

# Durham County Council

## County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan 2018 – 2025

*Altogether better*



## **Foreword**

High energy costs are impacting on many households in County Durham with fuel poverty affecting the most vulnerable in our local communities. With the introduction of the Energy Company obligation it is clear that the Government expect Local Authorities to play an increasingly important role in delivery of area based energy efficiency programmes over the coming years.

Local Authorities can play a pivotal role in delivering real change through the application of local knowledge and co-ordination of energy efficiency programmes. Families on low incomes are living in cold, damp homes and the elderly struggling to heat just one room in the depth of winter. It is easy to take for granted the comfort of a warm home, but as fuel prices continue to rise; this is a luxury that more and more people simply cannot afford. Accurate targeting of assistance to the people who most need support is crucial to tackling fuel poverty and the provision of energy efficient housing.

Improving the quality of life and securing prosperous and sustainable communities for our residents is a key priority for Durham County Council and so helping the most vulnerable members of our community afford to heat their homes to a healthy level is vital if we are to achieve that aim. The County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan will be central to the co-ordination and delivery of a wide range of actions to assist the reduction of existing countywide levels of fuel poverty and provision of energy efficient homes.

## **Acknowledgements**

To develop this Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan, Durham County Council consulted with a range of partners and key agencies who are vital to tackling fuel poverty throughout the county. We are grateful for the assistance from the following organisations:-

Age UK County Durham  
Care and Repair Service  
County Durham Partnership Against Poverty  
County Durham Residents Association  
Greater Durham Citizens Advice Bureau  
Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgfield Clinical Commissioning Group  
Durham Community Action  
North Durham Clinical Commissioning Group  
County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service  
NEA Fuel Poverty Charity  
County Durham Housing Group  
Financial Inclusion Forum  
Durham Housing Forum  
Health and Wellbeing Partnership  
Durham University  
Carbon Action Network North East

## **Introduction**

Durham County Council is committed to tackling the plight of fuel poverty faced by many of its households. The Housing Strategy and Affordable Warmth Strategy have been

designed to consider the main issues affecting the diverse communities of County Durham by identifying current barriers and solutions to affordable warmth and taking into account future policies. Key aims and objectives have been developed, designed to assist with the alleviation of fuel poverty, delivering affordable warmth and ensuring that the benefits of energy efficiency measures are brought to the attention of all households.

### **National Fuel Poverty Strategy**

In March 2015 the Government launched their new Fuel Poverty Strategy for England<sup>1</sup>. The Government are required by law to tackle fuel poverty by making the coldest, leakiest homes in England more energy efficient. Their new Fuel Poverty Strategy outlines the challenges and actions for the next 15 years to tackle fuel poverty and get help to those who need it most.

The new legally binding target came into force in December 2014 and requires a minimum standard of energy efficiency (Band C) for as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable by 2030.

The Government's UK Fuel Poverty Strategy progress report states that due to the impact of rises in domestic energy prices on fuel poverty, 10.4% (2.3 million households) are in fuel poverty in England. This report indicates that the main factors to be taken into account affecting levels of fuel poverty are:

- High energy prices and unfair markets
- Low household incomes
- Poor heating and insulation standards

The County Durham Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan used the above factors when developing the key actions within the plan.

### **County Durham Housing Strategy**

The Housing Strategy for County Durham is a vision for an altogether better Durham and has two key aims:

- An altogether better place
- Altogether better for people

As part of the Housing Strategy the Affordable Warmth Action Plan has been developed to co-ordinate countywide activities to deliver energy efficiency programmes to County Durham residents in all tenures.

### **Affordable Warmth Strategy**

The Affordable Warmth Strategy (AWS) will co-ordinate the delivery of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) programme in County Durham to maximise the opportunities for local residents to have warmer healthier homes and lower fuel bills.

We will continue to help tackle this important issue and contribute to the wider objectives of the Area Action Partnerships, and the Sustainable Community Strategy.

