

Worcester City Council HECA REPORTING 2019

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Introduction

Introduction

The Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change requires local authorities in England to provide an update report every two years setting out the energy conservation measures that the authority considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in the area. This report builds on previous reports setting out how Worcester City Council intends to help householders take advantage of financial incentives such as the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), Feed in Tariff (FIT) and any other schemes that became available. In addition, it will also provide information on funding sourced and provided by the council.

Since HECA was first introduced Worcester City Council has submitted annual reports to the Secretary of State from 1997 until 2011 defining any progress made towards the assumed target of a 30% improvement in energy efficiency in domestic property in our district. With the introduction of additional specific targets under Local Area Agreements we delivered programs and works for energy efficiency, fuel poverty and carbon performance.

We are now in our fourth reporting stage for the revitalised HECA and this report will detail projects and work we have delivered since the last report in 2017 and will also detail our plans for the next two years to address home energy related issues across our City.

HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

Name of Local Authority: Worcester City Council		
Name and contact details of official submitting the report:		
Job title of official submitting the report: Strategic Housing Officer Name: Madeline Ajetunmobi Email: madeline.ajetunmobi@worcester.gov.uk Phone Number: 01905 722193		
Headline and Overview Questions		
1	Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?	Y
2	If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here:	
https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20235/sustainability/1092/county_strategies/2 https://www.worcester.gov.uk/housing-strategies		
3	a. What scheme(s) has your local authority implemented (or planning to) 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? (if you have not implemented any scheme, please enter 'N/A')	
	<p><i>Free text response to question 3 - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>The Council works with partners to deliver and develop a range of projects that support our residents to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions. Additional outcomes for residents include increased incomes, improvements in health as well as improving housing stock and raising EPCs. Much of the strategic work is linked through Warmer Worcestershire and our wider county partnership. Since 2017 we have delivered the following:</p> <p><u>Boiler on Prescription</u> – This was a joint project led by Worcestershire and involving Warwickshire and Solihull Councils. Working with our long-term energy partners and charity Act on Energy we installed heating systems in properties housing the most vulnerable in our communities. The jointly commissioned home improvement agency Care and Repair Worcestershire also provide “Staying Warm, Staying Healthy grant assistance.</p>	

Warm Homes Fund (WHF) – the County Council along with partners from the other districts have been successful in a bid to deliver a category one programme for first-time gas extensions in homes across the county and Worcester City. Details of the programme are provided later in the report.

Winter Warmth Campaign – this is an ongoing campaign operated through our wider Warmer Worcestershire partnership to protect vulnerable residents from the effects of cold. The campaign has contact with over 500 residents on an annual basis, the majority of whom are vulnerable residents

Specialist Energy Advice Line and Support

As a Council we feel that advice provision for residents is essential. For us that advice is delivered locally through our energy advice partners Act on Energy, who offer a combination of quality telephone advice through to community-based and even in-home support allowing residents to make ongoing decisions about their energy usage, ranging from switching through to physical measures with funding sourced through ECO/ECO Flex or other industry initiatives. Since our last report they have provided support and advice to over 500 residents across our district.

Switch and Save – we have worked with our county partners to run two switch and save schemes

4	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.
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Free text response to question 4 - please outline in no more than 100 words

The Warm Homes Fund project has a value of £600,000. The cost to administer the project is £22,500 which includes EPCs before and after completion, with a target of 150 homes.

Energy advice line – cost £9,345 per annum to provide phone line and support to residents to help them access funding such as ECO/ECO Flex as well as advice on switching etc

The Staying Warm, Staying Healthy Grant provides a grant of £1000 to install a new/improved heating system prescribed to patients via the GP to improve health. This grant is intended as a top up, and there must be sufficient funding identified, either from the customer or other sources of funding to cover the full cost of works.

5	What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?
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Free text response to question 5 - please outline in no more than 100 words

We work with a number of partners including other statutory sectors such as public health to ensure we offer quality support to our residents. We work with the following partners to deliver our programmes:

Act on Energy, Age UK, CAB, Fortis Housing, Worcestershire County Council (including Public Health and Sustainability Team), other district councils across the area. We are members of West Midlands ALEO and attend a local consortium of LAs run by Act on Energy to share best practice and work together on combined schemes such as the Warm Homes Fund.

