

# Home Energy Conservation Act

## Report 2019

### A. Headline and Overview Questions

1. Does your LA have a current strategy on carbon reduction and / or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?

The Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy approved by Cabinet on 3 April 2019 includes priorities relating to carbon reduction and energy efficiency:

- Priority 3: Achieving a high standard of design and quality of new homes and communities; and
- Priority 4: Improving housing conditions and making best use of existing homes.

2. If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here:

<http://scams.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=293&MId=7366&Ver=4>

3. If no, are you planning to develop one?

No plans at present

- 4a. What scheme / s has your LA implemented in support of energy saving / carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties since 2017?

### Social Housing – Council properties

The focus of many of our improvement programmes is to help towards the alleviation of fuel poverty, whether this is through the installation of more efficient heating systems, or improving the insulation of the housing stock, including upgrading loft insulation and the provision of external wall insulation to solid walled properties.

In order to reduce energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions:

- a. All new gas heating systems installed have high efficiency condensing boilers and modern energy efficient controls, providing savings for tenants and the environment
- b. All new oil heating systems installed have high efficiency condensing boilers and modern energy efficient controls
- c. Highly efficient and controllable quantum electric storage heater systems are being installed in electrically heated properties, particularly bungalows
- d. Where viable, gas heating will be installed in properties when there is gas in the street

- e. Consideration will be given to the fitting of heating from renewable sources, such as biomass or multi-fuel burners
- f. We will install solar enabled coils in new water heaters
- g. All properties are fitted with double glazed windows. Replacement of older windows with new windows fitted with energy efficient triple glazing is now underway.
- h. Front and rear entrance doors are being replaced with highly efficient draught proofed composite doors.
- i. In order to improve the energy efficiency of properties with solid walls, a programme of external and internal insulation has been completed, with the exception of a small number of properties where the tenants have refused to have the work done.
- j. Identified cases of failed or settled cavity wall insulation will be investigated and remedial action taken
- k. Where it is identified that loft insulation is either lacking or significantly less than it should be, this will be increased to a minimum of 300mm.
- l. Loft insulation in all vacant properties will be brought up to a minimum 300mm before the property is re-let.
- m. Tenants will be encouraged to fit low energy light bulbs when replacing bulbs inside the properties.
- n. Ongoing monitoring and advice will be provided to ensure that tenants have support available to minimise bills and maximise comfort levels.

The overall energy rating of the Council stock is currently 76.14. The breakdown is as follows (at January 2019):

| EPC rating | SAP rating | Number of properties | Percentage |
|------------|------------|----------------------|------------|
| G          | 0 – 10     | 0                    | 0.00%      |
| G          | 11 – 20    | 0                    | 0.00%      |
| F          | 21 – 30    | 3                    | 0.06%      |
| F          | 31 – 40    | 10                   | 0.19%      |
| E          | 41 – 50    | 24                   | 0.46%      |
| D / E      | 51 – 60    | 257                  | 4.90%      |
| C / D      | 61 – 70    | 1,385                | 26.43%     |
| C          | 71 – 80    | 1,688                | 32.21%     |
| B          | 81 – 90    | 971                  | 18.53%     |
| A / B      | 91 – 100   | 883                  | 16.85%     |
| A          | 100+       | 20                   | 0.38%      |
| Total      | –          | 5,241                | –          |

We will continue to focus on those properties with lower than average SAP ratings in order to bring them up to a reasonable level of thermal comfort. Sources of funding for energy saving improvement work have largely disappeared, so funding for such works will need to be met from our own resources.

## Private Sector

We have worked with the other Cambridgeshire local authorities as part of the Action on Energy Partnership to identify and bid for funding wherever available. The cost of installations in Cambridgeshire tends to be high relative to much of the rest of the country and this has hampered efforts to win funds. A planned bid to the Warm Homes Fund in September 2018 for first-time central heating for both social and private housing was withdrawn following advice that costs were too high.

We have published a joint Statement of Intent for ECO Flex (see Section G below).

- 4b. What scheme / s is your LA planning to implement in support of energy saving / carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties in the next two years?

## Social Housing – Council properties

The improvement programmes outlined above will continue.

## Private Housing

We are in the process of commissioning a study into the potential for energy improvements in private housing with a view to informing potential collaboration with installers with access to Energy Company Obligation funding.

5. What has been, or will be, the cost / s of running and administering the scheme / s, such as the value of grants and other support made available, plus any other costs incurred (such as administration) as desired? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.

Not known at present

6. What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme / s?

Not known at present

7. What has been the outcome of the scheme / s (e.g. energy savings, carbon savings, economic impacts such as job creation and / or increased business competitiveness, societal impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and / or improved health outcomes etc.)? This does not have to be measured against national data or benchmarks but rather focuses on the LA's own monitoring and evaluation.

