

HECA "Guidance 2012" Report

Worcester City Council

Following the 2012 guidance issued by the Secretary of State, under Section 4 of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, this report represents Worcester City Council's ECA (Energy Conservation Authority) "further report" regarding energy conservation in the district as required by DECC by 31 March 2013.

It includes data obtained from the DECC website, information collected locally and where appropriate, information and activities shared with neighbouring ECAs and other partners.

Summary

Worcester City Council understands the importance of home energy conservation and the influence the council has with its residents. We will make all reasonable efforts to support the installation of energy conservation measures in the area and continue to encourage householders to take advantage of appropriate government and other national initiatives such as the Green Deal as well as local projects that support improved energy efficiency.

We will support the principles of "Climate Local" by recognising that the council has a vitally important role to help residents and businesses capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting our natural environment. We are an active member of the countywide Climate Change Group and have worked with the partnership to develop a new [Climate Change Strategy](#) for Worcestershire.

The Council recognised from the outset that considerable effort was needed to turn around our energy consuming behaviour to become more sustainable and we have made important progress towards our ultimate goal of achieving a significant reduction in energy use throughout residential accommodation across the city. We have been working in partnership through a number of channels including our local affordable warmth group, Local Strategic Partnership and through wider collaboration with [Warmer Worcestershire](#), and Worcestershire Partnership Environment Group and the countywide Green Deal group. Through the Green Deal group, we are working together with other councils to ensure we can offer a package of energy efficiency measures that benefit our residents, business and our local economy through the use of our local skill and supply base. The final model will also ensure best use is made of the trusted Worcester City Council brand, in order to establish high take up rates for the Green Deal. We are also keen that the model provides the best opportunities for take up of the Energy Company Obligation by the city.

Worcester City has an excellent record of working with partners to raise awareness of key environmental issues and to drive down our reliance on fossil fuels. We have supported [Transition Worcester](#) to become an active community organisation, in the future we are determined to do even better.

Through our Carbon Management Plan, we are ensuring that we lead by example by reducing our energy use in our buildings and operations. We have a target to reduce our carbon emissions by 25% by March 2016.

We are extremely concerned about the social and environmental impacts of a “business as usual” approach to energy use, if nothing changes. Many communities in our area have already suffered from the sort of extreme weather events which are predicted and seem already to be more frequent and more extreme. This has had a major impact on many of our local industries, and we are determined to do what is needed to minimise these climatic changes.

Adverse social impacts associated with energy costs also seem to be growing. The incidence of fuel poverty across the city is increasing with some areas experiencing fuel poverty levels as high as 28%, the average for the City is 18.1% (DECC fuel poverty stats 2010) We and our community will strive to limit these impacts by working with neighbours and partners across both the city and the County to put in place the measures needed to make a difference.

Reducing our need for energy has so many benefits that it's hard to imagine how we could continue without embracing it. We have a large stock of old homes that leak heat and waste energy trying to overcome it. These need sympathetic help and guidance to make them useful not just for the current occupants but for further generations to come. We also need to make sure that homes that may be affordable at the moment remain affordable when energy prices rise further, as they inevitably will. Most of the solutions are already available and our role will be to continue to make our householders aware of these through local advice, local support and local examples.

Our vision is that through leadership, a Council engaged fully with national and local initiatives will ensure that our residents and local businesses prosper by taking advantage of all that is available to support them. This Council has an enviable record of achievement in delivering energy efficiency programmes, including large scale insulation schemes.

We are currently working with partners on [Worcester Energy Pioneers](#) which is a pilot project in Worcester City, funded by DECC, aimed at introducing those who rent in Worcester to the possible benefits of Green Deal. The project is running until the end of April 2013 and primarily involves trained students from the University of Worcester undertaking pre-assessment surveys on local houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs) who quickly assess the likelihood of eligibility for Green Deal. This service is offered free, and is also available to some homeowners as well as tenants of HMOs. Where suitable, the project will fund a limited number of full Green Deal Assessments which will be delivered through one of two delivery models, either a local energy agency (Act on Energy) or Carillion Energy Services. It is our intention to continue in the same vein with this “follow on” requirement under the Home Energy Conservation Act.

The details of some of our most notable achievements to date are included in the following pages of this report.

2. HECA Background

The Council had already identified the potential to improve home energy efficiency by 30% over a 15 year period from 1996-2011 as required under the original HECA Guidance. We have not been required to undertake any reporting since 2011.