The Action Plan has a seven year implementation period, after and will be reviewed and updated annually to ensure the strategy is responsive to changing policies and programmes both locally and nationally.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/a-strategy-to-end-cold-homes-for-good>

### **County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership**

Delivery of the Action Plan will continue to be monitored by the County Durham Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership which is drawn from key partner organisations to ensure countywide co-ordination and delivery. The partnership is chaired by a representative from the Durham Housing Forum to ensure strategic linkages are developed and maintained.

This includes linkages to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) to roll out interventions to address the impacts of fuel poverty on excess mortality and morbidity, health inequalities, and excess winter deaths.

### **Consultation Process**

In order to update the Strategy and Action Plan consultations took place to gather feedback on energy conservation and fuel poverty issues in County Durham. These consultations involved the national fuel poverty charity (NEA), AgeUK, Health and Wellbeing Partnership, Durham Community Action, County Durham Residents Association, County Durham Housing Group, Financial Inclusion forum and Public Health to gauge the scale of the problem and potential solutions.

### **Affordable Warmth and Energy Conservation**

The Government's Fuel Poverty Strategy 2001 defines a fuel poor household as one which needs to spend more than 10% of its household income to achieve a satisfactory heating regime<sup>2</sup>. This definition has recently been replaced following the Hills Review to become a Low Income High Cost indicator. But affordable warmth continues to be the solution to fuel poverty, where a household is able to affordably maintain an adequate indoor temperature.

There are a number of causes of fuel poverty which result in households not being able to afford sufficient warmth for health and comfort. These include:-

#### **Low Household Income and Debt**

This can be caused by unemployment, inability to work due to ill health, caring responsibilities or being in receipt of a pension with limited resources. It is also exacerbated by recipients not claiming the benefits that they are entitled to. In County Durham, 13.3% (45,032) of the working age population are claiming benefits, 4.6% of children live in households with no adult employment, and 22.6% of households contain a pensioner with 13.6% living alone<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Inefficient heating systems**

This includes gas, oil, electric storage and solid fuel systems as the source of heat for the whole house. All new and replacement gas and oil boilers must be condensing but these are costly for those living on a fixed income, especially if the household does not qualify for a heating grant. Latest statistics<sup>4</sup> show that in County Durham, 0.8 % (1,868) of households have no central heating.

#### **Heating Systems with High Running Costs**

Old and inefficient heating systems can be expensive to run for example on peak electric heating, liquid petroleum gas (LPG) heaters and oil central heating. Some households in County Durham do not have access to the main gas network therefore their choice of heating system is more limited. It is important, with the introduction of more stringent

---

<sup>2</sup>21°C in the living room and 18°C in other occupied rooms

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Statistics 2015

<sup>4</sup> 2011 Census: Key Statistics for Local Authorities in England and Wales

carbon reduction targets that Durham County Council considers the introduction of more renewable technologies for householders, but also ensures that these systems do save money and are available to vulnerable people.

### **Poor Quality Housing**

Poor quality housing which does not meet the decency standard having little or no insulation can lead to fuel poverty, especially when combined with low income and inefficient heating. 300mm of loft insulation can save an average household around £150<sup>5</sup> per year and cavity wall insulation can save £145. Other simple measures such as double or secondary glazing, hot water tank jackets and draught proofing can also considerably reduce fuel bill expenditure. Housing tenure is also a factor in fuel poverty, with the private and private rented sector being most at risk.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - cold homes and ill health**

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2014 states that poor quality housing is often associated with poor health the greatest risks to health in housing are related to cold and damp. It is suggested that living in a cold sub-standard house can lead to an increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory disease along with anxiety and depression.<sup>6</sup>

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy has a strategic aim to 'Reduce health inequalities and early deaths' with an action to 'Reduce excess winter deaths' through the integration and roll out of interventions to address the impact of fuel poverty on excess mortality and morbidity.

The definition of a satisfactory indoor temperature to maintain satisfactory health is 21°C in the primary living area and 18°C in the rest of the dwelling. There were an estimated 31,000 Excess Winter Deaths in England during the winter of 2012-13. This represented an increase of 29% compared to the winter of 2011-12.<sup>7</sup>

Poor housing has an important detrimental effect on health as occupiers spend more time in their homes than anywhere else. The County Durham Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a formal method of assessing the health impacts of cold and damp housing using Housing Health and Safety Rating System Category 1 hazards. This has allowed the production of a health cost benefit analysis showing the costs of rectifying cold related ill health housing hazards and the resultant savings to the NHS and society as a whole.

