

HECA REPORTING 2019

Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 ('HECA') requires local authorities ('LA's) in England to submit reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within that LA's area. This covers measures to improve properties in the owner-occupier, private rented sector, and social rented sector. BEIS uses data submitted through LAs HECA returns to inform policy thinking on energy efficiency, and to build an ongoing picture of local and national energy efficiency policy delivery.

Name of Local Authority: Medway Council
Type of Local Authority: Unitary Authority
Job title of official submitting the report: Head of Housing
Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool: Housing Strategy and Partnerships Team, Trading Standards Team, Housing Asset Management Team, Planning Policy and Development Management Team
Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE): 31

Headline and Overview Questions

Question 1:

Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?

Yes part of a county wide one.

Medway Council has signed up to the current Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy and is working in partnership to create a new draft.

Question 2:

If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here:

Kent Environment Strategy includes MR6.2: Improve the resource efficiency of our homes, reducing costs, tackling fuel poverty and improving health outcomes. This lists four activities including delivering a co-ordinated home insulation retrofit programme across Kent and Medway such as the Warm Homes programme

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/63810/The-Kent-Environment-Strategy-Implementation-Plan-2017.pdf

Medway does not have a carbon reduction strategy but officers from the Authority are actively feeding into the [SELEP Energy 'South2East' Strategy \(to be launched on 25th March\)](#) and the emerging Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (KMELES).

The vision for the KMELES is “by 2050, the county of Kent is benefiting from a competitive, innovative and resilient low carbon economy, where no deaths are attributable to poor air quality and our [Kent and Medway’s] demand for energy is less than the low carbon energy generated or used has a positive carbon balance.”

The KMELES’s aim will be to tackle challenges including:

- Embracing clean growth;
- Tackling hotspots of poor air quality;
- Achieving a step change in the reduction of carbon emissions and greenhouse gases;
- Enabling integrated and connected mobility;
- Ensuring a sustainable, secure and affordable energy supply;
- Overcoming energy grid constraints; and
- Protecting the vulnerable.

The strategy will be informed from Government policy, the overarching Tri-LEP Energy Strategy and evidence base, Kent Environment Strategy (KES), AECOM Renewable Energy for Kent 2017 update, public health indicators, HECA reports and action plans and air quality monitoring, plans and reports.

Question 3:

If no, are you planning to develop one?

Yes. We intend to be part of, and to shape, the new county wide Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emission Strategy.

Question 4:

A. What scheme(s) has your local authority implemented in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties since 2017? (if you have not implemented any scheme, please enter 'N/A')

We have not implemented a scheme since 2017 and continue with the scheme running before 2017. Through the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership (formerly the Kent and Medway Green Deal Partnership) we are part of the Kent and Medway Warm Homes Scheme. https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200153/private_housing/93/kent_and_medway_warm_homes_scheme/1

This offers residents a free quote for loft insulation, cavity walls insulation, external wall insulation and heating systems. The contractor will assess whether ECO funding can be used to subsidise the works. The scheme is available to people who own their home or rent it from a private landlord. Social landlords can apply directly.

B. What scheme(s) is your local authority planning to implement in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, privately rented and social housing) or non-domestic properties in the next two years? (if you are not planning to implement any scheme, please enter 'N/A')

Our current Warm Homes scheme procurement framework will end in September 2020. We will continue to be members of the Kent and Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership which is investigating options on what can be delivered on energy efficiency measures going forward.

Question 5:

What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of running and administering the scheme(s), including the value of grants and other support, plus any other costs incurred? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.

The Warm Homes scheme has been run and administered by Kent County Council. The other local authorities, including Medway Council, paid £500 to seed fund the call centre in 2013 and it has run on referral fees and money from Kent County Council since. Medway Council promotes the scheme at its landlord's forums and landlords e-newsletters which cover other topics making it challenging to identify the costs of promoting the Warm Homes Scheme. Medway Council does not provide grants or other financial support.

