

**DARTFORD HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT 1995**  
**MAY 2019 REPORT**1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the revised version of the existing statutory guidance on the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) and the obligation on the Council to publish a report at two yearly intervals.
- 1.2 The May 2019 report at Appendix A covers the progress made around Home Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty in the District and answers specific questions asked by the Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The report also outlines new actions and how the Council plans to measure progress.
- 1.3 The Report also outlines the recent changes around the Energy Company Obligation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the content of the May 2019 progress report at Appendix A be noted.

3. Background and Discussion

- 3.1. Statutory guidance on the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 was revised in 2013 placing a duty on councils to prepare and publish a report on energy conservation, particularly in relation to improving the efficiency of private rented properties. A report was presented to Cabinet on 7 March 2013 where the contents were noted (Minute No 166 refers). A further report on progress was presented to Cabinet on 16 April 2015 (Minute No 138 refers) where the contents were again noted. In January 2017 further guidance was received and the Council's 2017 Home Energy Conservation Report was presented to Cabinet on 13 April 2017 (Minute No 143 refers).
- 3.2. In January 2019 all local authority chief executives received a letter from the Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth outlining the HECA reporting process for 2019.

The refreshed reporting system follows a series of questions covering:

- What main strategy and schemes local authorities (LAs) currently have to promote carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency, stakeholders involved and impact at a social and economic level.
- How LAs engage stakeholders (including consumers and businesses) to promote awareness of energy efficiency.

- How LAs engage local businesses involved in the promotion of energy savings products and the societal benefits along with any local economic impact this might have.
- How LAs enforce & promote awareness of the Private Rented Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards that came into effect April 2018.
- Financial programmes used by LAs to promote energy efficiency.
- How LAs identify those in fuel poverty and any initiatives used to address this.
- How LAs are using the recently introduced EGO flexible eligibility programme to refer certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes, who are vulnerable to the effects of cold homes to EGO obligated suppliers for support.
- How LAs promote awareness and uptake of smart metering.

For 2019 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is piloting the submission of reports via the digital platform Survey Monkey with a report submission deadline of 31 May 2019.

The Council used the word document template provided by BEIS to gather the information. The document will be placed on the Council's website and sent to BEIS too. The Council's response is at Appendix A to the report.

- 3.3. Currently there are a range of strategic documents, guidance and legislation covering the reduction of people living in fuel poverty as well as improving the quality of both new and existing housing stock and also considering the health impacts related to housing.

These include:

- Energy Act 2011.
- Climate Change Act 2008.
- The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995.
- The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy 2015.
- The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (Housing Act 2004).
- The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.
- Government's Energy Company Obligation (EGO) Scheme
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards .

A revised UK Fuel Poverty Strategy will be consulted on later in 2019

Collectively, these have a number of emissions targets and reductions. In the last two years a number of initiatives have been developed or continued to take on board these legislative changes including:-

- Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership.
- Kent Warm Home Scheme (including Home Heating Cost Reduction obligation (HHCRO/ECO Affordable Warmth Officer) and Local Authority Flexible Eligibility.
- Better Care Funding.

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- Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy.
- Kent Environment Strategy.
- Kent Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (in draft stage at present). SELEP and Local Action Plan.
  
- It should be noted that DBC is an active member of the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP) who received awards from South East Association of Local Authority Energy Officer for their work (September 2017) along with recognition for their work in taking forward the Kent Environment Strategy (December 2017)

### 3.4 Energy Company Obligation (ECO) 3 and Local Authority Flexible Eligibility

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme is an obligation that the Government has placed on larger energy suppliers to install energy efficiency and heating measures to people's homes in England, Scotland and Wales, subject to certain eligibility criteria..

The scheme includes an element called "Local Authority Flexible Eligibility" (LA Flex), and since December 2018, up to 25% of an energy supplier's obligation can be allocated on a voluntary basis by suppliers working in partnerships with Local Authorities. Under LA Flex, Local Authorities may use a Statement of Intent (SOI) to establish additional eligibility for privately owned properties within its own area. This is intended to support energy efficiency improvements in properties where the households are either living in fuel poverty or living on low income and are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home, but which fall outside of the national eligibility criteria.