6	<p>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.)?</p> <p>This does not have to be measured against national data or benchmarks, but rather focuses on the local authority's own monitoring and evaluation.</p>
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Free text response to question 6 - please outline in no more than 200 words

We provide advice and support in a number ways and outcomes are often driven by the criteria is set through the funded programmes, ie ECO or Warm Homes Fund

We have delivered through our schemes the following for residents

Warm Homes Fund – this scheme is still being delivered but we have a target of 150 installs across the county with a focus on first time gas central heating.

Worcestershire Switch and Save – we have run 2 switch and save events over the last two years we which can be used by residents, and help boost the local economy.

Energy Advice Service

Our local energy advice service provides quality and impartial advice to residents.

	No of Events/ measures	Clients receiving 1-2-1 advice	Energy Saving Kwh	Monetary Savings (per annum) to residents
Events (saving based on 33% take up of advice includes switching)	54	190		£16,540
Presentations (saving based on 33% take up of advice includes switching)	4	109		£9,497
Front line staff training	4	46		£12,135
HVs	21	21		£5,540
Heating Measures	28	ECO/flex & WHF	103,236	£4,760
Telephone Line (saving based on 33% take up of advice includes switching)	278	278		£24,270

In addition to financial support, the schemes supported by Act on Energy have

improved health and wellbeing outcomes for residents whilst also supporting the West Midlands economy by using the local supply chain where possible.		
7	What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 8 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>Although levels of fuel poverty in Worcester City are lower than other LAs in the West Midlands, we do still have areas of significant fuel poverty and the demand for support is high. We are working within considerable funding constraints to offer support to households and therefore can only focus on those most in need.</p>		
Local Communications Strategy		
8	Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?	(Y)
9	If yes to question 8, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)	
<p><i>Free text response to question 10 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>We provided a specialist energy advice line through local charity Act on Energy who have over 20-years experience of providing impartial energy efficiency advice. They also assist residents with accessing funding support through ECO/ECO Flex, Industry Initiative Schemes or our own schemes. We also provide information on our own website and through newsletters to promote energy saving/switching etc. The service is also promoted via other agencies such as CRW who ensure appropriate referrals are made to meet the needs of their customers.</p> <p>From a business perspective, our partners at Worcestershire County Council have been running a Business Energy Efficiency Programme (BEEP) which supports SMEs across the county with free energy and resource efficiency reviews, as well as grants of up to £20,000. Small businesses are faced with high and fluctuating energy costs; the Business Energy Efficiency Programme is designed to help local businesses to manage and reduce these costs, while improving their environmental impact.</p> <p>BEEP has helped over 300 businesses to manage and reduce these costs, while improving their environmental impact. (as at April 2019)</p> <p>BEEP is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund, and is administered by Worcestershire County Council, in partnership with Herefordshire Council, Telford and Wrekin Council, Worcestershire Councils, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce and Shropshire Chamber of Commerce.</p>		

10	How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses? (if you do not, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Local Green Supply Chains')
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Free text response to question 10 - please outline in no more than 100 words

Information is available through a variety of sources including the following:

Worcester City Council website

Act on Energy website

Leaflets across the city to promote our schemes

Leaflets on specific issues such as heating, damp, switching

Newsletters

Local charities

Social media

Letters to residents to promote schemes, for example Warm Homes Fund

Promotion at events

Information at flu clinics

Energy advice clinics at libraries

Training to Council staff and other frontline services/partners

Local Chamber of Commerce

The LEP

Local Green Supply Chains		
11	Does your Local Authority promote the use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)? (if you answer no please move onto the next section 'Private Rented Sector')	Y
12	If yes to question 11, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.	
<p><i>Free text response to question 12 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>Promotion through our energy advice partner Act on Energy and wider through our BEEP programmes and the LEP and West Midlands Combined Authority partnership work where energy is a key priority.</p>		
13	What engagement (formal or informal) does your local authority have with local businesses/supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 14 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>We are partners in the County Energy Strategy which enables engagement with the wider supply chain and promotion of energy efficiency. In addition our energy advice partners work with the local supply chain to deliver efficiency schemes.</p>		
Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards		
<p>The Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations (the 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 on 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 (please see BEIS published guidance documents for the full details on the standard).</p> <p>The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to local authorities, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.</p>		
14	Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018? (if you answered no, please move on to the next section 'Financial Support for Energy Efficiency')	Y
15	Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard? Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.	
<p><i>Free text response to question 15</i></p> <p>The Private Sector Housing Team within the council is looking to work together with other districts and trading standards and utilise the guidance that BEIS will develop</p>		

through its current pilots to develop cohesive approach to enforcement of MEES.

