### Home Energy Conservation Act Further Report 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Local Authority</th>
<th>Durham County Council</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of contact within the Local Authority</td>
<td>Cliff Duff – Housing Regeneration Project Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Address | County Hall  
Durham City  
County Durham  
DH1 5UL |
| Telephone contact number | 03000 265 262 |
| E-mail contact address | WarmHomes@durham.gov.uk |

## Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) recognises the ability of Local Authorities to use their position to significantly improve the energy efficiency of all residential accommodation and coordinate the reduction in levels of fuel poverty in their local areas. In July 2012 the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) published a requirement under HECA for all local authorities in England to report on the measures they have taken to achieve this aim.

BEIS has set a deadline of 31st March 2017 for Local Authorities to publish their biennial HECA progress report setting out their objectives to improve the energy efficiency of homes in their locality and the actions taken to help achieve these objectives. This report summarises the actions taken by Durham County Council.

### Fuel Poverty

Fuel poverty arises from a households’ inability to afford the energy required to power and heat their home to a satisfactory standard. This standard is defined as satisfactory where a domestic temperature of 21°C in the primary living area (living room) and 18°C in the secondary living area (other occupied rooms) are achieved. This regime is one which is necessary for good health and wellbeing.

Recent trends have seen an increase in the cost of all fuels and the average annual gas and electricity energy bill is now £1,238 (BEIS 2016).  

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County Durham Fuel Poverty Statistics
The Low Income High Cost fuel poverty indicator\(^2\) shows 12.2% of households in County Durham are in fuel poverty equating to 28,792 households. This is the same as the average level of fuel poverty in the North East region. However in West Durham there are settlements off the gas network when fuel poverty levels are significantly higher, peaking at 33.9% as shown in Map A.

Map A – Levels of Fuel Poverty in County Durham

Cold Related Illness Statistics
There were an estimated 24,300 excess winter deaths (EWDs) in England and Wales in the 2015/16 winter period. This represents an excess winter mortality index of 15%; that is 15% more deaths occurred in winter compared to the non-winter months. The number of EWDs has almost halved since the 2014/15 period and is closer to the 5-year average (years 2011/12 to 2015/16)\(^3\).

Cold weather has a direct effect on the incidence of heart attack, stroke, respiratory disease, flu, falls and hypothermia. There are associated indirect effects on mental health problems and the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.\(^4\) The strongest link is between respiratory disease and the cold although the greatest disease burden is caused by cardiovascular disease. The number of excess winter deaths varies between years and on average it is around 24,000. The Excess Winter Death Index (EWDI) in County Durham has been falling over time although the period 2010-13


\(^3\) Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2016, Excess winter mortality in England and Wales: 2015/16 (provisional) and 2014/15 (final)

saw an increase on 2009-12. Between 2006-09 and 2010-13 the index fell by almost 13% (from 21.8 to 19). Although County Durham’s index is higher than England, the difference is not statistically significant. For the period 2006-09 there were a total of 1,078 excess winter deaths at an average of 359 per year (all ages). This compares to 944 deaths for the period 2010-13, at an average of 315 per year.\(^5\)

**County Durham Geography and Deprivation**

Within County Durham 290,892 (56%) of people live in urban areas and 228,803 (44%) live in rural areas as shown in Table 1 below.\(^6\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>County Durham</th>
<th>North East</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2015)</td>
<td>519,695</td>
<td>2,596,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Age Population</td>
<td>327,617</td>
<td>1,660,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Persons % (Over 65) 2015</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty Homes % (Longer than 6 months) April 2016(^7)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Price 2016 (Average)(^8)</td>
<td>£126,053</td>
<td>£157,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel Poverty %2014)</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Qualifications% (2011)</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income. 2016(^9)</td>
<td>£30,978</td>
<td>£31,528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits Claimants – Main Benefit Claimants - Working-age client group % (August 2016)(^10)</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits Claimants - Job Seekers % (August 2016)</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment: Employees at place of Work.2015(^11)</td>
<td>173,000</td>
<td>1,071,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**County Durham Housing Stock**

The County Durham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2016 assumes a total of 239,685 dwellings in County Durham of which 1,841 are second homes, 11,522 vacant and 226,322 are occupied. The overall vacancy rate is 4.8%. This compares with vacancy rates of 2.7% across England.

