
Progress Report 2015-17 and
Further Report 2017-19

Newark & Sherwood District Council

&

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities’ Energy Partnership (LAEP)

May 2017

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Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Local Authorities’ Energy Partnership (LAEP) Statement

The LAEP is a non-statutory partnership of all 20 councils across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire (established in 1996) and continues to provide an excellent model of how councils can work together for mutual benefit.

This report covers collective activities across the following 15 LAEP district authorities:

**Nottinghamshire**
- Ashfield District Council
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Broxtowe Borough Council
- Gedling Borough Council
- Mansfield District Council
- Newark and Sherwood District Council
- Rushcliffe Borough Council

**Derbyshire**
- Amber Valley Borough Council
- Bolsover District Council
- Chesterfield Borough Council
- Derbyshire Dales District Council
- Erewash Borough Council
- High Peak Borough Council
- North East Derbyshire District Council
- South Derbyshire District Council

Partnership activities are delivered via a membership service and a communications service which are funded through separate subscriptions. Councils benefit from support, information and communication services and collaborate on carbon reduction, affordable warmth and sustainable energy projects, sharing expertise and best practice.

Each council is represented on the Officer Working Group (OWG) which runs the partnership and funds are held by Derbyshire County Council which is the LAEP Treasurer and Accountable Body.

This report provides an update on trends, initiatives and activities since 2015, and plans for the future as LAEP councils work together and independently to reduce domestic carbon dioxide emissions and fuel poverty across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

**LAEP Chair’s introduction**

The production of this report by our partnership is an example of how our long-standing collaboration has provided huge benefit and exceptional value to our local authority members over the years. In increasingly challenging times for local government, this report provides evidence of how our partnership is striving to maximise the economic, social and environmental benefits to our councils and residents through its work on home energy conservation and affordable warmth.

*Phil Keynes, Team Manager, Energy and Carbon Management*

*Nottinghamshire County Council*
Levels of fuel poverty

Between 2012 and 2014 across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and the East Midlands as a whole, government statistics show that there was a fall in the number and percentage of households categorised as being in fuel poverty, as illustrated in the table below.


Although these figures do not cover the period of this report, they are the latest available and show a bigger fall than during the preceding period 2010-2012 reported in the LAEP HECA Report 2013-15.

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<td>Total</td>
<td>Fuel Poor</td>
<td>% Fuel poor</td>
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In 2012, the Government moved to a new measure of fuel poverty named ‘Low Income High Costs’. Under this definition, households are considered fuel poor if they have an income below the poverty line (including if meeting its required energy bill would push it into poverty) and higher than typical energy costs; higher costs would be incurred by those in hard to heat
homes or those whose health or occupancy needs required higher home temperatures or longer heating periods.

While it is important to note that this new way of measuring fuel poverty led to a fall of around one third in the number of households categorised as being in fuel poverty in LAEP district council areas (as illustrated in the LAEP HECA Report 2013-15) Newark & Sherwood District is second highest in terms of fuel poverty levels across Nottinghamshire.

Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funded measures

The ECO programme provides funding for energy efficiency measures for households in hard to treat properties and to vulnerable or low income households who struggle to achieve affordable warmth.

The Energy Company Obligation Phase 2 (ECO2) ran from April 2015 to March 2017.

The most recent data available shows the cumulative total of ECO funded measures installed since the beginning of ECO to November 2016, compiled from:


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<tr>
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<th>Carbon Saving Target (CSO/CERO)</th>
<th>Carbon Savings Community (CSCO)</th>
<th>Affordable Warmth (HHCRO)</th>
<th>Total no. ECO measures installed</th>
<th>All Households in area</th>
<th>ECO measures per 1,000 households*</th>
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* More than one measure installed in some homes
The total number of ECO funded measures per 1,000 households within the Newark & Sherwood District Council area is over 10% higher than the average for Nottinghamshire. This is in part due to the Council’s role in providing advice, support and signposting.

**PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION**

1. **Priorities and ambitions**

The LAEP acknowledges the requirements for local government to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation as outlined in the Climate Change Act 2008 and has a collective ambition to reduce domestic emissions of carbon dioxide and to help reduce fuel poverty across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire.

The LAEP supports the aims of the 2015 Fuel Poverty Strategy for England ‘Cutting the Cost of Keeping Warm’ and the statutory target published in 2012 to ensure that as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C by 2030, with interim milestones of Band E by 2020 and Band D by 2025.

The LAEP also looks forward to engaging with the reformed ECO framework during the transition period to the longer term ECO3 (running from 2018 – 2022) as a key means of achieving affordable warmth locally and has played a proactive role in both responding to the ECO consultation and positively influencing national policy.

**Tackling fuel poverty and achieving affordable warmth** has been the LAEP’s **key priority** for a number of years and is the main focus of its current work programme.

Affordable warmth is woven into most of the partnership's activities with a particular emphasis on reducing the impacts of the cold on those with long term health conditions.

Through the development of health and housing programmes, local authorities in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire are taking a leadership role in assisting fuel poor residents with long term health conditions in new and innovative ways, working collaboratively with each other and with Public Health, the NHS and third sector partners to establish and expand the reach and impact of successful LAEP programmes and initiatives.

All local councils are committed to supporting the continued development of the Derbyshire Healthy Home Programme and the Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription pilot project which now have an established track record of delivery.

More broadly, the LAEP is committed to providing guidance and improving access to affordable warmth assistance and energy efficiency advice through its community and public engagement service and is exploring opportunities to engage with ECO providers in the new phase of ECO.

The LAEP intends to engage fully with the rollout of smart meters as a way of assisting all local residents to save money and energy in the future and particularly to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are as able as the general population to take advantage of the benefits which smart meters can bring.

The LAEP’s programmes and objectives are detailed in a number of countywide policy documents which, together, illustrate the integrated and cross-cutting nature of the partnership’s activities:

- Derbyshire Housing and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2016)  

5
As a two tier, two county area comprising 15 district and borough councils, there are both significant organisational challenges to be overcome and operational benefits to be gained from collaborative working on this issue. (In Nottinghamshire, this is recognised within the Sustainability Transformation Plan which includes housing as a core theme meriting its own housing chapter. This has been highlighted nationally as good practice.) The value of this joint approach is clearly demonstrated in subsequent sections of this report and in previous reports which document the track record of the partnership over the last 21 years of its operation.

2. Achievements 2015-17

2.1 Information, advice, education and promotion

The LAEP has commissioned the provision of a public facing communications service on behalf of its member authorities since 2010. This provides residents with information, advice and education on domestic energy efficiency, carbon emissions reduction and affordable warmth and is delivered by third sector partner, Marches Energy Agency (MEA).

A website provides advice and guidance to residents and active low carbon community groups to encourage and support domestic energy efficiency and other low carbon behaviour change. One-to-one advice is available for community groups wanting to set up community energy schemes or undertake other low carbon initiatives.

The communication service provided by MEA, and the LAEP’s relationship with National Energy Action (detailed below) has also enabled access to health through affordable warmth training for frontline staff including social workers and health visitors.

Two half day training sessions (one specifically tailored to meet the needs of front-line customer facing staff and the other for partner agencies) were co-organised by Newark & Sherwood District Council’s Energy & Home Support Team and hosted at Kelham Hall. In addition, MEA provided resources to support the provision of home energy
saving information and advice at three of Lombard Medical Centre’s Saturday morning flu clinics; attended by over 100 vulnerable residents.

