

## **Analysis of current benefits and impacts of the individual programmes**

### **Tackling Excess Cold in the Private Rented Sector**

The Housing Enforcement Team works with local private landlords to increase energy efficiency activity in all areas through education and increased awareness at landlord forums and via landlord communications and through the Accreditation Scheme run in conjunction with the National Landlords Association. Landlords are encouraged to take measures funded through ECO and Green Deal to improve the energy efficiency of their properties, reducing energy use, saving residents money, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving the health, well-being and comfort of the occupiers whilst potentially maintaining or increasing the value of the property through appropriate maintenance and improvements.

Where necessary, Housing Enforcement Officers utilise enforcement powers under the Housing Act 2004 where excess cold hazards are identified following a Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment, to require landlords to remedy the excess cold hazard in their properties.

Officers are raising tenant awareness that from April 2016 landlords of residential properties will not be able to unreasonably refuse requests from their tenants for consent to energy efficiency improvements, where financial support, such as the Green Deal or ECO is available.

### **Tackling Excess Cold in Privately Owned property occupied by low income households**

The Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency deliver Repairs Assistance grants to elderly and low income vulnerable households where excess cold is identified following a HHSRS assessment and the household meets the eligibility criteria for assistance. The Council's capital programme for heating in 2014/2015 is £300,000.

As part of the screening process for eligibility Agency Caseworkers carry out a benefit entitlement check in order to maximise household income for elderly, disabled and low income clients.

Following two successful bids to the Department of Health's Warm Home: Healthy People Funding in 2011/12 and 2012/13 the Winter Warmth Partnership was formed which aims to tackle excess winter deaths due to vulnerable residents living in cold, energy inefficient homes. The Partnership involves the Peterborough Care & Repair Home Improvement Agency, Peterborough Environment City Trust, Public Health – Healthy Lifestyles Team, the Salvation Army and Age UK. The Partnership delivered a citywide campaign raising awareness of the impact of cold homes on health and wellbeing, energy efficiency audits and advice in the home, free boiler and gas fire servicing and repairs and referrals into energy efficiency funding streams. Although the funding has now been withdrawn the partnership still exists and cross referrals for assistance and advice are continued to be made

Park Home Project – The Care & Repair Agency are delivering external wall insulation to park homes within the City funded through the Councils capital programme for Repairs Assistance. Park homes are predominantly occupied by households on low, fixed incomes who are likely to be in fuel poverty due to the high costs of heating their park home.

### **Effective Targeting of Fuel Poor Households**

The Housing Programmes Team have recently commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to conduct a Private Sector Stock Modelling Report. The stock modelling will inform future housing strategies and policies and will ensure that investment and resources are targeted to the most appropriate areas by the utilisation of data on tenure, the prevalence of Category 1 hazards (particularly excess cold) identified under HHSRS, the energy efficiency of dwellings and vulnerable households living in fuel poverty. A Quantitative Health Impact Assessment of the private housing stock has also been commissioned which will quantify the health costs to the NHS and the wider society of people living in poor quality, energy inefficient housing and will demonstrate the health cost benefit of enforcement and financial assistance to reduce health and safety hazards in the home. Both reports will be available by the end of this financial year.

### **Collective Switching**

Collective switching is when consumers combine together to negotiate a group deal with their gas and electricity suppliers with the aim of reducing their energy bills. The Council appointed a third party provider, iChoosr to undertake this on behalf of the residents of Peterborough and residents of other local authorities as well.

So far the Council has entered into 8 rounds of collective switching amounting to £752K in energy savings. 6062 residents across all participating authorities have successfully switched resulting in an annual average saving of £207 per household.

### **Peterborough Energy Package**

The Peterborough Energy Package (PEP) is a unique set of benefits which is an alternative to collective switching and is more focussed on energy efficiency rather than a straight reduction in cost of an energy tariff. The Council negotiated an arrangement whereby residents can benefit from a package of the following:-

- The latest promotional British Gas Tariff (these vary quarterly)
- Dual Fuel discount
- Free ECO Assessment or reimbursed Green Deal Assessment
- A 'Smart Meter Assessment' / Installation
- Nectar Points

The cost benefits of the PEP vary according to which promotional tariff British Gas is offering at the time of joining, however some elements of it are fixed. These are typically:-

- Dual Fuel discount worth £15
- Free ECO Assessment or Green Deal Assessment worth between £129 and £140
- A 'Smart Meter' Installation worth on average £65 per annum in savings
- Nectar Points worth £7

The first two promotional tariffs were: (a) 'Fix and Control' (with the "Hive" heating control system that allows customers to better manage their energy usage) and (b) 'Fix and Reward' (with the issuing of a Gift Card). These packages gave overall average annual savings to the customer of £150 and £50 respectively.

In addition, the PEP has led to over 50 customers enquiring about free home energy efficiency measures through Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Funding. These are typically loft and cavity wall insulation.

### **Green Deal Community Fund**

Promoted under the 'Heataborough' initiative, the GDCF was a successful Council bid for £3.9 million from the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC). The bid was focused on 11,000 of the City's most "hard to treat" domestic properties (in its Gladstone, Millfield, New England and Eastfield wards areas); collectively known as the "Target Area" because of the particularly poor construction of homes there. The main focus is on private landlords, as the Target Area has a very high proportion of rented homes, although the scheme is available to all households in the Target Area, and will eventually be offered to other parts of the City. It is intended that under the programme, households will be offered a holistic package of home energy efficiency improvements with a primary focus on external solid wall insulation (EWI) but including other secondary measures such as loft insulation, energy efficient boilers, double glazing and draught proofing. In addition, the Council has received ECO funding from EON which combined with the GDCF funding is worth up to £6000 per household. This funding together with a Green Deal Finance Plan will help to create an average net saving of £100 per household per annum, with some homes achieving considerably more.

### **Private Residential Solar PV**

In December 2014, Cabinet approved the decision to enter into a strategic partnership with Empower Community LLP to deliver a city wide free private residential solar PV scheme. The characteristics of the scheme are:-

- No cost to the owner for installation
- Free energy generated to the occupier
- A fee for installation paid to the owner
- Creation of a local community fund out of profits
- A fee to the Council out of profits generated
- Investment returns generated by the Council

It is anticipated that for those homes that take up the offer, this will generate savings of around £200 per household per annum. Initially, the scheme will focus on the Target Area, where fuel poverty is higher, but it will also be made available to the whole City as quickly as possible.

This page is intentionally left blank