The tenure profile of County Durham is analysed in the SHMA. Overall, based on survey evidence, 65.9% of occupied dwellings are owner-occupied, 20% are social rented, 13.9% are private rented, and 0.1% are intermediate tenure (e.g. shared ownership).

**County Durham Housing Build Types**

The SHMA reviews the profile of all dwelling stock based on Valuation Office Agency data for County Durham, the vast majority (79.4%) of properties are houses, 15.1%

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\(^5\) DCC (2015) DCC Cold Weather Plan  
\(^6\) ONS Mid Year Population Estimates 2015 and Rural Urban LSOA Classification  
\(^7\) Council Tax – 2016 and NLPG Residential Properties  
\(^8\) Land Registry  
\(^9\) CACI data  
\(^10\) ONS Nomis  
\(^11\) These figures exclude farm agriculture (SIC subclass 01000)
are bungalows, 5.0% are flats/apartments and maisonettes and 0.4% are other types of property including park homes/caravans. Of all occupied properties, 6.1% have one bedroom/studio, 35.2% have two bedrooms, 43.8% have three bedrooms and 15.0% have four or more bedrooms.

**National Legislation and Targets**
The Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000 requires the government to implement a strategy to eradicate fuel poverty in England along with establishing national targets and timescales. This has resulted in the introduction of national fuel poverty and domestic energy conservation grant programmes to provide warmer homes and lower fuel bills.

Following the Hills Fuel Poverty Review the Government is moving away from the 10% of income fuel poverty indicator in favour of a new Low Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator. It is expected that all future measurement of fuel poverty will use the LIHC Indicator.

**Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm: a new fuel poverty strategy for England**
Under the Warm Homes and Energy conservation Act 2000 and the Fuel Poverty Regulations 2014 the government have introduced a new Fuel Poverty Strategy and targets to address the situation of persons in England who live in fuel poverty. The Fuel Poverty Regulations create a new fuel poverty target of ensuring that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency standard of Band C by 2030. The government has also published the Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Rating Methodology, setting out in detail how Local Authorities will measure energy efficiency standards of fuel poor households in relation to the new fuel poverty target.

The government's new fuel poverty target will assist those most vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home and sets out the following long term targets:

As many fuel poor homes in England as is reasonably practicable to Band E by 2020 –15% of fuel poor households currently live in F and G rated homes 12
As many fuel poor homes in England as is reasonably practicable to Band D by 2025 – 46% of fuel poor households currently live in E rated homes

At the same time actions taken to tackle fuel poverty will bring wider benefits, supporting jobs, saving carbon and improving health.

**Strategic Links**
The Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2014 - 2030 was launched by DCC in November 2014. The SCS sets out a vision for an ‘altogether better’ Durham by 2030 and provides direction and context for partners to work to improve quality of life in the county. Fundamentally, this is about realising two aims for County Durham:

*An altogether better place*
*Altogether better for people*

The SCS sets out five priority themes and high level objectives:

*Altogether wealthier*
*Altogether better for children and young people*
*Altogether healthier*
*Altogether safer*

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12 Band A to G rated homes related to the energy performance of a domestic dwelling
Home Energy Conservation Act Report 2017

Altogether greener

The Regeneration Statement (RS) 2012-2022 underpins the SCS and in particular supports the vision of an ‘Altogether wealthier’ Durham. The RS frames the County Durham Housing Strategy. As part of the RS, the Council has put housing, regeneration and economic development at the forefront of our priorities.

The Council’s Housing Strategy to 2020 is being developed around two high level aims:
Altogether better delivery and standards; and
Altogether better housing support.

These two aims are associated with the following related objectives for County Durham:
The delivery of more homes
The improvement of housing stock and the wider environment in the social and private sector
The provision of advice, assistance and support for older and vulnerable people
Improving access to housing.

