

**ST.HELENS COUNCIL HECA PROGRESS REPORT MARCH 2017**

ACTION	DETAILS	TIMING
<b>i) LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES</b>		
<p><b>Strategic Commitments</b></p> <p>Liverpool City Region</p>	<p>The Council is committed to delivering actions within the Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP). SEAP is key to delivering the Low Carbon Economy Plan which aims to transform the wider low carbon economy to deliver high quality and long term economic growth and investment across the City Region's six local authorities. The SEAP sets a strategic direction across domestic, transport industrial and commercial sectors and addresses key social issues including fuel poverty. Through this approach the sub regional authorities aim to meet and exceed a carbon reduction target of 20% by 2020.</p> <p>The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Devolution has identified the reduction of fuel poverty as a priority across the City Region.</p> <p>Viridis is a sub-regional collective of housing providers and local authorities allowing member organisations to access expertise on a wide selection of key energy and environmental issues. These range from renewables, retrofit and community energy schemes, and housing best practice. St.Helens Council has supported and contributed to a number of initiatives through Viridis such as training programmes and resident engagement activities.</p> <p>Through Viridus, the Council benefits from subregional funding bids and has the option to access the Liverpool ECO framework as appropriate.</p>	<p>Ongoing unless otherwise stated</p> <p>April 2020</p>

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St Helens Fuel Poverty Strategy	<p>The Council's key strategic commitments to the reduction of fuel poverty and provision of affordable warmth are contained within the current Fuel Poverty Strategy. The Strategy's action plan has the following aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide information, education and advice on affordable warmth</li> <li>• To work together to achieve affordable warmth</li> <li>• To reduce fuel poverty by maximising income</li> <li>• To improve health and well-being through affordable warmth</li> <li>• To improve energy efficiency to achieve affordable warmth</li> </ul> <p>The Council aims to reduce/mitigate increase of fuel poverty from 2010 level of 20% (15,320 households) for life of plan</p> <p>The Council aims to Reduce SAP &lt;35 properties at a rate of 5% of the total from 2010 level of 775 properties for the life of plan.</p> <p>The Council works with a number of partners to achieve these aims and progress is monitored by members of the Fuel Poverty Forum who meet quarterly.</p>	<p>April 2019</p> <p>April 2019</p>
Strategic Partnerships  St Helens Affordable Warmth Unit & Winter Warmer Scheme	<p>The St Helens Affordable Warmth Unit &amp; Winter Warmer Scheme is commissioned and funded by Public Health and works with a range of external partners to deliver outreach advice and small scale measures to vulnerable householders. The Affordable Warmth Unit is an integral part of the Council's Home Improvement Agency and exists to reduce the number of homes in fuel poverty, reduce excess winter deaths and also to provide assistance on any matter related to reducing energy bills.</p>	<p>Subject to Annual Review</p>

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<p>Caribou Green Warmth Service</p> <p>-NEA Warm &amp; Healthy Homes Scheme</p> <p>-Central Heating Fund (CHF)</p>	<p>The Council has a service level agreement with Caribou Green Warmth LLP to facilitate the installation of energy efficiency measures within the Local Authority area. Caribou is a joint venture between local housing providers Helena Partnerships and The Riverside Group together with sustainability specialist the Starfish Group, and was launched in 2013 to act as a one stop shop for people wanting to make their homes more energy efficient. In addition to accessing Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding on behalf of householders, Caribou have project managed heating and insulation schemes on behalf of the Council, enabling householders to benefit from timely and cost effective delivery of works whilst maximising access to a number of financial streams including ECO and grant awards from charitable organisations such as National Energy Action (NEA), Energy Projects Plus (EPP) and from the Government's Central Heating Fund.</p> <p>In January 2016 a Council lead partnership scheme to deliver heating improvements to householders with health vulnerabilities was successful in receiving grant funding from the NEA. The partnership included the Council's Housing and Public Health Services, St Helens CCG, St Helens and Knowsley Hospital Trust, Caribou and the St Helens Fuel Poverty Focus Group. Following completion of the scheme interventions in March 2017 NEA will be carrying out an evaluation and research process with regard to the health improvements arising from the energy efficiency works carried out, to further inform national strategic delivery and targeting of future resources. It is also the Council's intention to roll out the successful delivery process used through this scheme to maximise other funding streams as appropriate.</p> <p>St.Helens Council was included within a successful Liverpool City Region (LCR) Central Heating Fund bid, lead by Sefton Council. The scheme was developed in partnership with all LCR Authorities, SSE who provided ECO funding and Energy Projects Plus. The scheme provided first time central heating systems to vulnerable households across the region.</p> <p>(See section (ii) below for current progress on specific schemes)</p>	<p>Ongoing unless otherwise stated</p> <p>Subject to Annual Review</p> <p>Subject to Annual Review</p> <p>April 2017</p>