The Council has an LA Flex Statement of Intent (SOI) in place which enables it to make declarations for energy efficiency measures for Dartford residents (owner occupiers and private rented properties) who fulfil our criteria of living on a low income and with a health condition that is impacted by living in a cold home ie disability, heart condition, auto immune issues etc., LA Flex funding towards a measure is unlike previous schemes in that the resident shouldn't be in receipt of a specific benefit. If a resident is in receipt of a benefit a referral can still be made through the HHCRO/Affordable Warmth route.

#### APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018.

	No of measures	CERO funding	HHCRO funding	LA Flex funding	Council (Better Care Funding)	Client contribution
<b>Dartford Borough Council Generated Installs</b>						
Cavity Wall Insulation	5	£2,308.14	£856.79	0	0	£742.28

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Heating	1			£1,704.32	£2,380.95	
Loft Insulation	11	£1,281.73	£331.24	£516.88		£1,838.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>£3,589.87</b>	<b>£1,188.03</b>	<b>£2,221.20</b>	<b>£2,380.95</b>	<b>£2,580.61</b>
<b>Kent Warm Homes Generated Installs</b>						
Cavity wall insulation	1	£1,431.97				£440.00
Heating	0					
Loft insulation	5	£6,322.40				£2,813.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>£7,754.37</b>				<b>£3,253.96</b>

**APRIL 2018 TO MARCH 2019.**

	Nb of Measures	GERO funding	HHCRO funding	LA Flex funding	Council Better Care Fundina	Client contribution
<b>Dartford Borough Council Generated Installs</b>						
Cavity wall insulation	19	£1,729.46	£2,326.59	£18,557.28	0	£1,936.10
Heating	9	0	£2,526.77	£8,325.31	£19,604.89	£1,779.85
Loft Insulation	16	£444.30	£3,036.00	£4,769.73		£1,117.30
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£2,173.76</b>	<b>£7,889.36</b>	<b>£31,652.32</b>	<b>£19,604.89</b>	<b>£4,833.25</b>
<b>Kent Warm Homes Generated leads</b>						
Cavity wall insulation	1	£393.84				£518.34
Heating	0					
Loft insulation	2	£750.39				£518.34
<b>Total</b>		<b>£1,144.23</b>				<b>£1,036.68</b>

**3.5 Kent Warm Homes Scheme.**

The Kent Warm Homes Scheme is a partnership project between Kent County Council and district councils to support residents in Kent and Medway to save energy in their home and to drive housing retrofit by taking advantage of retrofit funding and finance options including Energy Company Obligation. Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (KMSEP) has appointed different EGO funded Providers to deliver retrofit to the domestic sector across the County. The current Warm Homes contract takes the form of a framework agreement with different 'lots' covering delivery of works and the current schemes offered include delivery of the following energy efficiency measures:

- Cavity wall and Loft Insulation - for residents in receipt of benefits plus eligible residents under LA Flex criteria
- External Wall Insulation

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- Boiler Replacement

The framework is available for use by all local authorities in Kent and Medway and the current provider for the different 'Lots' is Aran Services. The framework is currently being reviewed by a small task and finish group

**3.6 Warm Homes Fund and SGN First Time Central Heating Support.**

Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP) on behalf of KMSEP has applied for Warm Home Funds several times during the last couple of years. The Warm Homes Fund (monies via National Grid and administered by Affordable Warmth Solutions (AWS). The funding is broadly split into 3 categories focussing on the following areas:

- o Category 1: Urban - involved new gas heating systems to properties within 23m of a gas connection
- o Category 2: Rural - some of the most severely fuel poor households are those without a mains gas connection in rural locations - this category of funding primarily focussed on non gas solutions - air source heat pumps etc.,
- o Category 3: Health Related Solutions - bringing together organisations to promote energy efficiency and/or health related programmes.