Poor housing and low income can worsen existing ill health problems including heart problems, respiratory problems and strokes. Being chronically cold or malnourished makes people more vulnerable to sickness. 44% of households in England have one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness. As energy and food bills have continued to rise, tackling fuel poverty and preventing excess winter deaths has become increasingly important. Historically, County Durham has had a higher than average rate of excess winter deaths with those aged 85 or over at the greatest risk.

The Excess Winter Deaths Index (EWDI) in County Durham has been falling over time. Between 2006-2009 and 2009-2012 the Index fell by almost a quarter (23.9%). Although County Durham's Index is higher than England for all time periods, the difference is not statistically significant.

---

<sup>5</sup> Figures from the Energy Saving Trust

<sup>6</sup> National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence Housing and Public Health: a review of interventions for improving health.

<sup>7</sup> NEA research 2014

Guidance produced by NICE, 2014<sup>8</sup> has identified key recommendations with various bodies suggested to lead on them:

- Role for strategic planning so that cold related illness is included in the JSNA with a strategy to address the issue
- Provide a local health and housing referral service for people living in cold homes
- Provide services via a one stop local health and housing referral service for people living in cold homes.
- Identification of those at risk of ill health from living in a cold damp home.
- Health and social care professionals should make 'every contact count' by assessing the heating needs of vulnerable people who use their service.
- Others visiting vulnerable people should assess their heating needs.
- Ensure vulnerable hospital patients are not discharged to a cold home.
- Train health and social care professionals to help people whose homes may be too cold for their health and well-being.
- Train housing professionals and voluntary sector workers to help people whose homes may be too cold for their health and wellbeing.
- Raise awareness among professionals and the public about how to keep warm at home.

Durham County Councils Warm and Healthy Homes Project which receives referrals from Social Care and health Practitioners fits well with the NICE guidance.

### **Energy Prices**

Recent trends have seen a steep increase in the cost of all fuels. The NEA estimates that for every 1% increase in energy prices a further 10,000 households fall into fuel poverty. Recent trends have seen a steep increase in the cost of all fuels. Between January 2007 and December 2014 combined gas and electricity bills increased by 38%. The average annual fuel bill is now £1,244<sup>9</sup>.

This problem is made worse by the fact that costs for prepayment measures are currently higher than direct debit options and the former is often chosen by those on low incomes.

### **Access to affordable tariff and payment options**

There are a range of tariff options available to domestic consumers, which can cause confusion. The Warm Home Discount (WHD) scheme came into effect on 1 April 2011. Electricity Suppliers that meet the criteria set out in the WHD Regulations 2011 are obligated to provide direct and indirect support, mainly financial, to customers in or at risk of fuel poverty over a period of four years.

### **Households in Fuel Poverty**

It is difficult to quantify where and who the fuel-poor are because there are an array of variables that contribute to the issue. Put simply the government want to "put an end to those on the lowest incomes living in the coldest, least energy efficient homes."<sup>10</sup>

