas were judged by a Challenge Panel, and the final four are being evaluated and considered for implementation within their investment programme. Additional support to further develop the idea will be made available via the University of Wolverhampton.

Stafford & Rural Homes (SARA) and South Staffordshire Housing Associations (SSHA) were formed following the transfer of homes from Stafford Borough Council. Together they represent over 11,000 homes in the Staffordshire area. They continue to support local businesses to develop ideas to help reduce carbon emissions from those homes, especially for those living in fuel poverty.

The Hard To Treat Challenge, run by BECCI in conjunction with SRA and SSHA, was aimed at identifying and evaluating ideas to make these hard to treat properties more environmentally friendly, and easier to heat. All winners have the opportunity to enter discussions wit h the housing associations, with a view to trialing their technologies.

Greengineering's idea, which was embraced by the judges, involves improving the efficiency of currently available heat pump technology. When implemented, the fuel savings for the occupant of the home could be substantial, thus helping to reduce fuel poverty.