County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy
Durham County Council is committed to tackling the issue of fuel poverty faced by many of its low income residents. The County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy (AWS) received corporate approval in 2009 and supports delivery of the County Durham Housing Strategy. The AWS co-ordinates all fuel poverty and domestic energy conservation activities within County Durham and maximises the assistance for fuel poor households provided under the national energy and fuel poverty programmes.

Since 2012 a range of new national fuel poverty funding programmes and reporting requirements have been introduced by the Government. Consequently the AWS was refreshed in March 2015 and December 2016 in order to ensure alignment with the new national fuel poverty indicator, the new National Fuel Poverty Strategy 2015-2030 and compliance with the reporting requirements under the Home Energy Conservation Act.

Delivery of Warmer Energy Efficient Homes
The County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership (EFPP) is responsible for co-ordination and delivery of the County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan. This partnership brings together key strategic partners and stakeholders to maximise uptake of all current local and national energy conservation and fuel poverty programmes. This prioritises the assistance available to households in County Durham by maximising external funding opportunities and facilitating partnership working in the delivery of energy efficiency and fuel poverty projects whilst reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions and Energy Usage
The requirement to improve the energy efficiency of homes stems from the legal requirements to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions set out in the Climate Change Act 2008 and the government’s Carbon Plan, published in 2011. The Carbon Plan sets the following targets in relation to housing:
Home Energy Conservation Act Report 2017

To reduce greenhouse gas CO2 emissions by 29% by 2017, 35% by 2022, and 50% by 2027 – for buildings this means a reduction of between 24% and 39% lower than 2009 levels by 2027
To insulate all cavities and lofts, where practical, by 2020
By 2030, between 1 - 3.7m additional solid wall installations and between 1.9 - 7.2m other energy efficiency installations
By 2030, 1.6m - 8.6m building level low carbon heat installations such as heat pumps (Government modelling suggests that 21 - 45% of heat supplies to buildings will need to be low carbon) and by 2050 emissions from UK buildings to be “close to zero”

Total domestic energy usage 2014 in County Durham is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Domestic Energy Consumption (GWh) in County Durham 2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coal (97 GWh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petroleum Products (114 GWh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elec (800 GWh)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT PROGRESS REPORT 2017**

Durham County Council have produced their annual HECA progress for submission to the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and made publically available to all residents via their web site.

1 **BACKGROUND**

1.1 In 2012 the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change issued new guidance to English Energy Conservation Authorities (ECAs) setting out their obligations pursuant to the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995.

This document represents Durham County Council’s Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change from April 2015 to March 2017.

Specifically, the guidance requires that ECAs publish a publically available report on their plans and actions to achieve improved energy efficiency by 31st March 2017 and to report on progress in implementing their proposed
measures annually up to an including 31 March 2027; ECAs are to consider setting out a timeframe for delivery and the role key local partners, such as partners, stakeholders and community organisations, can play in supporting their plans.

ECAs are to report on the energy conservation measures it considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in their areas.

1.2 Durham County Council’s HECA Report shows the following levels of fuel poverty in County Durham\textsuperscript{13}.

- Countywide level of fuel poverty 12.2%
- North West Durham 12.8%
- City of Durham 11.9%
- Easington 11.6%
- North Durham 11.4%
- Sedgefield 11.2%
- Countywide domestic energy usage 4,075 GWh (2014)\textsuperscript{14}
- Average domestic energy performance (energy database): SAP 62

2 LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES

2.1 Strategic Commitment

During the period 2013/14 Durham County Council established targets to reduce levels of fuel poverty, domestic energy usage and climate change emissions. These targets are based on the new energy efficiency programs introduced by the Energy Act 2011.

The County Durham Home Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership (EFPP) oversees the implementation of the County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy as part of the Durham County Council corporate Housing Strategy. The Affordable Warmth Strategy co-ordinates all countywide actions to maximise the uptake of fuel poverty and domestic energy conservation intervention programs.

Monitoring of all strategic and delivery related activities relating to fuel poverty and the Home Energy Conservation Act is undertaken by this partnership.

