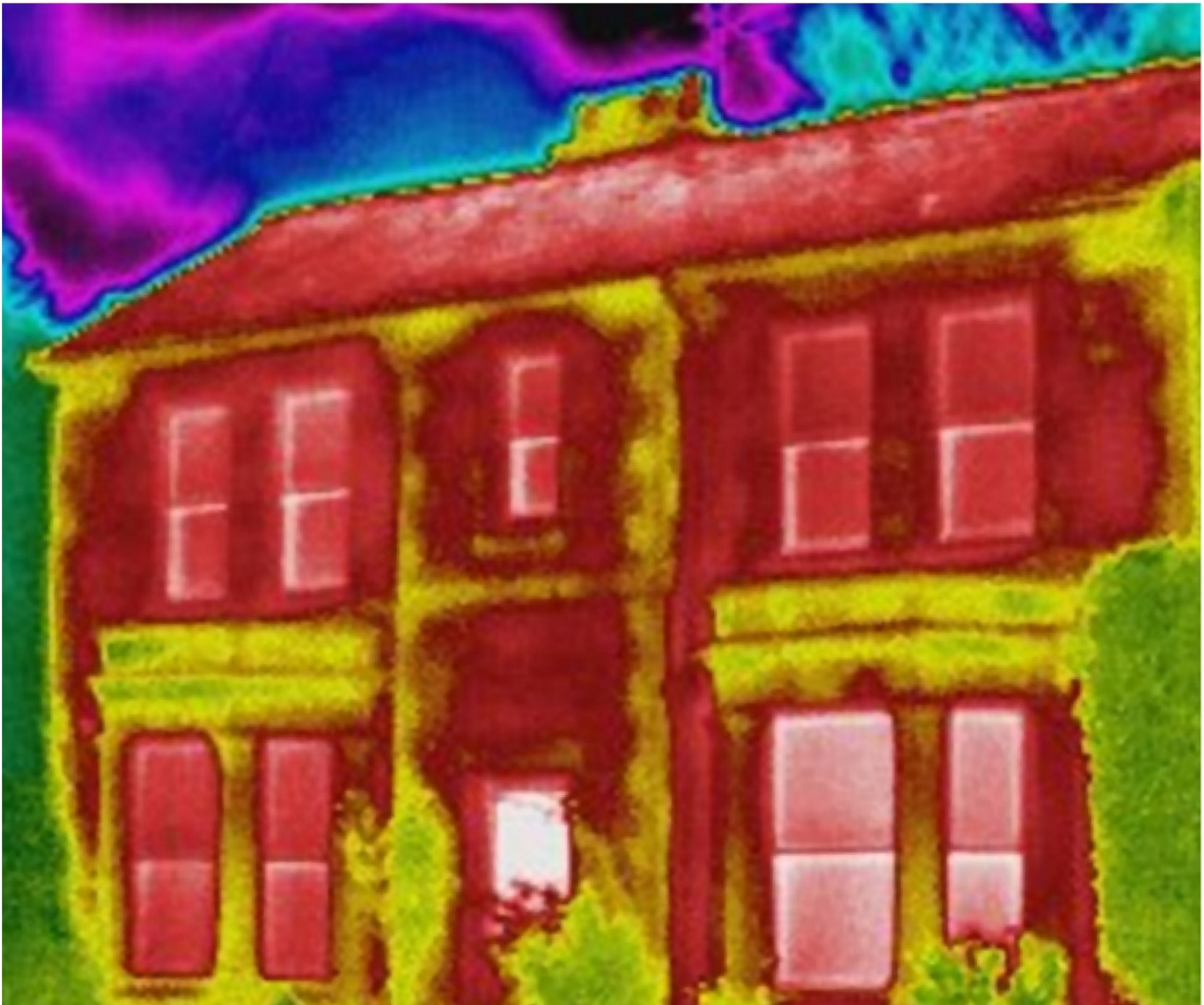


Further Report 2017

Pursuant to Section 5(1) (b) of the
Home Energy Conservation Act 1995
(HECA)



Introduction

This report builds upon the Herefordshire further report of 2015, as required by the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA), introduced in 1995. HECA was one of the first acts of legislation to address concerns regarding rising carbon dioxide emissions and the poor energy performance of UK homes.