The Private Sector Team Manager is Ismene Broad. Her contact details are ismene.broad@worcester.gov.uk and 01905 722525.

16	What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 18 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>The Council communicate with landlords through the following methods:</p> <p>Council website Landlord Forums Regular mailings Landlord newsletter</p>		
17	Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties? If yes, how? If no, please explain.	N
18	<p><i>Free text response to question 17 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>We have limited resources, but we have written to landlords with low performing properties to inform them of the regulations along with ways and opportunities for action. The service is predominately reactive only and we do not currently have funds to offer an alternative option that would include the enforcement of MEES</p>	
Financial Support for Energy Efficiency		
19	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. (If you do not have any financial assistance programmes, please enter 'N/A' and move onto the next section 'Fuel Poverty')	
<p><i>Free text response to question 19 - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>We have funding for the following physical intervention programmes:</p> <p>Warm Homes Fund – Category 1 bid to provide first time central heating to residents. The bid was for just over £900,000 and is for delivering heating measures to 150 homes across the county.</p> <p>ECO – we also offer support through ECO but levels of funding are not fixed and are dependent on supplier/installer offers.</p> <p>Energy advice and Support – funding of £9,345 provided by the Council to support the delivery of ECO, along with energy advice support to residents.</p>		

Fuel Poverty		
20	<p>Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy?</p> <p>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.</p>	Y
<p><i>Free text response to question 20 - please outline in no more than 300 words</i></p> <p>Fuel poverty is embedded within a number of key documents including the Council's housing partnership plan https://www.worcester.gov.uk/documents/10499/5660094/Worcestershire+Strategic+Housing+Partnership+Document.pdf/95830938-7f91-83ae-3839-d43ff6356163</p> <p>The Council is also a partner of the Warmer Worcestershire Fuel Poverty Plan. This 5-year plan commenced in 2016 and is reviewed annually to ensure that it supports the delivery of and works alongside the cold weather plan. It is supported by public health and feeds into the aims and objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Board, taking into consideration the work of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).</p> <p>The council is also a partner of the LEP Energy Strategy which has fuel poverty as one of its key priorities, along with carbon reduction and increased renewable energy generation across the county.</p> <p>The purpose of the strategy is to guide the Council and partner agencies in committing resources to four linked objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to affordable, clean energy • Clean economic growth • Overcoming economic and infrastructure and development barriers • <u>Promoting low carbon transport and active travel</u> <p>Worcester City Council also has a Health and Well Being Plan 2017/19 with one of the priorities being "To help improve air quality and reduce effects of poor air quality on health". The action from this is to engage and work with partners to plan ways to reduce ill effects of poor air quality on health. This priority will continue in the draft Healthy Worcester Plan 2019/21.</p>		
21	<p>What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)</p>	
<p><i>Free text response to question 21 - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>Households living in fuel poverty have been identified through a number of different approaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government's annual statistics have been used to identify areas in the city with the highest levels of fuel poverty. • Use of off-gas data from Cadent and data from Fortis to target potential households in fuel poverty. • We have also carried out a stock survey during 2014 which helped us to target homes most likely to be at risk of fuel poverty. This is currently being 		

updated.

- Through partnership arrangements with frontline services such as GP practices, home care providers, AgeUK, hospital discharge services, social workers and children's centre staff, as they are in a position to identify clients as being fuel poor.

22 How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)

Free text response to question 22 - please outline in no more than 200 words

This area of work sits within the wider countywide work provided through the county climate change strategy and the LEP Energy strategy to provide a coordinated delivery. There are three key measures that we will aim to deliver :

- Reduction in carbon emissions of 50% on 2005 levels by 2030
- Double the size of the low carbon sector by 2030
- Tripling energy production from renewable generation by 2030

As an area we also have an active transition group who deliver and promote wider sustainability across the city and have a dedicated energy group.

23 a. What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? And if so what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate) (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)

Free text response to question 23 - please outline in no more than 200 words

We use our energy advice partners Act on Energy who are able to access both energy suppliers and local contractors to deliver our energy efficiency works and support vulnerable residents in our communities.

Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council have worked with its business partner, iChoosr, to deliver two Switch and Save campaigns over the last two years.