The delivery of HECA sits alongside the reduction of countywide levels of fuel poverty and is delivered using the County Durham Affordable Warmth Action Plan. This ensures actions are coordinated across partner organisations to maximise the assistance available to households along with maximising uptake of energy efficiency and fuel poverty programmes.

Progress is monitored using DCC's Housing Energy Database and Stock Condition Model. Data is gathered using an extensive network involving internal council service providers and external partners and organisations. This provides


an up-to-date targeting and reporting platform for all area based fuel poverty and domestic energy efficiency programmes.

2.2 COUNTY DURHAM AFFORDABLE WARMTH STRATEGY

The County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy (AWS) is central to the co-ordination and delivery of a wide range of actions aimed at reducing countywide levels of fuel poverty and provision of warmer, energy efficient homes. Durham County Council's Warm Homes Campaign is the mechanism that ensures joint working and promotion on all local and national fuel poverty programmes in partnership with local communities using local community venues and partner organisations.

With the introduction of the Energy Company Obligation 2(extension) it is clear that the Government expects Local Authorities to play an increasingly important role in delivery of area based energy efficiency programmes over the coming years. This will be achieved by the application of local knowledge to co-ordinate area based energy efficiency programmes. Accurate targeting of assistance ensures the households most in need support receive assistance.

Key Objectives

The key objectives of the County Durham AWS 2015-20 include providing warmer homes and lower energy bills to help eliminate fuel poverty across County Durham. Working in a broad strategic partnership assists with achieving these key aims and objectives.

Aim 1: Maintain a strategic partnership to co-ordinate delivery of affordable warmth and energy efficiency programmes in County Durham

Aim 2: Maintain a countywide housing energy database and housing stock database to target assistance and report on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmes

Aim 3: Maximise the uptake of all current energy efficiency programmes for private sector properties

Aim 4: Maximise awareness of energy efficiency programmes in Social and Registered Provider properties

Aim 5: Signpost vulnerable households to income maximisation and debt management services

Aim 6: Improve the health and wellbeing of residents and reduce health inequalities by minimising the negative health impacts of cold homes

Aim 7: Provision of energy efficiency advice services

3 COUNTYWIDE PROMOTIONAL AND ASSISTANCE MECHANISM

3.1 County Durham Warm Homes Campaign

The Durham County Council Warm Homes Campaign seeks to maximise awareness and uptake of fuel poverty and domestic energy conservation schemes. It also provides assistance to make it easier for households to apply for home insulation and central heating grants and provides general advice on saving energy.
More than 900 local community venues throughout County Durham participate in the Warm Homes Campaign. These venues distribute advice literature to help raise awareness of the scheme. Venues range from public buildings and libraries to local community groups and post offices. This listing is advised by the Local Authority Planning Gazetteer.

The campaign provides one to one advice, help and support for residents wanting to reduce their energy bills or to apply for fuel poverty and energy efficiency grant schemes. Regular articles are featured in Durham County News and an e-newsletter is distributed to all internal and external stakeholders and partners.

Durham County Council’s Warm Homes Campaign promotes the ECO funded Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) scheme across County Durham to raise awareness, provide credibility and encourage eligible households to apply for the scheme.

Promotion of the ECO funded boilers and insulation offers have been focused on key priority areas as shown in our Energy database and stock condition model. Hard to treat property types and hard to reach residents whilst also ensuring information to the wider public is available Durham County Council’s well established Warm Homes Campaign provides local credibility for schemes and our countywide housing energy database ensures the needs of Durham’s residents are central to the overall project.

### 4 ENERGY and FUEL POVERTY TARGETING

#### 4.1 Housing and Fuel Poverty Database Targeting

Domestic housing data is essential to assist with effective targeting and promotion of fuel poverty and domestic energy conservation schemes. This is a problem that the Local Government Association (LGA) and Durham County Council have been working together to tackle. DCC believe that better targeting and a focus on improved local property specific data is the solution. We have developed a guide demonstrating a whole stock energy management database is a powerful and cost-effective targeting tool. This guide has been distributed by the Local Government Association (LGA) to assist other Local Authorities with targeting for local ECO schemes.