Question 6:

What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?

Kent County Council have a framework of providers and carry out mini tenders to seek the most competitive service. The services are currently provided by Aran Services.

Question 7:

What has been the outcome of the scheme(s) (e.g. energy savings, carbon savings, economic impacts such as job creation and/or increased business competitiveness, societal impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc.)?

This does not have to be measured against national data or benchmarks, but rather focuses on the local authority's own monitoring and evaluation.

Since April 2018 insulation has been installed in lofts and cavity walls in 60 owner occupied and 8 privately rented homes through the Warm Homes scheme in Medway. This has led to a carbon emission reduction of 14950kg per year or 627,900 kg over the lifetime of the products.

Aran Services worked with Medway Council in July 2017 to send a mailshot to all homes in Medway to inform them of the Warm Homes offer. This led to just over 100 referrals which is a low response rate for over 110,000 letters.

Question 8:

What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?

ECO funding generally does not cover the whole cost of installing measures. Residents in receipt of means tested benefits are not well placed to pay any top up towards the costs of installation and many do not proceed to installation. We promote the scheme to landlords via our landlords' forum but have seen low take up from landlords. This may be that the complications of ECO, with different contributions to each home, are unattractive and few landlords use the service.

Local Communications Strategy

Question 9:

Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?

No.

Question 10:

If yes to question 10, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

N/A

Question 11:

How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses? (if you do not, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Local Green Supply Chains')

N/A

Local Green Supply Chains

Question 12:

Does your Local Authority promote the use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)? (if you answer no please move onto the next section 'Private Rented Sector')

No.

Question 13:

If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.

N/A

Question 14:

What engagement (formal or informal) does your local authority have with local businesses/supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?

N/A

Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

The Minimum Energy Efficiency Regulations (the Regulations) apply to all privately rented properties in England and Wales. As of April 2018, all such properties are legally required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least an E before they can be let on a new tenancy. This requirement will then extend to all such properties by 1 April 2020, even if there has been no change in tenant or tenancy (please see BEIS's published guidance documents for the full details on the standard).

The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to local authorities, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.

Question 15:

Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018?

Yes.

Question 16:

Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard?

Trading Standards Team.

Question 17:

What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?

This service undertakes an annual projects looking at letting agents which encompasses all aspects of their obligation. This includes a compliance test to ensure that advertised properties have a valid certificate.

On an individual basis we investigate all complaints concerning EPCs both from tenants and the wider industry.

Question 18:

Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties?

If yes, how? If no, please explain.

No.

Medway Council does not hold data showing which landlords have properties rated F or G on their EPC. With the introduction of the 'E or above for a new tenant' Trading Standards team has included checks on this matter in this year's annual campaign and will be advising letting agents and landlords of the this and the planned obligations in respect of EPC.

Financial Support for Energy Efficiency

Question 19:

What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable, please outline the sums, where such funding is sourced, and where it is targeted.

(If you do not have any financial assistance programmes, please enter 'N/A' and move onto the next section 'Fuel Poverty')

N/A

Fuel Poverty

Question 20:

Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy?

If yes, please describe the scope of the strategy, and the support that is available for low income and vulnerable households to help tackle fuel poverty in your local area. Please also provide a link to your strategy if published.

For our housing stock yes.

Our Medway Council Landlord Services Energy Efficiency Strategy 2018-2020 is applied to our housing stock of just over 3000 homes. Its priorities are to;

- Identify the EPC rating for all our properties

- To analyse the data and create a programme of work to improve ratings in line with the governments Fuel Poverty Strategy targets
- Identify the households most likely to be in fuel poverty and work with them to improve energy conservation in their homes
- Identify and use government initiatives that will help improve the energy efficiency of Medway Council stock.

The document can be found on our website here

https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/3908/landlord_services_energy_efficiency_strategy

Question 21:

What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)

We aim to identify tenants in our council housing to offer them support.