For the second funding application KEEP's application for Category 1 and 3 reached interview stage, however, due to timing and location of interviews we were not able to attend the interview. We submitted answers to questions but our application was unsuccessful.

There is another funding round in August 2019 and an application may well be placed for a Kent wide project.

As part of the Warm Homes Fund application process KEEP managed to secure funding towards first time gas central heating installation from Southern Gas Networks (SGN) which will help towards costs for some gas connections and first time gas central heating installation. This will be subject to contractual arrangements between Kent LAs and SGN

**3.7 Better Care Funding**

In addition to providing the funding for the mandatory Disabled Facility Grant the Better Care Fund also allows for discretionary financial assistance to be provided by a Local Authority to enable residents to leave hospital and return to a suitable home environment; thus reducing bed blocking as well as staying safe and well in their homes. Dartford Borough Council receives Better Care Funding from the Government to enable it to assist vulnerable client groups. The Better Care Fund Discretionary Assistance Policy that will assist this client group, by allowing the Council to fully utilise its Better Care Funding was agreed a Cabinet 25 January 2018. The Policy is also aimed at preventing admissions/readmissions to hospital by providing funding to

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eligible households for, for example, essential repairs or heating installation, which, if not carried out, may have a detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing.

The different Grants available to some residents at present include:

**Discretionary Assistance Grants:** 'Fast Track' version of DFG: Urgently needed disabled aids/adaptations recommended by an Occupational Therapist up to £7500

**Hospital Discharge Grants:** To help local residents being discharged from hospital up to £5000

**Safe and Secure Grants (applicants must be 65 + OR have a specific ill health diagnosis/disability):** Up to £5000 Some of the items the funding may be able to help you with include: key safes, electrical rewiring, heating repair or renewal, home repairs, modifications to steps/floors or even moving furniture.

These grants are available to owner occupied or privately rented properties and some to social housing tenants. A number of the Borough's residents have benefited from a blend of LA Flex EGO funding and a Safe and Secure Grant to provide central heating replacement to some very vulnerable residents.

Grant figures for period April 2017 to March 2019.

	2017-2018	2018- 2019	Total
Disabled Facilities Grant	39	28	67
Discretionary Assistance Grants	2	8	10
Safe and Secure Grants	0	8	8
Hospital discharge grants	41	2	43

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

This links to the following targets in the Corporate Plan:

- ET 1 To reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality in the Borough.
- ET2 To ensure that development in Dartford is sustainable with high standards of design, layout and energy/water efficiency.
- HS2 To provide high quality housing services to strive to improve the quality and condition of the Borough's private rented housing sector.
- HP1 The number of households taking part in home energy efficiency improvement programmes/works.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other implications and risk assessments.

Financial Implications.	Reduced emission and water usage from the Council's own estate may assist in offsetting the rising cost of utilities provision
Legal Implications.	The Council has a duty to produce a Greenhouse Gas Emissions report and a Home Energy Conservation Act Report
Public Sector Equality Duty.	<i>N/A</i>
Crime and Disorder duty.	None
Staffing Implications.	To be met within existing resources
Administrative Implications.	To be met within existing resources
Risk Assessment.	Not adapting to climate change may have health and safety implications for the Council and the public -flooding, heat waves, drought etc., and the Council's ability to deliver services

6. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not applicable

7. Appendices

Appendix A -Appendix A: Progress Report on Home Energy Conservation work for reporting to BEIS

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Documents consulted</u>	<u>Date/ File Ref</u>	<u>Report Author</u>	<u>Section and Directorate</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Dartford Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) March 2017 Report	Cabinet April 2017	Peter Dosad (01322) 343327	External Services	NA
Dartford Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) March 2015 Report	Cabinet April 2015	Peter Dosad (01322) 343327	External Services	NA
Dartford Home Energy Conservation Act (1995)	Cabinet April	Peter Dosad (01322) 343327	External Services	NA

March 2013 Report

2013