To ensure the database is kept up-to-date large quantities of domestic energy performance data is imported into the database from a variety of sources including Building Control, energy utility companies and Landmark. 70,000 Energy Performance Certificates were imported providing detailed energy related property specific information and energy related records were imported from DCC’s Building Control Service competent person data.

This allows analysis and targeting of measures under the ECO and HHCRO programmes or any other initiatives that come forward.

### 5 MONITORING

#### 5.1 Energy Efficiency Measures Installed 2015 - 2017

The Housing Energy Database uses a variety of data to build a comprehensive Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) data analysis of the private sector housing in County Durham. Data from Building control competent persons scheme, Energy Performance Certificates, surveys etc. are input into the
database to provide up to date information for targeting and monitoring purposed. This allows monitoring and analysis of the majority of measures that are carried out to domestic properties. This allows us to report on the success of promotional activities across the whole of county Durham and to monitor how the SAP energy performance is changing in geographical localities.

Over the period of this HECA Report in 2015-16 there were a total of 21,500 domestic energy efficiency measures installed in County Durham.

In the period 2016-17 there was a total of 13,327 energy efficiency measures installed in domestic properties in County Durham as shown in the graphs below:

Legend for Domestic Energy Efficiency Measures
CERTAS - New Double Glazing
FENSA – New Double Glazing
GAS SAFE - New Gas Boilers
HETAS – Biomass and Solid Fuel Central Heating  
OFTEC – New Oil Boilers  
BMCL – Biomass Register  
CIGA – Cavity Wall Insulation  

Source: Building Control Competent Persons Data and Energy Performance Certificate Data 2015-17

6  
**HOUSING and HEALTH**

6.1 **Housing Stock Condition Model**  
Durham County Council recognises that poor housing has an important effect on health as most occupiers spend longer in their own home than anywhere else.

The Council commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to produce an enhanced housing stock database to help understand the condition of the private sector housing within County Durham. The housing stock model is based on data gathered from a number of sources including the English Housing Survey (EHS) and includes an assessment of dwelling hazards using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

**Health Impact Assessment**  
The County Durham Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a formal method of assessing the impact of poor housing on the health of the population of County Durham. HIAs are advocated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) who state:

The “HIA provides decision-makers with information about how poor housing can affect health. The WHO support the use of a HIA because of its ability to influence policies, programmes and/or projects.

This HIA draws on evidence of the health impact of housing hazards identified using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and a methodology developed by the BRE Trust and published in the “Real Cost of Poor Housing”. The HHSRS is the method by which housing condition is now assessed in accordance with the Housing Act 2004. A dwelling with a Category 1 Hazard is considered to fail the minimum statutory standard for housing and is classified as ‘poor housing’.

Data from the housing stock model and database is used as a basis for the Health Impact Assessment to better understand the effect of private sector housing hazards and intervention strategies on the health of residents in County Durham.

Poor housing and low incomes can worsen existing ill health problems including heart, respiratory problems and strokes. Being chronically cold or malnourished

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15 The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings
makes people more vulnerable to sickness, 44% of households have one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness\(^\text{16}\). Energy and food bills have continued to rise worsening this situation.

The estimated cost to the NHS of treating domestic accidents and ill-health in County Durham caused by these hazards during the next ten years is £39 million. If the wider costs to society are considered, the total costs are estimated to be £98 million. If these hazards are mitigated then the total annual savings to society are estimated to be £9.2 million including £3.7 million of savings to the NHS.

The quantitative information provided in this HIA on the impact of private sector housing on health provides an invaluable contribution to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The results will contribute to the provision of evidence of the costs, savings and benefits of improving housing in the private sector, and the costs to health of not doing so.

The data from the Housing Stock Model has been used as a basis for the HIA to better understand the effect of private sector housing hazards and intervention strategies on the health of residents in Durham.

7  JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

7.1 Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA’s) are used by local authorities, the NHS and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) to quantify baseline health needs data.

The quantitative information provided by the Durham County Council Health Impact Assessment (HIA) on the impact on health of private sector housing provides an invaluable contribution to the JSNA. The HIA provides evidence on costs, savings and benefits of improving housing in the private sector and the costs to health of not doing so.