Question 22:

How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)

N/A

Question 23:

A. What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? (enter N/A if not appropriate)

We promote residents consider switching to a cheaper energy provider

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200160/roads_and_pavements/536/stay_well_this_winter/2

This links to Citizens Advice webpage on switching energy supplier.

B. If you have taken measures or initiatives to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty, what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken? (enter N/A if not appropriate)

N/A

The Energy Company Obligation

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is an obligation on energy suppliers aimed at helping households cut their energy bills and reduce carbon emissions by installing energy saving

measures. Following the Spring 2018 consultation, the Government set out in its [response](#) that ECO3 will fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households.

The recently introduced ECO “[flexible eligibility](#)” (ECO Flex) programme allows LAs to make declarations determining that certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes and vulnerable to the effects of cold homes, are referred to ECO obligated suppliers for support under the Affordable Warmth element of ECO. LAs involved are required to issue a Statement of Intent that they are going to identify households as eligible, and the criteria they are going to use; and a declaration that the LA has been consulted on the installation of measures in a home.

Question 24:

Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility?

If yes, please include a link to your Sol below.

No.

Question 25:

Please use the following space to provide any further information you feel might be of benefit to BEIS, in helping us to understand ECO Flex delivery in more detail. For example, the number of declarations signed versus the number of households helped.

N/A

Question 26:

Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:

Engage and support your residents (including those in vulnerable circumstances or with pre-payment metering) to promote take up of smart meters and achieve associated benefits (e.g. ability to control energy use, identify best value tariffs)? Please detail any work undertaken or planned with local/community groups, housing associations, micro businesses, Smart Energy GB under their Partnership Programme and energy suppliers.

We do not have a current or planned approach to promoting smart meters and we do allow smart meters to be fitted into our council housing stock.

Question 27:

Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:

Integrate your approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation with the opportunities presented by the installation of smart meters, drawing upon materials from the Smart Meter Energy Efficiency Materials Project or other sources of independent information.

N/A

Question 28:

Please detail any:

Resources/ support (e.g. services, funding) available to residents who have had an appliance(s) condemned for safety reasons and cannot afford to replace it (e.g. during visual safety checks conducted during their smart meter installation or otherwise).

N/A

Question 29:

Please detail any:

Existing relationships with energy suppliers to help ensure that the opportunities presented by vacant properties under your control are effectively utilised (i.e. gaining access to install a smart meter).

N/A

Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives

Question 30:

Please outline any future schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation or businesses in your area, for example, within your Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Energy Strategy (if you do not plan any future schemes currently, please enter 'N/A').

Medway Council is currently working with the Energy Saving Trust to analyse what opportunities may exist to reduce emissions from the council's operations and increase the proportions of ultra low emission vehicles in the fleets. EST uses the information provided by organisations to analyse its operations, and calculate their carbon foot print. This enables EST to identify a range of opportunities to reduce energy usage and consequently the carbon foot print. The review will identify opportunities to replace internal combustion vehicles with ultra low emission vehicles such as battery electric, or low emission plug in hybrids, where they are viable.

We will run a pilot project with our social care workforce to offer 6 electric vehicles for work use. We will trial two types of vehicle and seek feedback from users on the most suitable vehicle as part of the review before planning further roll out.

We are hoping to run a pilot of Energy Insight in our Medway Park Sports Centre. This shows us the power we're using, right down to device level, and should inform how we could be wasting power and improve our operational efficiency.

The [Medway Council Air Quality Planning Guidance \(2016\)](#) has been really successful alongside the use of planning conditions which support the transition to a low carbon future. The guidance

has standard mitigation measures that include the requirement for NOx boilers and electric vehicle charging points per dwelling with dedicated parking or 1 charging point per 10 spaces (unallocated parking).

For commercial or industrial applications, the guidance states that 10% of parking spaces should be provided with electric vehicle charge points which may be phased with 5% initial provision and the remainder at an agreed trigger level.