ACTION	DETAILS	TIMING Ongoing unless otherwise stated
<b>ii) MEASURES WE ARE TAKING TO RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS OF OUR RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION</b>		
<b>ECO</b>	<p>Through our partnership with Caribou and via the CHF we have assisted households in the borough to access ECO funding to provide heating and insulation measures.</p> <p>Data provided by BEIS indicate that since the start of ECO up to the end of December 2016 7,059 households in St.Helens have benefited from having 8,844 ECO energy efficiency measures installed.</p> <p>St.Helens has had 114 measures installed per 1000 households, whereas the national average is 73.7 measures per 1000 households.</p> <p>Properties in St.Helens with a SAP rating of below 35 have dropped from 676 to 625, between March 2015 and March 2016. Data for 2016/17 is yet to be provided and a further reduction is expected.</p>	
<b>Additional Funding/ Advice Measures</b>	<p>The Council's Housing Assistance Policy allows for the targeting of available finance towards energy efficiency measures through mechanisms, which include zero interest loans, grants and low value emergency assistance. Delivery of affordable warmth interventions through the Council's in house Home Improvement Agency ensures effective targeting of resources to vulnerable households and allows effective linkages with a range of referral bodies. The Council will review available Capital finance and commissioner requirements on an annual basis and will develop assistance packages in accordance with fuel poverty strategy / HECA priorities.</p> <p>The Council's Home Improvement Agency provides a range of non financial services and assistance to promote and enable take up of energy efficiency measures. Working with our partners we have been successful in attracting a wide range of funding in order to support energy efficiency and fuel poverty reduction schemes.</p>	Subject to Annual Review

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	<p>Activities / schemes are detailed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Affordable Warmth Outreach</b> – St.Helens Council’s Public Health continues to support this work and forms part of a wider initiative to reduce the rates of Excess Winter Deaths in the borough. The main function of the Affordable Warmth Outreach is to provide a home visiting service to help residents access affordable heating, insulation measures, and to assist with setting heating controls to make their homes warmer, healthier, and more energy efficient. In addition to the physical improvements that can be made to a property residents are assisted to reduce their fuel bills by accessing the Warm Homes Discount, by providing advice about switching supplier to get cheaper tariffs (via both direct price comparisons and through collective energy switching schemes), and assist those people who are in debt with their energy supplier. The home visits have allowed the identification of additional housing and social needs and onward referrals to a wide range of partner agencies including Caribou, CAB, Occupational Therapy, Home Improvement Agency Services. From April 2015 to the end of March 2017 over 1000 home visits have been completed, with approximately 2500 interventions provided (including advice, onward referrals, and measures). </li> <li> <b>Save Energy Advice Line (SEAL)</b> – The Council also has a service level agreement with Energy Projects Plus to provide an energy efficiency advice line. SEAL is staffed by experienced advisers who have qualifications in energy efficiency advice, renewable energy technologies, customer care standards and up-to-date knowledge of the range of schemes available to residents whatever their personal circumstances. In 2015-16 the SEAL had 2800 enquiries regarding all schemes including general energy advice, collective switching scheme and the Warm Home Discount scheme. </li> <li> <b>St.Helens Winter Warmer Scheme</b> – This project also funded by Public health follows on from previous warm homes healthy people funded schemes. Over the last two winters the initiative has seen the delivery of a cold weather advice line; the distribution of 12,000 winter survival packs to vulnerable homes; and also provision of low cost heating repairs and energy efficiency measures. The project is undertaken with the assistance of many local partners, the main partner being Age UK Mid Mersey. </li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>St.Helens Fuel Poverty Focus Group</b> – The focus group continues to be successful with members from over 20 local organisations regularly attending meetings. The focus group has developed annual work plans and monitors progress against the aims of the St Helens Fuel Poverty Strategy.</li> <li>• <b>Warm Homes Discount Campaign</b> – This annual campaign seeks to maximise the number of vulnerable homes in St.Helens benefitting from the discount. In conjunction with the Council’s revenues and benefits section a mail out is undertaken to those households most likely to be eligible to receive the discount. Clients are offered support to apply for the discount through the Save Energy Advice Line, operated by Energy Projects Plus. Each year the letter was sent to over 7000 vulnerable households. Over the last two years approximately 2700 applications have been made giving savings from electric bills of over £325,000.</li> <li>• <b>Promotional Activity</b> - There has been in excess of 30 promotional activities undertaken since April 2015 including St.Helens annual Affordable Warmth Event and a variety of other multi agency events/promotions.</li> <li>• <b>Training/Affordable Warmth Information Sessions</b> - In order to further promote the assistance available to alleviate fuel poverty and reduce excess winter deaths training/information sessions have been offered to local stakeholders and community groups. Since April 2015 12 sessions have been delivered with 160 people given the advice/information. It is hoped the training will increase the range of St.Helens residents accessing the service and number of referrals.</li> <li>• <b>GP Promotions</b> - The Affordable Warmth Outreach service continues to establish strong links with local GP’s in order to target assistance to those in greatest need. The referral pathway via Information Access St.Helens (IASH) for health professionals to refer to the affordable warmth service is instrumental in forging links with GP’s.</li> <li>• <b>NEA Warm &amp; Healthy Homes Funding</b> – A scheme to deliver heating improvements to householders with health vulnerabilities. The scheme has proved to be very</li> </ul>	