By the **12th HECA** update report, our local monitoring had identified that the following had been achieved.

| % improvement | Energy saved (GJ) | Carbon saved (tCO₂) |
|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 28.99 | 1,539,566 | 96,316 |

The 30% potential was identified as possible through the use of the following measures; wall and roof insulation, double glazing and draught proofing, replacement high efficiency boilers and improved heating controls, additional hot water cylinder insulation and temperature control, low energy lighting and the number of homes receiving property specific advice and written information.

Under HECA, the Councils reported that we would support the setup of an Energy Efficiency Advice Centre to work with the Energy Saving Trust to provide free and impartial information and advice to householders in the area. The organisation was registered as an independent company in August 1998 and registered charity in May 1999 and is known as “Act on Energy”. The Council continues to have in place a service level agreement with Act on Energy to deliver on these commitments and provide local support and advice to our residents.

The improvements reported under the original guidance were assessed using a self completion householder questionnaire sent annually to homes selected at random. The proportion of each improvement measure identified by householders as being carried out in the previous 12 months was applied to the baseline report figures as an estimate of the level of improvement during that period. This was carried out independently by Act on Energy. The improvement information was included in the annual report together with an action plan for the following year which DECC will have copies of.

The council continues to work with Act on Energy to promote national initiatives and devise and manage local energy saving projects and to provide a free local energy advice service to householders in the area, which is particularly important now that the Energy Saving Trust has ceased having a local presence.

The Council promoted local initiatives with insulation contractors accessing CERT energy supplier funding and refer appropriate people to the Warm Front Scheme up until 31st December 2012. We will continue to promote local and national schemes including Green Deal and ECO.

3. Carbon and Fuel Poverty strategies

The Council, with other partners, works to ensure residents are able to [access warm and affordable homes](#). This is part of the Worcester Affordable Warmth Action Group, which is about local delivery of a shared County Fuel Poverty Strategy and Local Action Plan. We are partners in the countywide 'Warmer Worcestershire' group which ensures that health needs linked to fuel poverty are address at both local and county levels and provides a effective vehicle for the delivery of the Cold Weather Plans and linking to that the Warm Homes and Healthy People Fund. We have also been an active partner in the Worcestershire Climate Change Partnership and Worcestershire Partnership Environment Group who are responsible for the delivery of Worcestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy.

These strategies will be renewed over the coming months to take account of the current situation and in the light of more recent fuel poverty data, and changes to the definition and information available from DECC. We have developed our own in-house data base to enable us to target those most likely to be a risk of fuel poverty utilising SAP data collected through previous HECA reports and current EPC data. This data can then be used to target Green Deal and ECO to the most suitable households.

We will align our targets for home energy efficiency improvements where appropriate to match the Government's objectives in the Carbon Plan, subject to current funding constraints.

The extension of HECA resulting from the latest UK-wide guidance leads to renewed targets to try to achieve a reduction in buildings CO2 emissions by 24-39% by 2027 from 2009 levels. The Councils however recognise that they have little direct access to improve buildings other than its own, but accept that it has a responsibility to advise households of their options for saving energy and promote and encourage take up of all appropriate national and local schemes. To ensure we are addressing our own buildings and services we have worked with the Carbon Trust to develop a 5 year [Carbon Management Plan](#). This sets out how we will reduce carbon emissions from our buildings, operations and services by 25% by 2016.

To ensure a wider delivery of carbon savings the council is involved with Green Deal and ECO development along with other Worcestershire Councils. Over the coming months, we will decide on a final way forward for local delivery. We have of course in the interim period ensured that our residents are able to access impartial advice from our energy partners Act on Energy who will ensure that residents can access energy efficiency measures, through Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation. We are also working closely with local social housing providers to ensure that they benefit from the Green Deal and particularly ECO funding.

4. Data obtained from DECC website

CO₂ data

Using data obtained from the DECC website in September 2012, The Council have reported to have the emissions in the domestic sector for 2010 as follows

| Total domestic emissions (ktCO₂) 2010 | Emissions per capita (tonnes) | % reduction since 2005 |
|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 215 | 2.26 | 6.16% |

The Council is obviously pleased that there has been a reduction in CO₂ in the domestic sector although the emissions per capita are greater than the local and national average. The Authority will continue to support schemes that promote and install energy saving measures in homes and particularly engage with energy suppliers delivering ECO support.

Fuel Poverty Data

The 2010 sub-regional data indicates the following levels of fuel poverty.

| % Fuel Poverty | Number of households | No. of LSOAs > 15% |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 18.1% | 7,431 | 9 |

This is higher than the UK average with levels as high level 28%. The Council has 9 LSOA's in the lowest 15% which can access the Community aspect of ECO which is an excellent opportunity for energy efficiency measures to be installed. These LSOA's cover parts of the following wards - Wardon, Cathedral, Gorse Hill, St Johns and Rainbow Hill.

