

FOCUS ON

Insulation

Materials and methods,
from external, internal and
cavity wall to floor and loft

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Bradley Van Der Straeten (b-vds.co.uk) designed a loft extension for a three-bedroom house in Stoke Newington, north London. Kingspan Optim-R 50mm vacuum insulation panels line the roof with Kingspan Thermapaper fixed on top (kingspan.com). The project cost £110,000

Limit the heat lost from your home in the winter and reduce the risk of overheating in the summer with well-installed insulation made with the most effective material for your property.

UNDER THE ROOF

Because heat rises, it makes sense to insulate the attic to prevent warmth leaking through the roof. 'The best-value retrofit insulation is in the loft,' says Dr Sarah Price, technical director at Qoda Consulting (qodaconsulting.com). 'An attic floor covered to at least 30cm depth gives the greatest energy saving per pound of spend.'

Laying rolls of mineral or sheep's wool is something you could tackle yourself. Avoid covering air vents, grilles and bricks, and if

there is no ventilation you may need to fit an airbrick or similar to prevent a rise in humidity. Any pipework and water tanks should be insulated too. Cellulose fibre can be used to fill the nooks and crannies between the joists and the blanket of insulation – this loose-fill material is blown into place. A semi-rigid batt, such as hemp slab, is also suitable for DIY installation. Rigid foam insulating board or hemp slab are ideal for insulating the sloping roof of an attic that has been converted into living space.

'Budget from £1,200,' says Nigel Donohue, CEO of the Insulation Assurance Authority (theiaa.co.uk). 'The cost will depend on the size of your home, the existing insulation and any remedial work required.' >>