The reduction in the numbers of households suffering fuel poverty is a key element within the JSNA allowing a strategic linkage with the Health and Wellbeing strategy and Clinical Commissioning Groups. This led to the development of our Housing and Health Targeting Matrix as detailed below in Item 8.

8  HEALTH AND HOUSING TARGETING MATRIX

8.1 Durham County Council developed a Housing and Health Targeting Matrix to act as a new method of targeting fuel poor households with poor health conditions. The Matrix uses DCC’s data from three key sources:

1. Health Data from Public Health
2. DCC’s Housing Stock Condition Model
3. DCC’s Housing Energy Database

The above data is brought together to provide a ranking of the worst housing conditions alongside the worst areas for Asthma and COPD. The Matrix also

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\(^{16}\) Source: Krishnan Bhaskaran et al (2010) Short term effects of temperature on risk of myocardial infarction in England and Wales: time series regression analysis of the Myocardial Ischaemia National Audit Project (MiNAP) registry. BMJ;341:c4540

http://www.bmj.com/content/341/bmj.c4540
indicates the GP surgeries that are embedded into these localities with poor housing and ill health.

Discussion have taken place with one GP surgery and a pilot project has commenced allowing contact to be made with patients having a cold related illness in these localities. Targeted actions will be taking place in early 2017 to make contact these patients to raise awareness of fuel poverty programmes and encourage them to engage in these programmes.

This pilot will be analysed by Durham and Teesside Universities Health Departments to assess the pre and post intervention health impacts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>WARM AND HEALTHY HOMES PROJECT</th>
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</table>
| 9.1 | The project has been running since 2014 to address levels of both excess winter deaths and hospital admissions for those residents in County Durham who have a health condition relating to living in a cold damp home. The project provides grant funding to install domestic energy efficiency measures and maximising incomes resulting in warmer homes, enabling people to manage fuel debt and assisting in reducing cold related illnesses. The installation of these measures also aims to enhance the condition of private sector housing stock across County Durham.

The project delivers a countywide referral and training process for front line health and Social Care practitioners along with other partner organisations to enable them to refer patients/clients for assistance. Practitioners are informed of the scheme through an awareness raising programme delivered by Durham County Council staff through a range of mechanisms including health team meetings/ e-mail updates. This provides information in promoting the scheme and to explain how to make a referral.

The project has developed clear linkages with the two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) across County Durham in order to make them aware of the impact the project can have on their patients, reducing hospital admission and re-admission rates and improving life quality.

In 2016 the project received a best practice award from the national fuel poverty charity (NEA) for innovation in working with front line health practitioners and assistance for low income households with a cold related illness. The project represents good practice and value for money. Delivery is capable of being scaled up using the targeting mechanisms available using the Health Impact Assessment and Housing Stock Database.

Once a referral has been received by Durham County Council, there are four main opportunities to assist households as follows:

1. Free insulation and central heating measures for qualifying households under the Energy Company Obligation installed by Warm Up North
2. Insulation and central heating measures funded by Public Health and installed by Warm Up North subject to qualifying criteria
3. Green Deal loan from WUN British Gas to install insulation and central heating measures at a substantially reduced cost (subject to qualifying criteria)
4. In addition advice on energy suppliers and tariffs including the switching process, a benefits check, a fire safety check referral and referral to the
Public Health fund can be made subject to eligibility criteria as set by Durham County Council Public Health and Housing Service

**Progress**
From April 2015 to March 2017 the project has provided awareness raising sessions to 247 front line social care and health professionals including GP’s who operate across County Durham. 323 referrals for assistance have been received with 98 of those referrals qualifying for central heating boiler replacements or repairs. All households received fuel tariff advice, welfare check and 43 opted to have a fire safety check. The project has been show cased at the Building Research Establishment Health and Housing Conference as an example of good practice.

The project is an integral part of the long term health condition care pathway that is developed or in the process of being developed. It will also link to the services developed from Social Care/Re-ablement funding and work on hospital discharges.