The Council is fully aware of the situation regarding fuel poverty in the City and it is a priority for the council to address and to this end has a local delivery partnership through its affordable warmth group and is an active partner in the Worcestershire Affordable Warmth group (Warmer Worcestershire). This group includes other agencies such as NHS, Age UK, Act on Energy and other interested parties. There are a number of local initiatives planned including the provision of information and advice at the autumn "Flu Clinics", joint projects with NHS that focus of doorstep delivery in areas of highest need, the county mobile library service.

The Authority continues to be active in this area and is providing funding to develop a number of local insulation schemes aimed directly at relieving fuel poverty and making energy more affordable to all households, including park homes.

5. Supporting Green Deal and other government initiatives

The Authorities have looked in detail, and continues to do so, at the various options for engagement with Green Deal. We are working with our partners across the county to assess Green Deal potential and therefore commissioned a joint study to look at potential delivery options for the county on the Green Deal and ECO.

The Authority does not consider that it has the necessary skills or resources to become a Green Deal Partner to deliver measures or make assessments and would rather utilise those existing local organisations and local supply chain options for a Worcestershire Green Deal. We recognise that our brand and leadership will enable a local offer that can support both local business and improve the energy efficiency of our building stock. There is significant potential for the delivery of ECO across the County, the table below illustrates the total potential for external solid wall insulation and its investment potential. Of course the reality is that not all of these properties will be suitable due to conservation, flooding concerns etc.

| Solid wall insulation | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| | %of houses | Number of installs | Investment potential millions |
| Bromsgrove | 22.7% | 8,737 | £68.87 |
| Malvern Hills | 28.5% | 9,408 | £74.53 |
| Redditch | 11.7% | 4,208 | £28.94 |
| Worcester | 27.8% | 12,044 | £77.07 |
| Wychavon | 21.7% | 11,068 | £84.55 |
| Wyre Forest | 23.4% | 10,348 | £73.24 |
| Total | 22.6% | 55,813 | £407.20 |

Alongside Green Deal, we will also promote the Energy Company Obligation by engaging with all energy suppliers who can provide financial assistance to householders in the district. We see considerable benefit in promoting the Carbon Saving Obligation to support improvements to many of the older properties in the city. Many of these are also suitable for renewable technologies and we see the Feed in Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive key to encouraging greater take up. As part of our Green Deal Options Appraisal we asked the consultants Encraft to look at the renewable potential across the county to give us an indication of investment potential and FIT/RHI potential. The table below illustrates the PV potential across both commercial and residential stock

| Building mounted photovoltaic installations | | |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | Number of installations | Investment potential (£ millions) |
| Bromsgrove | 12613 | £42.60 |
| Malvern Hills | 10073 | £35.80 |
| Redditch | 11438 | £35.53 |
| Worcester | 13502 | £41.61 |
| Wychavon | 16276 | £55.38 |
| Wyre Forest | 14274 | £46.14 |
| Total | 78176 | £257.06 |

The district has pockets of fuel poverty. The average for the district is 18.1% and with rising energy prices and a number of solid wall properties we expect the challenge to reduce the level of fuel poverty to be significant. For this reason the Authority works with other agencies, particularly Act on Energy and the health sector, to provide a referral service for those who suffer ill health as a result of cold homes. We will as part of our approach to Green Deal and ECO be targeting the most vulnerable homes to ensure that they are able to access Home Heat Cost Reduction Obligation (see potential below), but also receive face to face support to help access Warm Homes Discount, Switching Supplier and help our residents understand their energy usage and how behavioural change can lead to a warmer more affordable home

Estimated number of affordable warmth group eligible households

| | Owner Occupied | Social Housing | Private Rented | % Dwellings |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| Bromsgrove | 1,127 | 0 | 752 | 4.8% |
| Malvern Hills | 1,184 | 0 | 789 | 5.8% |
| Redditch | 1,382 | 0 | 922 | 6.8% |
| Worcester | 1,524 | 0 | 1,016 | 5.9% |
| Wychavon | 1,581 | 0 | 1,054 | 5.2% |
| Wyre Forest | 1,902 | 0 | 1,268 | 7.3% |
| Total | 8,701 | 0 | 5,801 | 5.9% |

*The total number of eligible households in Worcestershire for ECO Affordable Warmth (also known as Home Heating Cost Reduction) has been determined by analysing current Department of Work and Pensions claimant count data (supplied at LSOA level).