---

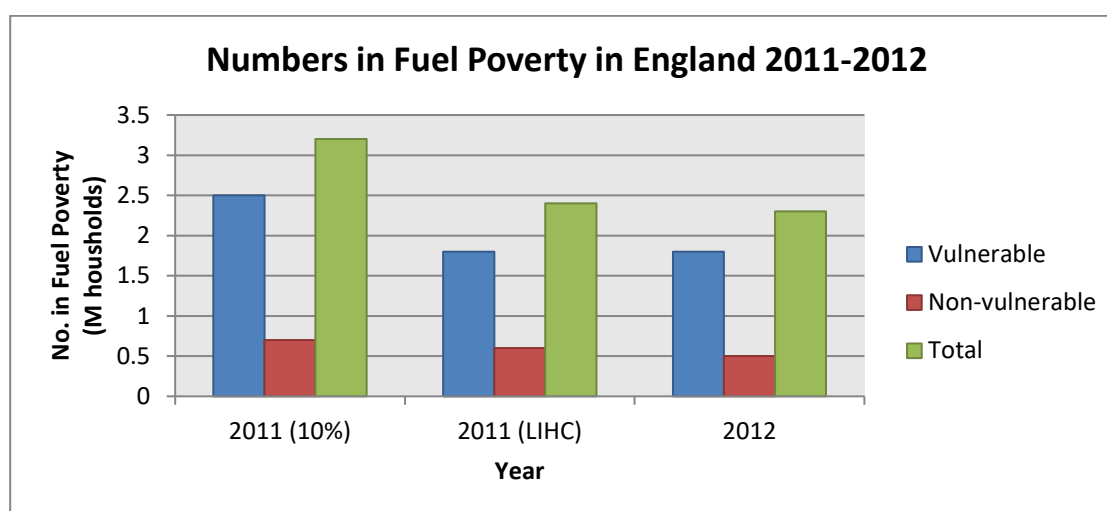
<sup>8</sup> [NICE, 2014, Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes, Draft Public Health Guideline.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Ofgem Fact Sheet number 98](#)

<sup>10</sup> Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm. 2014 DECC fuel poverty consultation

In 2013 the Government dropped the Boardman 10% definition of fuel poverty in favour of an all new 'Low Income High Cost' (LIHC) indicator to measure national levels of fuel poverty. As a consequence of this change the overall numbers of households classified to be in fuel poverty have reduced. But this is not to be viewed as fuel poverty being on the decrease, in fact according to the National Energy Action (NEA) it is expected that under the new definition the level and depth of fuel poverty could show an annual increase.

Under the LIHC definition of fuel poverty, official statistics state that in 2011 fuel poverty affected 2.4 million households in England. This is compared to 3.2 million under the previous 10% definition over the same period, as shown in the table below.

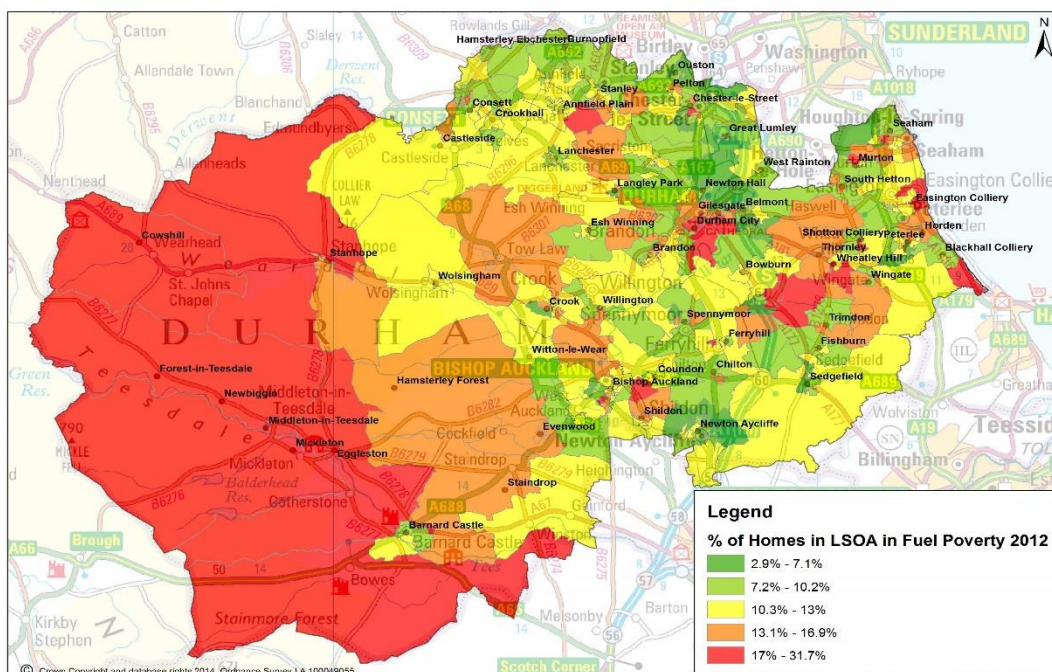


NEA has further extrapolated statistics in order to produce regional scale numbers on the extent of fuel poverty:

Region	No of fuel poor households in 2009 (old indicator)	% households in fuel poverty 2009 (old indicator)	No of fuel poor households in 2016 (new indicator)	% households in fuel poverty in 2016 (new indicator)
North East	297,000	27	128,971	13.8
North West	594,000	20.8	335,344	11.3
Yorkshire & Humber	519,750	24.6	244,850	10.8
East Midlands	368,200	21	256,017	13.2
West Midlands	445,500	20.3	340,226	15.2
East of England	371,250	16.2	206,319	8.6
London	337,840	11.1	276,782	8.9
South East	408,500	12	276,860	7.8
South West	403,500	18.7	217,210	9.3
England	5,314,655	24.7	2,282,579	11.1

At the local authority level, latest statistics (2016) show that the number of households in fuel poverty in County Durham was 14% (32,760 households) using the new LIHC indicator compared to 17.9% (39,421 households) using the previous fuel poverty indicator. In parts of Wear Valley and Teesdale fuel poverty reaches almost 29%.

### Percentage of homes in LSOA in fuel poverty 2016



The information in the map above provides an indication of the current areas of fuel poverty concern in County Durham.

In relation to actually measuring the energy ratings of individual properties and combining these readings with individual household incomes, the task could quite possibly outweigh any benefits gained. However, assessment procedures do exist which can give useful guidance in relation to overall property types and average rates of income.

The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the Government’s standard for home energy rating. SAP ratings provide a simple but reliable indicator of the efficiency of energy use for space and water heating in new and existing dwellings. SAP ratings are expressed on a scale of 1 (poor) to 100 (excellent). The UK average currently stands at 55.

### How will the Action Plan help the residents of County Durham?

The Action Plan will ensure that the problem of cold homes, high energy costs and fuel poverty in County Durham can be dealt with in a planned and systematic way.

A joined up approach is very effective and enables internal and external partner organisations to assist residents once they have been identified for assistance.

By reducing fuel poverty we are ensuring that all households have the opportunity to attain affordable warmth. Affordable Warmth is the achievement of a minimum safe average internal temperature at an affordable cost to the householder’s disposable



income. A comfortable standard is identified as an average of 21°C in the living room and 18°C everywhere else in the home.

To ensure that the household can achieve affordable warmth we need to consider the factors causing fuel poverty and how a local authority can address each of the main issues below:

- Energy efficiency of the home
- Price of fuel
- Health
- Income levels
- Size of property
- Householders awareness of energy efficiency and of payment options of fuel

### **Key Aims and Objectives of the Action Plan**

The overall goal of this action plan is to provide warmer homes, lower energy bills, reducing fuel poverty across County Durham. We accept that this is a considerable task, but by working in a broad partnership to achieve a number of key aims and objectives, achievements can be made.

The seven key aims outlined below are based around targeting schemes to reach those households most in need of assistance:-

- 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 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 in 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 well being of residents and reduce health inequalities by minimising the negative health impacts of cold homes**
- AIM 7: Provision of energy efficiency advice services**

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

<b>No</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead / Partners</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales / Stage</b>
<b>1.1</b>	Maintain joint working via the Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership	1.1.1 Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership (EFPP) to act as the group to oversee implementation of the Affordable Warmth Action Plan	ED&H, DCC, NEA, ANEC, DCA, DVH	Group established with representation from relevant partner agencies	Quarterly meetings
		1.1.3 Update the countywide Affordable Warmth Action Plan	EFPP	Frameworks to coordinate all related actions	April 2016 then annually linked with Housing Strategy
		1.1.4 Review and monitor progress using annual performance targets	EFPP	Quarterly reports monitored through performance management framework	Quarterly reports
		1.1.5 Review and monitor implementation of the Home Energy Conservation Act Report	ED&H	Annual progress monitoring to EFPP	Annual Progress Reports to DECC
<b>1.2</b>	Establish a working group	1.2.1 Working Group to co-ordinate delivery of energy conservation and affordable warmth programmes across County Durham to embed energy conservation activities into service delivery	ED&H	Structure of working group to be agreed	Monthly meetings