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	<p>successful with 128 vulnerable households receiving a boiler replacement or full central heating.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Central Heating Fund</b> - The scheme provided first time central heating systems to a total of 23 vulnerable households in St. Helens.</li> <li>• <b>Foundations Independent Living Trust (FILT) Gas Safe Funding</b> - The funding is for minor gas-related works essential for gas safety in the homes of vulnerable people. From November 2016 to end of March 2017 a total of 32 properties have received assistance.</li> <li>• <b>Insulation Scheme</b> – St.Helens Council continues to provide an insulation scheme through our SLA with Caribou. The scheme provides standard cavity wall and loft insulation measures. From April 2015 to the end of March 2017 we have directly assisted 79 properties with 83 measures at a cost of approximately £54,000.</li> <li>• <b>Heating Schemes</b> – From all the heating schemes combined (CHF, NEA Warm &amp; Healthy Homes, and other Council Housing Financial Assistance) between April 2015 to the end of March 2017 we have directly assisted 168 properties with a main heating measure (boiler replacement or full central heating) at a combined cost of approximately £507,500 of which over £360,000 was sourced from external funding to the Council.</li> </ul>	
<b>Feed in Tariffs scheme</b>	<p>The Council continues to promote the Feed in Tariff Scheme through the Council website. There have been 764 domestic FIT installations registered from April 2015 up to the end of March 2017. The total domestic FIT's installations are now 2001 giving an installed capacity of 5.841 MW.</p>	
<b>Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)</b>	<p>The Council continues to promote the Renewable Heat through the Council website. From April 2014 to January 2017 there have been a total of 13 accredited domestic installations.</p>	

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<b>Data Use/EPCs</b>	<p>The Council continues to incorporate Energy Performance Certificate data into the Council's energy efficiency housing stock database on an annual basis to ensure updated information is available to effectively target interventions.</p> <p>Data is used to support the Council's strategic aims and is included within the Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Health and Wellbeing Strategies. This supports the Council's bids for additional funding, for example the NEA</p> <p>We will use our data to identify and prioritise interventions with regard to properties achieving SAP of 35 or below.</p> <p>We will continue to ensure that owners are aware of their legal obligation to provide and make available EPCs when selling or letting their homes.</p>	Subject to Annual Review
<b>Minimum Standards in the Private Rental Sector</b>	<p>The Council will continue to offer support to Households in order to improve housing standards and in particular reduce excess cold hazards. Where necessary, enforcement action is taken against landlords who fail to remove Category 1 or 2 Excess Cold hazards. We also work in partnership with a national landlord association in order to support provision of advice and information regarding both housing standards and quality of management, including landlord obligations in relation to EPCs and gas safety.</p> <p>The Council assists both landlords and tenants with advice regarding the proposed implementation of the minimum energy efficiency standards and await the further Government guidance regarding landlord financial and operational issues which will be required to support effective enforcement.</p> <p>A Landlords Forum is held annually in partnership with the National Landlords Association to provide updates to local landlords on any national housing policy amendments and what responsibilities they may have as landlords to improve housing standards. Speakers are</p>	October 2017

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	<p>invited from a variety of organisations and the forums are also used to promote the assistance available through Government, ECO and any local schemes.</p>	
<b>Smart Meters</b>	<p>The Council has supported Age UK with their successful bid for Smart Energy GB funding which enabled the delivery of 20 information events and distribution of 6000 information leaflets.</p> <p>Following the extension of the target date to 2020, local information on the roll out of smart meters within the Liverpool City Region is not yet available. However, the Council will maximise all opportunities to support the roll out locally.</p>	March 2019
<b>Collective Energy Switching</b>	<p>St.Helens Council continues to be a partner of the Liverpool City Region collective energy switching scheme, the 'Switch Together, Save Together' scheme. Up to the end of March 2017 there have been 8 rounds with 2779 registrations and 765 switches. Total estimated savings for St Helens residents is £184,166. The scheme is administered by our project partner Energy Projects Plus.</p>	Subject to Annual Review
<b>Communication/ Marketing</b>	<p>Working with the Council's marketing team a marketing plan has been developed and updated annually to promote the St.Helens Winter Warmer Scheme and the assistance available to improve the energy efficiency of homes in St.Helens. The Council's Affordable Warmth Unit (AWU) continues to work with a range of local services and organisations through the St.Helens Fuel Poverty Focus Group. This enables the AWU to promote the assistance available to as many vulnerable residents as possible.</p>	
<b>Registered Provider</b>	Registered Providers operating within the St Helens Borough are engaged in a range of	