No data available

8. What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme / s?

## B. Local Communications Strategy

9. Does your LA provide an advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?

No. A small number of enquiries on energy saving come into the Council and are directed to the Energy Saving Trust or to the local Citizens Advice Bureau as appropriate.

10. If yes to q 9, please briefly outline how this is undertaken.

11. How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and / or local businesses?

Council tenants have been able to access advice on energy saving from the Housing Warm Homes team. We run a thermal imaging camera loan scheme to help householders identify draughts (85 properties surveyed in 2017 – 2018). We also provide promotional materials including an interactive model Eco-house to community groups to provide information stalls at village events.

## C. Local Green Supply Chains

12. Does your LA promote the use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)?

Not at present

13. If yes, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.

14. What engagement (formal or informal) does your LA have with local businesses / supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?

We have no formal engagement; however, we have informal contact with a number of local businesses providing insulation, solar pv and other services.

## D. Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

The Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations apply to all privately rented properties in England and Wales. As of April 2018, all such properties are legally required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least an E before they can be let to a new tenancy. This

requirement will then extend to all such properties by 1 April 2020, even if there has been no change in tenant or tenancy.

The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to LAs, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance with their area.

15. Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards?

Yes

16. Which team is responsible for leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard?

Environmental Health & Licensing

17. Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team?

[Emma.Knight@scams.gov.uk](mailto:Emma.Knight@scams.gov.uk)

18. What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?

No proactive contact with landlords and tenants at present

19. Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties?

Not at present

## E. Financial Support for Energy Efficiency

20. What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable please outline the sums, where such funding is sourced and where it is targeted.

Whilst the Council has no financial programme specifically promoting energy efficiency, limited funding is available for measures including new efficient boilers and loft and cavity wall insulation for eligible low income households through Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency. Funding for these measures comes from the Disabled Facilities Grant budget (£762,491 for 2018 – 2019). There are a number of objectives for this budget with priority given to mandatory disabled facilities grants. Discretionary grants are also available for housing repairs assistance with a particular focus on energy efficiency measures where this will improve the health and wellbeing of the household.

## F. Fuel Poverty

21. Does your LA have a fuel poverty strategy?

If yes, please describe the scope of the strategy and the support that is available for low income and vulnerable households to help tackle fuel poverty in your local area. Please also provide a link to your strategy if published.

We have no fuel poverty strategy at present. However, we provide funding to a number of Citizen's Advice Bureaux who provide energy-saving advice to clients – often in relation to debt advice.

22. What steps have you taken to identify residents / properties in fuel poverty?

None within last two years

23. How does fuel poverty interlink with your LAs overall carbon reduction strategy?

N / A

24a. What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty?

Promotion of Cambridgeshire County Council's Collective Switching campaign through parish ebulletins and magazine to residents

24b. If you have taken measures or initiatives to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty, what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken?

N / A

## G. The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

ECO is an obligation on energy suppliers aimed at helping households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving measures. Following the Spring 2018 consultation the Government set out in its response that ECOH. 3 will fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households.

The recently introduced ECO 'Flexible Eligibility' (ECO Flex) programme allows LAs to make declarations determining that certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes and vulnerable to the effects of cold homes, are referred to ECO obligated suppliers for support under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO. LAs involved are required to issue a Statement of Intent that they are going to identify households as eligible, and the criteria they are going to use; and a declaration that the LA has been consulted on the installation of measures in a home.

25. Has your LA published a Statement of Intent for ECO Flex?

Yes, published December 2018 at:

<https://www.scams.gov.uk/climate-change/sustainable-living/energy-company-obligation-eco>

26. Please provide any further information you feel might be of benefit to BEIS in helping to understand ECO Flex delivery in more detail.

No active promotion by the Council; one declaration to date through local installer.

## H. Smart Metering – no engagement to date

27. Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to engage and support your residents (including those in vulnerable circumstances or with pre-payment metering) to promote take up of smart meters and achieve associated benefits (e.g. ability to control energy use, identify best value tariffs?) Please detail any work undertaken or planned with local / community groups, housing associations, micro businesses, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers.
28. Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to integrate your approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation with the opportunities presented by the installation of smart meters, drawing upon materials from the Smart Meter Energy Efficiency Materials Project or other sources of independent information.
29. Please detail any resources / support available to residents who have had an appliance condemned for safety reasons and cannot afford to replace it (e.g. during visual safety check conducted during smart meter installation or otherwise).
30. Please detail any existing relationships with energy suppliers to help ensure that the opportunities presented by vacant properties under your control are effectively utilised (i.e. gaining access to install a smart meter).

## I. Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives

31. Please outline any future schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your LA has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation or businesses in your area, for example within your Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Energy Strategy.

Officers are exploring the potential to incorporate neighbourhood energy projects within new housing developments, combining on-site energy generation and storage with promotion of sustainable technologies such as electric vehicles.