<b>1.3</b>	Implement the recommendations from the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) Strategy	1.3.1 Develop a strategy to promote the ECO programme	ED&H	Ensure energy conservation is a fundamental objective for Durham County Council and key partners to ensure long term commitment	Quarterly updates to EFFP
<b>1.4</b>	Lobbying and advocacy mechanisms	1.4.1 Advocacy with the intention of influencing decisions made by legislators and Government	EFPP	Influencing fuel poverty and energy efficiency legislation	As required with responses via consultation exercises
<b>1.5</b>	Engagement with and input into relevant strategic documents	1.5.1 Continue to develop and maintain effective links with partner organisations	ED&H and EFPP	Increased support for fuel poor households	Annual review
		1.5.3 Provide affordable warmth information on web page to assist residents	ED& H and EFPP	Increased resident awareness	Quarterly reviews of webpage information
		1.5.3 Ensure links between Climate Change Strategy and Energy Conservation	ED& H CCST	Joint delivery opportunities	Annual review
		1.5.4 Embed fuel poverty into the refreshed Housing Strategy	ED&H and EFPP	Ensure strategic commitment to affordable warmth action plan	Annual review
<b>1.6</b>	Engagement with Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	1.6.5 Embed fuel poverty issues and actions into the revised Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	ED&H and EFPP	Ensure links are made between poor housing and ill health	Annual review

**Aim 2. Maintain a countywide housing energy database to target and report on fuel poverty, energy efficiency and carbon reduction programmers**

No	Key Action	Detailed Action	Lead / Partners	Outcomes	Timescales / Stage
2.1	Housing energy and fuel poverty database	2.1.1 Continue to maintain a countywide housing energy database to coordinate all relevant energy data	ED& H, EST, HIA, NEA, Fuel Utilities, Building Control, Planning	Strategic targeting to maximise uptake of energy efficiency schemes	Quarterly updates
		2.1.2 Develop a spatial mapping and targeting approach using the energy database and BRE stock model linked to the refreshed housing strategy	ED& H	New targeting opportunities identified – link with Housing Strategy Data	Annual review
		2.1.3 Investigate health profiling and interventions using BRE Health Impact Assessment data	ED& H CCGs	Maximising targeting opportunities – link with Housing Strategy Data	Annual review
		2.1.5 Develop information sharing opportunities between partners	EFPP HIS, DWP, Fuel Utility	Maximising targeting opportunities	Annually up to 2025
2.2	Area based targeting mechanisms	2.2.1 Target households using energy database linked with benefits data to maximise uptake of energy and fuel poverty programmes	ED& H RBS	Maximising scheme delivery opportunities	Annually up to 2025
		2.2.2 Establish energy targets for priority housing areas identified via the housing strategy	ED&H	Monitor progress of energy targets identified in priority housing areas through housing strategy data	Annually up to 2025

<b>2.3</b>	Rural fuel poor households	2.3.1 Continue joint work with Durham Community Action	DCA, NEA	Joint working maximised, duplication avoided	Annually up to 2025
		2.3.2 Use the BRE stock condition model to target solid wall, hard to treat off gas dwellings	ED&H, BRE, EHCS	Maximising targeting opportunities	Annually up to 2025
		2.3.3 Raise awareness of ECO energy efficiency programmes amongst rural communities	ED&H, DCA	Support for rural communities	Annually up to 2025
<b>2.4</b>	HECA reporting mechanism	2.4.1 Establish a HECA reporting mechanism for energy, fuel poverty and carbon emissions to report on countywide fuel poverty and energy efficiency	ED& H EFPP	Countywide progress monitoring	Annual review
		2.4.2 All partners to supply regular performance information and properties improved for input into energy database	ED& H HIS, EST, NEA, Building Control, Planning	Countywide progress monitoring	Quarterly updates