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<b>Activity</b>	<p>activities to improve the energy efficiency of their properties and to encourage their tenants in programmes associated with behavioural change. A selection of those schemes and activities are identified below:-</p> <p><b>Torus - Helena Partnerships</b></p> <p>Helena Partnerships, now part of the Torus Group, have continued to improve the energy efficiency of their housing. From April 2015 to March 2017 they have completed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PV installations to 563 properties - resulting in estimated savings on tenants fuel bills of £67,560 and annual CO<sup>2</sup> savings of 515 tonnes.</li> <li>• Installation of 4 solar PV battery storage systems.</li> <li>• Installation of a unique ground source heat pump linking PV/Batteries and heat pump to 36 units, considerably reducing running costs and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.</li> <li>• Provided one to one energy advice to over 500 properties.</li> <li>• The installation of 333 central heating / A rated boilers, resulting in estimated savings on tenants fuel bills of £26,640 and annual CO<sup>2</sup> savings of 257 (tonnes).</li> <li>• The building of 11 new homes in St Helens, affordable / Shared Ownership, built to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.</li> </ul>	Ongoing unless otherwise stated
<b>iii) MEASURES WE PROPOSE TO COST EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION BY USING AREA BASED/STREET BY STREET ROLL OUT</b>		
<b>ECO</b>	<p>Through our work with Caribou we have continued to access ECO funding wherever possible. ECO funding has proved difficult to access since April 2015, however through our heating and insulation schemes the Council have accessed over £19,000 worth of ECO support.</p> <p>With regards to area based approaches the Council continues to support Registered Providers and their delivery agents to maximise their area based improvement programmes and to encourage the potential roll out of interventions to the private sector.</p> <p>However, due to the uncertainty of ECO funding it is no longer cost effective to pursue a street by street approach to identify those properties requiring assistance. A greater emphasis</p>	

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	<p>has been placed on working with local health partners to identify those households in need of assistance.</p> <p>St.Helens Council is currently working with other Liverpool City Region Authorities to maximise any opportunities that may arise from ECO Flex, including the development of a joint Statement of Intent for the Liverpool City Region as it is expected that establishing a consistent statement across the region will encourage a greater interest from energy companies. Following the successful targeting of the NEA heating scheme to households exhibiting low income and poor health, it is expected that these criteria will be the focus for future ECO flex delivery in St Helens</p>	<p>Ongoing unless otherwise stated</p> <p>July 2017</p>
<p><b>iv) NATIONAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS</b></p>		
	<p>Registered Providers  Viridis / Local Enterprise Partnership  People's Board (formerly the St Helens Health and Wellbeing Board)  EST  NEA  St Helens Chamber  NLA  St Helens CAB  VCO/St Helens Forum  St Helens Ward Councillors  Association of Local Energy Officers (ALEO)  Merseyside HECA Forum  LCR/NW Fuel Poverty Group</p> <p>St.Helens Council maintains a strong emphasis on partnership work and the benefits this can have on improving energy efficiency and reducing the effects of Fuel Poverty and Excess Winter Deaths. The Council continues to work with a broad range of local and national partners and has resulted in accessing significant levels of funding to provide assistance to vulnerable households across the borough.</p>	

## **Abbreviations**

<b>AGMA</b>	<b>Association of Greater Manchester Authorities</b>
<b>BRE</b>	<b>British Research Establishment</b>
<b>CO<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Carbon Dioxide</b>
<b>CSCO</b>	<b>Carbon Saving Communities Obligation</b>
<b>DECC</b>	<b>Department of Energy and Climate Change</b>
<b>DoH</b>	<b>Department of Health</b>
<b>ECO</b>	<b>Energy Company Obligations</b>
<b>EPC</b>	<b>Energy Performance Certificate</b>
<b>HECA</b>	<b>Home Energy Conservation Act</b>
<b>IMD</b>	<b>Indices of Multiple Deprivation</b>
<b>JSNA</b>	<b>Joint Strategic Needs Assessment</b>
<b>LCR</b>	<b>Liverpool City Region</b>
<b>LSOA</b>	<b>Lower Super Output Area</b>
<b>ONS</b>	<b>Office for National Statistics</b>
<b>SAP</b>	<b>Standard Assessment Procedure</b>
<b>UNO</b>	<b>The Council's Energy Software database</b>