As part of Newark & Sherwood’s proactive preventative agenda, the Council commissions a local Debt Advice Service through Citizens Advice Sherwood & Newark. Fuel poverty is one of the top 6 reasons for household debt and so, in response, Citizens Advice also provides an ‘Energy Best Deal’ service. This began in October 2015 and since then has helped 142 households to make sure they are getting the best deal for their energy needs; identifying and explaining options and providing support to switch or to resolve problems with their supplier. Clients supported by Citizens Advice for energy appointments also had other advice issues dealt with at the same time (see case studies below).

Local Case Studies from Citizens Advice

Fred was struggling with a large energy bill which Citizens Advice managed to reduce by getting his usage corrected, a mis-sold insurance product refunded and Warm Home Discount applied. Citizens Advice then helped him switch to a cheaper tariff. They helped him apply for Pension Credit and council tax reduction, and his housebound wife to apply for her state pension. Citizens Advice also helped him get a 90% reduction on his water bills for a year and supported him with budgeting advice.

Mark wanted to save money on his energy. Citizens Advice identified that he was eligible for help through NSDC’s Warm Home on Prescription project and referred him. As a result, Mark was able to get a gas central heating system installed. Citizens Advice helped him to get a reduction in his water bills for a year and, when checking his benefits entitlement, identified that his wife was likely to be eligible for Attendance Allowance, which they are now helping her to apply for.

Improving Council Housing Stock and Supporting Tenants

Newark & Sherwood District Council’s housing management company, Newark & Sherwood Homes, has carried out extensive improvements to the energy efficiency of the Council’s housing stock (5,397 homes) over the past decade. The following list provides an indication of the strategic investment made in the two years since the last HECA report:

- 653 heating system/boiler replacements
- 812 energy efficient external composite doors installed
- 4 community centres upgraded with energy efficient/LED lighting
- Communal lighting schemes upgraded with energy efficient/LED lighting in 19 blocks
- 2 air source heat pumps installed in properties off the mains gas network (replacing old electric storage heaters)
- 110 properties fitted with voltage optimisation equipment (piloted in communal buildings initially and now being targeted at the lowest SAP rated properties)
- 96 flats/maisonettes fitted with external wall insulation to solid wall panels in conjunction with cavity wall insulation
- 23 properties benefitted from external wall insulation (now only a very small number of solid wall properties remain uninsulated, i.e. those with listed status)
• 10 units for the homeless received cavity wall insulation and loft insulation top ups in addition to upgrading the electric heating system
• Mains gas connections installed in 4 sheltered blocks of flats in readiness for decommissioning the existing communal heating systems and installing new individually metered gas central heating systems in summer 2017, enabling tenants to control their own heating requirements/budgets. (Citizens Advice is working in partnership with Newark & Sherwood Homes to offer energy advice and support to these vulnerable residents.)

Newark and Sherwood Homes attracted ECO funding totalling £7,500

2.2 **Health and housing affordable warmth programmes**

Since 2015 the LAEP and its member local authorities have made great strides in creating and establishing health and housing programmes in both counties which target comprehensive affordable warmth assistance at the most vulnerable residents. Households living in fuel poverty with long term health conditions made worse by the cold are identified and provided with home heating improvements, assistance to help lower their fuel costs and/or increase their incomes; enabling them to keep warm and well at home.

Over the last two years, over £500,000 of capital funding for domestic heating measures has been secured from external sources including National Grid, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (now BEIS) and National Energy Action (NEA) as well as from public sector budgets including Public Health and the Better Care Fund. This has enabled essential works to be paid for in homes where residents had no means to pay for heating repairs, heating replacements or insulation measures.

Many of these households would have been unable to access ECO funding because they required the replacement of back boilers, whole heating systems or off gas solutions, none of which provide sufficient ‘life time savings’ for the investment that utility companies would need to make. In the worst cases this means vulnerable residents with no means of paying for the works themselves being without any heating or hot water for an indefinite period. In other situations residents are unable to access ECO because they are not on qualifying benefits; this is often the case for those of working age.

**Nottinghamshire Warm Homes programme (ongoing from 2016)**

The Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription project (led by Newark & Sherwood District Council who also host and manage the Programme Manager) aims to help low income households with cold-sensitive long-term health conditions to achieve affordable warmth.