**10 DECC FUEL POVERTY AND HEALTH BOOSTER FUND**

10.1 In 2016 DCC were invited to participate in the DECC funded Fuel Poverty and Health Booster Fund pilot. This innovative pilot allowed DCC to work alongside front line health practitioners to provide warmer homes for their low income patients who were suffering from a cold related illness. Training and briefing sessions were carried out for from line health practitioners in County Durham to encourage them to refer their patients to DCC for assistance. DECCC funding was used to provide new boilers and central heating measures in 32 households to improve their health and wellbeing.

Sheffield Hallam University are involved in the pilot to research the effects upon the health and wellbeing of the patients involved in the study pre and post installation. This pilot was run alongside DCC’s Warm and Healthy Homes project to maximise the assistance available to low income households with ill health.

**11 PROGRAMMES DELIVERING AREA BASED ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMODATION**

11.1 **Promotion and Delivery of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO)**

From 2015 private sector residents in County Durham have been offered a wide range of energy improvements, all tailored to the needs of the occupants. The Green Deal, ECO and HHRCO programmes have been promoted to households that have low incomes or need to carry out energy efficiency improvements.

In County Durham there are estimated to be 36,500 ‘hard to treat’ domestic properties with a large number of the remaining homes still able to benefit from improvements. Large scale promotions have taken place with off gas rural communities to promote renewable energy technologies and insulation programs.

Measures offered to households across County Durham have included:
- Solid wall insulation
- High efficiency boilers and new radiators
- Double glazed windows and new front and back doors
- Loft insulation
### 12. WARM UP NORTH LOCAL AUTHORITY PARTNERSHIP

**12.1** Warm Up North (WuN) is a regional Local Authority Partnership involving the following nine north east Local Authorities (LA's):
- Newcastle City Council
- Durham
- Gateshead
- Darlington
- Northumberland
- Sunderland
- Hartlepool
- Redcar and Cleveland
- South Tyneside

WuN procured British Gas as its ECO funding partner to providing funding to install up to £200m worth of domestic energy conservation measures to at least 15,000 homes across the North East.

The Partnership has four key objectives:
- Improve domestic energy efficiency / reduce energy consumption
- Reduce consumer energy bills / alleviate fuel poverty
- Reduce carbon emissions
- Safeguard / create employment.

As a result a range of programs have been established designed to:
- Engaged different communication approaches and messages with customers
- Supported local jobs, skills and training
- Installed energy efficiency measures

Each Local Authority Partner (LAP) is directly involved in project management and governance through representation on the Partner Steering Group (PSG) and is represented on the Liaison Committee (joint meeting with British Gas). This enables LAP representatives to both steer the WUN project and feedback to their respective authorities.

The programme is largely funded through ECO which currently provides three funding streams:
- Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO) - tackles fuel poverty and affordable warmth measures through central heating boiler replacements and repairs to low income and vulnerable households in privately owned and privately rented sector
- Carbon Saving Community Obligation (CSCO) - the availability of free standard loft and cavity wall insulation to properties throughout county Durham
- Carbon Emissions Reductions Obligation (CERO) - funding towards solid wall insulation and hard to treat cavity wall properties that are non-traditional in construction or built prior to 1919
Countywide Targeted Mail Outs
A wide range of promotions have taken place to maximise awareness and uptake of free HHCRo boilers and insulation measures. A vital part of this includes targeted mail outs from Durham County Council to low income households.

Ongoing joint working with Durham County Council's Revenues and Benefits Service resulted in a number of targeted mail outs have taken place from 2015 to 2017. Two large volume annual mail outs are carried out per annum during the winter period to raise awareness of the range of schemes available to low income and fuel poor households. Each of these mail outs involve approx. 23,000 households funded by British Gas.