### **Aim 3. Maximise the uptake of energy efficiency improvement programs in private sector properties**

<b>No</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead / Partners</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales / Stage</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Deliver energy efficiency improvements in privately owned/ rented homes in County Durham	3.1.1 Maximise the uptake of all national energy efficiency and fuel poverty grant schemes utilising DCC's Warm Homes Campaign to coordinate a countywide area based delivery programme	HIA, Utilities, Insulation Contractors, CDRA, DCA	Number of households assisted with energy conservation and fuel poverty grant schemes SAP figures before and after measures installed	Annually up to 2025
		3.1.2 Monitor delivery of the Local Authority programme delivering ECO energy efficiency measures	ED&H NEA, Fuel Utility, HIA, CDRA	All funding opportunities identified	Quarterly Updates
		3.1.3 Identify external funding and assistance for hard to treat properties	ED&H EFPP	Funding opportunities identified	Annual review
		3.1.4 Ensure appropriate information is disseminated by relevant partner agencies working with vulnerable households	ED&H HIA, CCGs, NEA, CDRA, DCA	Coordinated delivery to reach all tenures	Annual review
		3.1.5 Distribute affordable warmth information to residents using Warm Homes Campaign newsletter to community venues, AAP's and members	ED&H HIA, CCGs, CDRA	Maximise engagement with residents and stakeholders	Annual review
<b>3.2</b>	WHC e-mail newsletter	3.2.1 Continue to use e-mail newsletter to contact partner agencies	ED& H HIA, NEA, CCGs	Maximise awareness and uptake of energy and fuel poverty schemes	Annual review

<b>3.3</b>	Area Based Promotions	3.3.1 Undertake area based promotions to maximise uptake of energy conservation programmes	ED&H	Maximise awareness and uptake of fuel poverty schemes	Annual review
		3.3.2 Integrate external funding from ECO	ED&H	Targeted housing improvements within priority housing areas	Annual review
<b>3.4</b>	Schemes for off gas communities	3.4.1 Actively explore solutions for off gas and hard to treat properties	ED&H EFPP	Maximise awareness and uptake of schemes	2020
		3.4.2 Promote renewable energy technologies to assist households in off gas areas	CCST, DCA	Assistance for off gas households; Installation of renewable energy measures technologies	2020
<b>3.5</b>	Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Programme	3.5.1 Promote Energy Company Obligation grant information in Council Tax exercises countywide	ED&H EFPP	Reductions in fuel poverty and warmer homes	Annually up to 2020
<b>3.6</b>	Financial Assistance Policy	3.6.1 Integrate ECO into Helping Hands Loans	ED&H HIA	Vulnerable households living in warmer and cost efficient homes	2020
<b>3.7</b>	Home Improvement Agency	3.7.1 Work in partnership with the HIA to embed energy conservation advice as part of service delivery	HIA EDH, HIA	Vulnerable households living in warmer and cost efficient homes	2020
<b>3.8</b>	Linkages to Private Sector Housing Team	3.8.1 Review advice available to inform private landlords and tenants of energy grants available	ED&H	Engage with private landlords and tenants	Annually up to 2025

		3.8.2 Ensure linkages to Environmental Health scheme in CAT areas	EHO	Energy efficiency promotions in line with CAT interventions	Annually up to 2020
--	--	---	-----	---	---------------------

**Aim 4. Maximise energy efficiency improvements in Social and Registered Provider properties**

No	Key Action	Detailed Action	Lead / Partners	Outcomes	Timescales / Stage
4.1	Work with Social Housing Groups	4.1.1 Identify and promote the opportunities for engagement with the ECO	DVH, SHG, EFPP	Assist delivery of decent homes programmes	Annually up to 2020
		4.1.2 Work with housing providers to ensure improvements in energy efficiency are integrated into stock improvement schemes	EFPP	Lower fuel bills and warmer homes for tenants	2020
4.2	Reduce fuel costs in Social Housing homes in County Durham	4.2.1 Deliver a collective energy scheme to social housing tenants in County Durham	Housing Consortium of RP's	Number of social housing providers participating	2020
4.3	Use of new technologies	4.3.1 Investigate new and innovative forms of insulation and renewable technologies	RP's	Pilot scheme opportunities highlighted	2020