The project targets residents who satisfy the following criteria:

• Have long-term health conditions made worse by the cold
• Are in fuel poverty (defined as having a gross household income of no more than £16,010 per annum excl. PIP/DLA or <£800/month after mortgage/rent)
• Have savings of less than £16K
• Own their own home or privately rent their home
The project offers a bespoke service consisting of a home visit to primarily identify the need for a heating upgrade, an income maximisation assessment and/or support with energy tariff switching. In addition to these core elements, the project utilises existing local pathways to offer debt advice, temporary heating, home safety checks, falls advice, support with accessing Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG’s), Handy Person Adaptation Service and/or Housing Options advice.

The pilot year (2016-17) has delivered approximately 100 targeted interventions to 40 residents who are suffering with long term health conditions that are made worse by living in cold home. (A third of these beneficiaries live within Newark & Sherwood, and virtually all of the 60 vulnerable residents referred to Newark & Sherwood District Council benefitted from one or more of the support services on offer.) The home visits have been undertaken ‘in house’ by local authority representatives and whilst it was recognised early on in the programme that this pilot delivery model was unsustainable to some authorities, the learning has proved invaluable and, as a result, all Nottinghamshire authorities are looking to incorporate the Warm Homes on Prescription project as a ‘business as usual’ activity through their future Better Care Funding (BCF) allocations for 2017-2019.

Utilising the capital funding available through the BCF has only proved viable due to Public Health providing revenue funding to support the Warm Homes on Prescription project for 2017-18. This funding will be used to cover the costs required to deliver home visits, as required, and the coordination and management of the project.

The project has been successful in creating new referral pathways with NHS frontline staff, Environmental Health Officers and local charities, however, engaging GP’s has proved to be challenging. As well as creating new pathways, the project has been successful in building on the existing services delivered by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS), the Nottingham Energy Partnership (NEP) and the AGE UK Connect Service.

The project is governed by a Project Board and, looking forward, has been included as a key work strand in the Nottinghamshire Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP), enabling expansion into Nottingham City and delivery of targets set out in the Housing Chapter of the Nottinghamshire JSNA.

Newark & District Council Case Study – Mrs B

Mrs B has Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and Atrial Fibrillation. As a result of her health conditions she spends a minimum of 15 hours per day on an oxygen machine which means she is virtually housebound.

Mrs B has very little in the way of savings. She receives the State Pension, a small private pension and is in receipt of Pension Credit. Living on a low income makes it impossible for Mrs B to adequately heat her home in cold weather but, as a result of her long-term health conditions, she feels the cold more than most.

At the time of the home visit Mrs B’s heating was not working which lead to the Home Energy Advisor making an immediate referral to the Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service (NFRS) to request that they deliver and set-up 2 oil-filled electric radiators as a temporary heating measure. Whilst NFRS were delivering the heaters they undertook a Home Safety Check which resulted in the installation of new smoke detectors.

Through the Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription project a full central heating system has been installed which consisted of a new ‘A’ rated combination boiler, new double panel high heat output radiators, a programmer, a room thermostat, thermostatic radiator valves (TRV’s), all connections and pipework. The team also arranged the 1st year annual service to give Mrs B piece of mind that she would have no unexpected maintenance bills during the 2 year warranty period. As Mrs B lives...
alone general advice was given regarding falls prevention and a Lifeline was installed, just in case she falls and needs assistance. A grab rail was also fitted outside the back door to enable her safer access to her garden.

Mrs B was also referred to DWP for a benefits check; they visited her at home and have significantly increased her income via the Assisted Living Allowance which has enabled carers to visit twice per week to help her to live more independently.

As a result of these Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription interventions, Mrs B says she is looking forward to being warmer and more comfortable in her home during the winter and is very grateful to the project for all the support she has received.

**Nottinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service**

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) recognise that living in a cold home, especially during the winter months, can have an adverse effect on people’s health and for the past five years has been issuing oil filled radiators and blankets during the winter months to help prevent excess winter deaths.

NFRS’ new ‘Safe and Well’ project is an ideal opportunity to foster a closer working relationship with the local authority-led Warm Homes on Prescription project. Whilst undertaking the ‘Home Safety Checks’, NFRS are ideally positioned and committed to identifying and referring residents who would benefit from interventions that are available through the Warm Homes on Prescription project to improve their health and wellbeing, paying particular attention to occupants who have a long term health condition that is made worse by living in a cold home. Likewise, local authorities are making referrals to NFRS when it has been identified that the resident would benefit from a ‘Home Safety Check’ to address issues relating to fire safety or the need for temporary heating whilst the resident’s Warm Homes on Prescription application is assessed.

**2.3 Housing intelligence**

The LAEP has developed a Housing and Energy Database (HED) containing Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) records purchased by the partnership, and other housing data to enable district and borough authorities to identify and target housing archetypes for investment/signposting to ECO, fuel poverty initiatives and government funded schemes.

Newark & Sherwood Homes has invested in an enhanced IT energy module (Keystone) to enable the targeted investment of energy efficiency improvement measures towards the lowest SAP rated properties.

**2.4 Local Building Control**

The Building Control function for Newark & Sherwood District Council is now carried out by East Midlands Building Consultancy; a shared service partnership of three councils: South Kesteven (host partner), Rushcliffe and Newark and Sherwood. All team members are qualified or have membership of a professional body, such as RICS, CABE or CIOB and as such undertake 35 hours of CPD per year as a minimum. Additional training is provided where required and operational KPI’s are set for the team to ensure the service meets customer expectations, this is above Government KPI’s. In addition, the service is now an accredited Chartered Building Consultancy with the CIOB. The Business Manager for the Partnership submits a monthly report to the responsible Directors from each council and they meet quarterly.
Meetings are also held with the Chief Executives of all three councils, where major decisions for the partnership are agreed.

Building Control can only enforce compliance with the building regulations. On any new build the regulations require a SAP/EPC which also details boilers etc. and compliance with the appropriate approved document. Heating replacements in existing homes generally tend to be completed through Competent Person Schemes (where the installer is accredited to sign off the works) and therefore Building Control staff would have no involvement other than their statutory duty to maintain a register of where those boiler replacements etc. have been undertaken.

3. Looking ahead 2017-19

3.1 Delivering warm and healthy housing programmes for the most vulnerable

District and Borough councils in both Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire plan to develop and expand their innovative health and affordable warmth programmes over the next two years.

LAEP councils will continue to work together to develop countywide alliances with Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and third sector partners to link into wider strategic priorities and funding streams including ECO, Better Care Fund (BCF) and Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) to ensure that these programmes are sustainable.

Using experience and expertise gained to date, targeting and delivery of programmes will be continuously improved. This will ensure that limited resources are used to achieve affordable warmth for those most at risk of harm from the cold, estimated to be around 3,000 households in each county, and will aim to impact positively on unplanned hospital admissions and avoid costs to the NHS and social care.

The Nottinghamshire Warm Homes on Prescription pilot project plans to expand during 2017-19 to reach 250 eligible households in year 2017-18 and 300 in year 2018-19 as detailed in the Nottinghamshire Strategic Transformation Plan.

A toolkit is under development between the 7 Nottinghamshire Local Authorities (via the Warm Homes on Prescription Programme Manager) and Public Health to provide the data required to academically evaluate the outcomes of the Warm Homes on Prescription project against the Better Care Funds Key Performance Indicators, with a focus on ascertaining the return on investment (ROI).

Newark & Sherwood District Council has secured £70K of Better Care Fund funding and has requested an additional £70K to further expand the project locally.