Measures Installed
Free insulation measures and ECO funded central heating boilers installed in 1,055 new HHCRo funded low income private and private rented households
All households also received energy efficiency advice and information. The promotions and awareness campaigns ran by Durham County Council have resulted in County Durham having the highest uptake of HHCRo boiler installations across the Warm Up North partnership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13</th>
<th>OFF GAS RURAL COMMUNITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>In April 2015 a further 19,000 households in County Durham who are off the main gas supply and in receipt of qualifying benefits received a direct mail out. The mail out was fully funded by British Gas to encourage eligible residents to apply to Warm Up North for a free home survey and assessment for an oil boiler. Following the assessment residents could receive a free oil boiler and insulation measure. Community based promotions have also taken place across County Durham from mid-2015 utilising Area Action Partnerships and joint working with the Durham Rural Community council to maximise awareness and uptake in rural off gas communities.</td>
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<tr>
<th>14</th>
<th>BEIS CENTRAL HEATING FUND</th>
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<td>14.1</td>
<td>The Central Heating Fund (CHF) project is funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (formerly DECC) by £6.4m to assist low income households across the nine Local Authorities (LA’s) involved in the established Warm Up North LA consortium. This approach has proved that it is possible to deliver cost effective, targeted, meaningful and effective assistance to North East fuel poor households in line with the Fuel Poverty Strategy for England. The scheme has been promoted extensively across County Durham using a wide variety of promotional mechanism. The project has enabled a range of new partnerships to come forward including joint working with Northern Gas networks to deliver new gas connections. Measures Installed In County Durham a total of 350 low income households without central heating have received a new gas, oil or air source heat pumps central heating system. This scheme has provided to be a huge success and it is hoped that the learning will enable future central heating grant schemes to come forward during ECO2(e).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### MANAGING MONEY BETTER

**15.1 Managing Money better helps households in County Durham save money on their energy bills and make their homes warmer. The scheme is funded by Comic Relief and has been running since 2013 and is designed to help people save money and manage their finances better.**

The objectives of the project are as follows:

- Target financially excluded older people who are unable to take advantage of lower fuel tariffs due to lack of a bank account or basic budgeting skills. Introducing an innovate fuel account enabling older people to save weekly (at collection points or local shops) and pay bills via direct debit through a community bank, (without having a high street bank account) at a lower tariff. Also to access the cheapest providers of fuel through a local group buying scheme. This could be extended to provide local shopping ordered over the internet by the credit union and from large supermarket chains delivered to the older person’s home.

- Provide a financial “MoT” via a household visit, looking at ways to increase income, ensuring maximum take up of benefit entitlements and improving money management skills.

- Provide practical support and help in reducing energy usage through simple measures such as installing draught excluders, bleeding radiators, setting heating controls and installing insulation delivered via a social enterprise.

- Referrals to fuel poverty projects co-ordinated by Durham County Council.

From April 2015 to February 2017 there have been 2,232 home visits carried out and it is expected to achieve a real cost saving of £307,000 by end of February 2017.

### WARM HOMES DISCOUNT SCHEME

**16.1 For winter 2015/16 and 2016/17 qualifying households could get a £140 Reduction in their electricity bill. The money is a one-off discount of the Household’s electricity bill, usually paid between October and March provided by the participating energy supply companies.**

In order to maximise awareness and uptake of the Warm Homes Discount scheme it has been promoted in Durham County News, a publication which reaches 239,000 households and also via our Warm Homes Campaign newsletter provided to over 800 community groups which has provided advice on how residents can claim from the participating energy suppliers.

### GREEN DEAL

**17.1 Green Deal products where promoted as part of the Warm Up North partnership but there was limited uptake in the products on offer.**

### Domestic Carbon Savings

**18.1 Domestic carbon savings are monitored through national statistical information. The Sustainability and Climate Change (CC) team and Housing Regeneration**
teams are responsible for reporting of these statistics. Promotion of climate change and issues such as energy efficiency are also split between several Teams.

<table>
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<th>HECA Report Submission date: 31st March 2017</th>
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<td><strong>Signature:</strong></td>
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<td>![Signature Image]</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong> Ian Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position:</strong> Durham County Council, Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services</td>
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<td><strong>Date:</strong> 23rd March 2017</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

For further information please contact:

Cliff Duff  
Housing Project Manager  
Housing Solutions Team  
Durham County Council  
Tel: 03000 265 262  
E-mail: WarmHomes@durham.gov.uk