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

<b>No</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead / Partners</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales / Stage</b>
5.1	Poverty Action Plan and Delivery Framework	5.1.1 Ensure fuel poverty issues are built into the FIS including advice and support particularly for debt and money management	FIS ED&H, NEA, HIA, Revs/Bens, Welfare Rights	Agreed suite of performance indicators and timetable for reporting	2020

**Aim 6. Improve the health and well being of residents and reduce health inequalities by minimising the negative health impacts of cold homes**

<b>No</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead / Partners</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales / Stage</b>
6.1	Develop and maintain effective links with Public Health and partner organisations in the social care, housing, voluntary and health sectors	6.1.1 Work with social care and health sector. Explore ability for strategic staff to incorporate fuel poverty and excess winter death related criteria into assessments. Including the Single Assessment Process and Common Assessment Framework and Winter/Cold Weather Planning Group	PH CCGs, CAS, EDH, EST, Age UK DCA	Evidence of Framework and SAP have embedded excess winter deaths agenda. Relevant staff make referrals to fuel poverty assistance schemes	Annual review
		6.1.2 Discuss inclusion of ECO grant information Helping Hand Loan information within annual flu jab promotions	PH EDH, CCGs, As above	Increased uptake of assistance for vulnerable households	Annual review

<b>6.2</b>	Intelligence Data	6.3.1 Explore data sharing opportunities with Public Health for area based schemes to target households with health problems	PH, EDH As above	Strategic targeting of households with poor health and poor housing	Annual review
<b>6.4</b>	Warm and Healthy Homes Scheme	6.4.1 Patients living in private sector cold homes assisted with energy measures funded by Public Health	PH, EDH As above	Assistance for households with cold related illness	Up to 2020

### **Aim 7. Provision of an energy efficiency advice and signposting service**

<b>No</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Detailed Action</b>	<b>Lead / Partners</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Timescales / Stage</b>
<b>7.1</b>	Ensure all private sector households are signposted to the Warm Homes Campaign	7.1.1 Durham County Council Housing Regeneration Team provide a countywide one stop shop relating to ECO	ED& H, HIA, EST, NEA, Utilities, Insulation Contractors, Revs and Bens, Age UK, CAB, CDRA, AAP	Help and support to private households on all energy efficiency and fuel poverty schemes	Annual review
		7.1.2 Promote support available to private households from the Home Improvement Agency	HIA	Maximise assistance via FAP, decent homes and DFG's	Annual review
		7.1.3 Ensure relevant linkages to Helping Hands Loan scheme including ECO programme	ED&H, HIA	Provide assistance with client contributions	2020

7.2	Explore opportunities for fuel poverty energy awareness training	7.2.1 Briefing sessions with organisations that interact with vulnerable members of the community	EDH, NEA	Increased understanding and awareness leading to increased referrals	2020
-----	--	---	----------	--	------

**Abbreviations**

- AAP - Area Action Partnership (Durham County Council)
- BRE - Building Research Establishment
- CCGs - Clinical Commissioning Groups in County Durham
- CCST - Climate Change and Sustainability Team (Durham County Council)
- CDRA - County Durham Residents Association
- CDHIA - County Durham Health Impact Assessment
- CAS - Children and Adult Services (Durham County Council)
- DHS - Durham Housing Strategy
- DCA - Durham Community Action
- CDHG - County Durham Housing Group
- EFPP - Energy and Fuel Poverty Partnership
- ED&H - Economic Development and Housing Service (Durham County Council)
- EST - Energy Saving Trust
- FIS - Financial Inclusion Strategy
- Fuel Utility - ECO Funder
- HIA - Home Improvement Agency
- JSNA - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- NEA - National Energy Action fuel poverty charity
- PLS - Private Landlords Service (Durham County Council)
- PH - Public Health (Durham County Council)
- RBS - Revenues and Benefits Service (Durham County Council)
- RP - Registered Housing Provider
- SHG - Social Housing Group
- SWPG - Severe Winter Pressure Group
- WRS - Welfare Rights Service (Durham County Council)