Adopting an Integrated Delivery Model in Newark & Sherwood

Within Newark & Sherwood District Council it is well recognised that housing is a significant determinant of health and, in its broadest sense, has an important role to play in the health and wellbeing agenda. This is primarily due to the daily contact providers of housing services have with residents, tenants and their families covering a range of issues beyond the traditional housing management and enforcement functions.

The Care Act 2014 amended the NHS Act 2006 to provide the legislative basis for the Better Care Fund (BCF). It allows for the mandate to NHS England to include specific requirements relating to the establishment and use of an integration fund. It creates a local single pooled budget to incentivise the NHS and local government to work more
closely together around people, placing their wellbeing as the focus of health and care services, and shifting resources into social care and community services for the benefit of the people, communities and health and care.

Six projects (including Warm Homes on Prescription) have been approved by the Better Care Fund Project Board for delivery locally. In order to ensure the services offered and delivered within NSDC are equitable and available to as many householders as possible, officers have worked together to produce a Housing and Health based model that pulls together a number of grant-based schemes into a more integrated model to ensure that housing and health is at the centre of the model to deliver a range of preventative interventions to as many households as possible.

The ‘Housing and Health Independent Living Integrated Model’ aims to support disabled people and vulnerable households to remain living independently in a safe and healthy home. This is achieved by linking existing funding sources and support to newly available sources of small grants, with the aim of facilitating essential repairs and renovations to the homes of people in need of support to live independently in their own homes. This new delivery model will be implemented from 1 April 2017.

The Council is looking to attract approximately £10,000 worth of funding through the ‘flexible eligibility’ element of the Energy Company Obligation 2t (ECO2t) to support the Warm Homes on Prescription project and the Integrated Delivery Model from April 2017 to October 2018. It has been recognised that ECO funding rarely fully funds the measures available and, as a result, NSDC is looking to support the most vulnerable in society, who have historically been overlooked through previous energy company lead initiatives, by blending ECO2t funding with its Better Care Fund allocation to actively target residents with long term health conditions that are made worse by living in a cold home.

3.2 Tackling fuel poverty

The LAEP will engage with the new affordable warmth focus of ECO to help improve access to grant funding for those in fuel poverty across the two counties, estimated by BEIS to be around 65,000 households. The LAEP’s Home Energy Database (HED) will assist councils to bring ECO funding for solid wall insulation into their areas by helping to locate areas of suitable housing type(s).

Comprehensive signposting and guidance about how to achieve affordable warmth, including how to access ECO funding, will continue to be provided through the LAEP website and its innovative community engagement service and through engagement with partner organisations.

LAEP will monitor the effectiveness of ECO to assist those in fuel poverty through the partnership’s joint projects and will provide feedback on this to BEIS.

3.3 Increasing domestic energy efficiency throughout the population

Since ECO funding has been refocused to assist those in fuel poverty, ‘able to pay’ households will not have access to any public funding to assist or subsidise energy efficiency improvements in their homes.

The LAEP will redouble its efforts to provide incentives for individual action by promoting the cost savings and comfort improvements that can be achieved by financial investment and behaviour change, using its community engagement service, currently delivered by third sector partner Marches Energy Agency (MEA). This will include website signposting and public exhibitions (mentioned in item 2. above), co-ordination of Open ECO Homes events across the two counties and the promotion of the benefits of smart meters, as highlighted below.
The biggest council house building project in Newark & Sherwood for 40 years is set to commence this year; a £30 million programme which will involve the construction of 335 new, energy efficient council homes over a five year period. The development programme is being delivered in partnership with the Council’s housing management company, Newark & Sherwood Homes.

3.4 Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in the Private Rented Sector

From the 1st April 2018 there will be a requirement for properties in the private rented sector to achieve a minimum energy performance certificate (EPC) rating of E. The regulations will come into force for new lets and the renewal of tenancies with effect from 1st April 2018 and for all existing tenancies on 1st April 2020. It will be unlawful to rent a property which breaches the requirement for a minimum E rating unless there is an applicable exemption. A civil penalty of up to £4,000 will be imposed for breaches.