The Energy Company Obligation

The Energy Company Obligation (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 ECO3 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.

24	Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility? If yes, please include a link to your Sol below.	Y
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Link to Sol: https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20241/warmer_worcestershire

25	Please use the following space to provide any further information you feel might be of benefit to BEIS, in helping us to understand ECO Flex delivery in more detail. For example, the number of declarations signed versus the number of households helped.
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Free text response to question 26 - please outline in no more than 200 words

We deliver ECO Flex through a countywide SOI with the six other district councils and the county council along with our impartial partner Act on Energy who assess each case individually to ensure the need and eligibility of the resident. Referrals for the scheme come through our promotional work and through trusted partners. In addition, Flex has enabled us to help residents access Industry Initiative Schemes and Warm Homes Fund.

Smart Metering

26	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
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	<p>with local/community groups, housing associations, micro businesses, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers.</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 27 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>Through our partners Act on Energy we have been able to access support and training for both residents and frontline staff.</p> <p>Act on Energy have attended events and worked with key partners such as Solihull Community Housing to help residents understand the benefits of Smart Metering this has been linked to their work in 2017 delivering BESN on behalf of BEIS. Unfortunately they were unable to access the funding for 2018 and relied on Smart Energy GB to promote smart meters.</p>	
27	<p>Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 28 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>Our partners use a joined up approach to energy efficiency so will look at the whole house and householder to maximise the support that is provided. They use material produced by themselves and through others such as Smart GB portal for leaflets and information this is then circulated though out the city in a variety of formats</p>	
28	<p>Please detail any:</p> <p>Resources/ support (e.g. services, funding) available to residents who have had an appliance(s) condemned for safety reasons and cannot afford to replace it (e.g. during visual safety checks conducted during their smart meter installation or otherwise).</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 29 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>Where a resident's gas boiler has been condemned, they could potentially be helped through the Council's Winter Warmth project if they meet the eligibility criteria and funding is available. In addition, our partners Act On Energy are due start a reactive response programme with NEA and Cadent to repair/replace condemned heating appliances.</p>	

29	<p>Please detail any:</p> <p>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).</p>
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Free text response to question 29 – please outline in no more than 150 words.

Not applicable as we do not currently have our stock. Fortis housing are the largest social provider in our district. Fortis have a regular programme for stock improvements in regard to energy efficiency. They are currently working on a project that will look at first time central heating which we will link to our WHF project.

Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives

30	Please outline any future schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority 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 (if you do not plan any future schemes currently, please enter 'N/A').
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Free text response to question 30 - please outline in no more than 500 words

LEP Energy Strategy

As mentioned earlier the LEP has recognised the significance of energy to the local economy and with funding through BEIS has developed an Energy Strategy.

Worcestershire is currently a net importer of energy, we need to increase local energy generation in Worcestershire, with an ultimate focus on zero carbon emissions. Worcestershire has a number of local assets which enable us to do this, and we also have a healthy low carbon sector operating in the county which we can learn from, develop and work with to scale up benefits across the county. This strategy provides the evidence base and priorities for Worcestershire to focus on, looking ahead to 2030. The LEP has set up a working group to develop key projects that can be delivered to fulfill the objective of the strategy.

Business Energy Efficiency Programme BEEP

This programme is due to be extended to support business with both energy audits and grant funding for measures.

Public Energy Efficiency Programme

This is new programme to support the energy efficiency improvements in public building and is funded through the European Regional Development Fund.

West Midlands Combined Authority

The Council has been involved in early discussions with other regional stakeholders about how an Energy Company Obligation pilot scheme could potentially be operated in the West Midlands under the auspices of the West Midlands Combined Authority. If supported, the pilot would develop new approaches to insulation and heating improvements, and would run during the current ECO 3 obligation period which ends in 2022.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is convening a consortium of national, regional and local partners who will design, develop and pilot a new, more efficient, cost-effective and holistic approach to addressing fuel poverty in the UK while also meeting industrial strategy, social inclusion and environmental policy objectives.

This is an exciting and once-in-a-generation opportunity to redesign the way we approach fuel poverty in the UK. The vision is a practitioner-led project with clear accountability and scale, delivering at least £50M of improvements for some of the worst housing and most deprived communities in the country. This will create a template for delivery of a significant part of the UK's Clean Growth and Industrial Strategy for at least the next decade.