6. Existing and proposed further initiatives and partnerships

The Authority will continue to develop its plans with the County Council and Districts to provide a countywide offer for Green Deal and ECO and work with partners across neighbouring authorities to ensure that we deliver a cohesive approach to addressing fuel poverty and cold weather plans that align with both council and health priorities.

The Council is a key member of the Act on Energy Local Authority Consortium Group which identifies and shares best practice in energy efficiency with the other authorities in Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Coventry and Solihull. This has been active since 1998 and now includes 11 ECAs and 2 first tier authorities and gives the member authorities the opportunity to replicate successful projects which have proven benefit in improving energy efficiency.

The Council supports the Warmer Worcestershire Network with neighbouring authorities, NHS and other partners who provide some additional funding for health and well being projects which support our fuel poverty agenda.

The Authority is also represented on the Carbon Action Network (previously the HECA Forum) by Act on Energy who also chairs the West Midlands CAN and reports to all regional members.

7. Communication strategy

A marketing and communications strategy has been developed which outlines the measures we will be taking to ensure we promote and provide guidance to all households within the district. This will ensure we achieve maximum take-up and engagement with the energy efficiency schemes available

| Activity | Purpose | Timing |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Council staff training | Ensure all staff are aware of the LAs desires and objectives to promote energy efficiency including in its own buildings along with Green Deal and ECO | Annual |
| Senior Officer training | Ensure that all service managers within the council are aware of the duties we have to reduce CO ₂ and fuel poverty and cooperate with appropriate initiatives such as GD, ECO | Annual |
| Partner organisation meetings | Include energy efficiency as an agenda item for all meetings held with external partners particular the health sector and links to the Clinical Commissioning Groups | As appropriate |
| Warmer Worcestershire campaign | Promotion of exciting branding to ensure a consistent message and building of a strong and trusted brand | Monthly through winter |
| Media release | Send press releases to local media, including council publications and website, outlining the campaign and support available | Immediate |
| Promotion | Work with partners to promote all energy related initiatives through normal partner activities such as presentations, exhibitions, events and home visits. | Within 3 months |
| Private sector householders | Encourage RSLs to consider private sector households when developing stock improvement schemes links with GD and ECO potential for owner occupiers | Within 6 months |
| Social housing tenants | Working with Worcester Community Housing and other social housing providers in Worcester City to provide advice to tenants on the efficient use of the equipment provided and to encourage fuel switch and energy conservation through behaviour change | Within 12 months |
| Private rented sector | Provide information on energy efficiency and support available at Landlord Forum meetings. | As appropriate |
| Signposting | Identify all energy efficiency activity available in the area and signpost householders to appropriate support organisations | Within 6 months |

8. HECA Action Plan showing activities, outcomes, partners and timeframe

| Object | Action | Outcome | Lead/Partners | Delivery date |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|-------------------------------|
| HECA Further Report | Collate energy information | Submit and publish report | WCC & Act on Energy | 31 March 2013 |
| Partnerships | Continue to support partners and ensure links to other cross cutting council themes. | Partner actions/contributions identified | WCC Act on Energy NHS Worcestershire Age UK CAB HWFR | 31 March 2013 |
| Government initiatives | Support Green Deal through joint work with other LA's and partners | To ensure interim arrangements are delivered through Act on Energy and look to finalise GD/ECO option. | WCC Worcestershire LA's Act on Energy | March 2013 Summer 2013 |
| | UK Fuel Poverty Strategy | To provide feedback on local delivery for fuel poverty and support LGA with recommendation for local delivery | WCC/Act on Energy LGA | Spring 2013 |
| Energy Supplier Engagement | Identify ECO opportunities alongside RSL's | Installed measures across all tenures Fuel poverty reduction | WCC Act on Energy Energy Suppliers | On going |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|--|--|--|----------------------|
| Promotion | Deliver communication plan | Council staff, other partners and householders aware of HECA plan and energy efficiency objectives | WCC Act on Energy Local media | On going |
| Local initiatives | Identify other local energy efficiency projects and ensure links such as WHHPF Carbon Management Plan | Support partners in delivering projects Reduce carbon emissions from our buildings, operations and services by 25%. | WCC Act on Energy Local contractors Energy Suppliers Local supply chain WCC | On going 2016 |
| Council initiatives | Support/fund targeted projects focus on hard to treat, including park homes | Increased project activity delivering measures and reducing fuel poverty | WCC Elected Members | On going |
| Monitor and review | Record and collate data from activity | Refine action plan | WCC Act on Energy | On going |
| Follow on Report | Repeat action plan with variations as determined necessary | Submit report to DECC and publish locally | WCC Act on Energy | 31 March 2015 |

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nina Warrington', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nina Warrington

Strategic Housing Services Manager - Worcester City Council