It is not yet clear how this requirement will be regulated or which properties will be subject to an applicable exemption. Until clarity is received from the Government on these matters it is impossible to estimate how many properties within Newark & Sherwood District will be affected. However, the 2016 Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey estimates that 10.1% of dwellings in the private rented sector have an EPC below band E. Under proposed legislation these properties would not be eligible to be rented out after 1st April 2018.

It is also impossible to estimate how many of these ‘below E rated properties’ will become empty. More guidance is needed to understand what measures are necessary in a typical pre 1920’s solid wall terrace house in order to make it compliant.

Excess Cold

The map shown overleaf is an extract from Newark and Sherwood’s Private Sector Housing Stock Condition Survey 2016. It shows the percentage of private sector dwellings in Newark & Sherwood with the presence of a Housing Health & Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) category 1 hazard for excess cold.
Looking at the hazard of excess cold, of which there are higher levels in Newark and Sherwood compared to the regional and national figures, there are again higher concentrations in the more rural areas. The data behind the map shows that the highest levels overall are in Sutton-on-Trent, Muskham and Collingham but there are also higher concentrations elsewhere – for example to the north west of Ollerton.

The HHSRS is used as a tool to address Category 1 excess cold in the private rented sector. Typically, a house will need to have at least 200mm of loft insulation, cavity wall insulation (where appropriate), a modern condensing boiler, thermostatic radiator valves (TRV’s) on all radiators, a programmer and a room thermostat. The property will also be expected to have reasonable windows and doors that prevent excessive draughts, and suitable extraction from the kitchen and bathroom, taking away the reliance on opening windows during cold weather. If these standards are not met it is likely that a Category 1 hazard for cold will be present, and improvements required.

HHSRS training for Housing Options Officers, together with the introduction of a dedicated Landlord Liaison Officer role, are helping to expand HHSRS knowledge beyond Environmental Health Officers and improve standards in many properties by negotiating with landlords as a condition of the NSDC tenant finder scheme (RealHome) to meet the minimum standards required. It is also a condition of the scheme for the property to have a current EPC.

As part of the RealHome assessment, the Landlord Liaison Officer offers advice on energy saving measures to benefit the potential tenant and liaises closely with NSDC’s Energy & Home Support team (two part-time staff) to carry out an energy assessment and offer financial assistance as and where appropriate. This advice and encouragement is reinforced at the Sherwood Area Landlords Forum where NSDC promotes a minimum standard and helps landlords to achieve this.
NSDC’s Environmental Health team also works in partnership with the Warm Homes on Prescription project to signpost relevant landlords and tenants to the scheme as part of the independent living model described in 3.1 above.

3.5 Rolling out smart meters

The LAEP is committed to playing a proactive part in the rollout of smart meters and is working with National Energy Action (NEA) through the Smart Energy GB initiative to raise awareness and help councils to provide a lead. Councils see themselves as partners in the rollout of smart meters to assist residents to reduce domestic energy consumption and tackle fuel poverty.

Opportunities will be sought to ensure that the most vulnerable residents are as able as the general population to take advantage of the benefits which smart meters can bring. For example, Newark & Sherwood Homes is supporting a joint campaign with the National Federation of ALMOs and Smart Energy GB to ensure that its social housing tenants understand smart meters and their benefits; to help people get the best out of them by managing their gas and electricity usage in the most cost effective way for them.

Newark & Sherwood District Council plans to work in partnership with the local Citizens Advice service to deliver smart meter training to front-line staff/volunteers, partner agencies and local community groups.

This report focuses on our plans for the future as LAEP councils work together, independently and with external partners to reduce fuel poverty and promote affordable warmth for all across Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. The key actions highlighted in this report are also captured and supported in Newark & Sherwood District Council’s own local service delivery plans.

For further information about the contents of this report, please contact:

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