Local Authorities are uniquely placed to assess the needs of their areas and local residents and to act as catalysts for change. The Act (HECA) recognises local authorities' ability to use their position to improve the energy efficiency of all residential accommodation in their areas.

The Act requires all 326 English Local Authorities to report on what is being done to improve energy efficiency in all residential accommodation in their area and to report to the Secretary of State on progress in implementing strategies, delivery plans and energy efficiency measures.

The Act asks Local Authorities to consider the role that local partners can play in meeting their objectives (e.g. social housing providers and community organisations).

Authorities are required to publish further reports every two years. Following the publication of this further report, the next report will be due in March 2019 and every two years thereafter through until March 2027.

	<p>The council has various initiatives which aim to improve economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the county. Of particular relevance are;</p> <p>The Herefordshire Local Plan – (2011-31) is a framework for future development in Herefordshire, highlighting several key issues including meeting the challenges presented by climate change, creating places that promote an active and healthy lifestyle, achieving sustainable development and boosting the access of services.</p> <p>Herefordshire Corporate Plan (2016-20) priorities include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives; • Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life; • Support the growth of the local economy; • Secure better services, quality of life and value for money. <p>The Herefordshire Economic Plan (2016) seeks a transition to a higher value economy, part of which can potentially be delivered through environment and energy based projects.</p> <p>The Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2015) has a long-term vision to ensure Herefordshire residents are resilient, lead fulfilling lives, are emotionally and physically healthy, and feel safe and secure.</p> <p>The Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Strategy (2016-19) seeks to raise awareness of fuel poverty in the county, encourage and support householders to achieve affordable warmth and develop sustainable strategies and delivery models through co-operation and evaluation.</p> <p>Future Developments</p> <p>The council continues to investigate options to support alternative and better value for money energy tariffs for its residents, including options to launch a council branded energy tariff.</p> <p>The council continues to evaluate the allocation of affordable warmth grants and the health and wellbeing benefits realised from grant support interventions, in the hope of allowing the council and partners to build stronger business cases for further ‘invest to save’ models of delivery in future. The most recent such grant scheme (Warm Healthy Homes) has seen council grants totalling £15,000 allocated, which has leveraged in circa £22,000 of external funding (primarily through the energy company obligation). This has supported heating upgrades in 14 vulnerable homes.</p>	<p>2011 – 2031</p> <p>2016-2020</p> <p>2016 –</p> <p>2015 –</p> <p>2016-19</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
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Action	Details	Timescale
ii)	<p>Measures we are taking that take advantage of financial assistance and other benefits offered from central government initiatives, to help result in significant energy efficiency improvements of residential accommodation.</p>	
	<p>Fuel Poverty Fuel Poverty remains a significant issue in Herefordshire. According to latest figures, 13,287 households in the County are thought to be living in fuel poverty, this equates to circa 16% of all Herefordshire households.</p> <p>Herefordshire, as a large rural county, faces exceptional challenges in relation to the age and type of housing, the availability of mains gas, and the population profile. There are currently an estimated 82,521 domestic dwellings in Herefordshire. The data collected through the Healthy Housing Survey (2011) indicates that 20.5% of homes in Herefordshire were built before 1919. Mains gas is available to only 69.4% of properties, compared to 87% nationally. Of vulnerable households in Herefordshire, 25.5% inhabit dwellings classified as 'non-decent' under the Decent Homes Standard, 33.0% of whom live in pre1919 homes and 23.2% of whom live in properties with a SAP rating of below 55 (Band E).</p> <p>Household income levels in Herefordshire are significantly lower than those nationally and of the West Midlands Region (Herefordshire Facts & Figures, 2016) and there are fewer affordable social housing options, with only 14.6% of housing being in the social sector compared to 16.9% nationally.</p> <p>Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan The council continue to commit resource to tackle fuel poverty. The council published a new Affordable Warmth Strategy and Action Plan in 2016 (http://bit.ly/2nEVpnK).</p> <p>An Affordable Warmth Steering Group has been formed to assess progress against the Strategy and Action Plan. The Group meets quarterly.</p> <p>Keep Herefordshire Warm Advice Service Keep Herefordshire Warm (KHW), the council's Affordable Warmth Service has been operating since 2014. Marches Energy Agency are currently contracted to run the service until March 2018. The scheme offers free and impartial advice to all Herefordshire residents through a Freephone advice line and through face-to-face events across the county. In the financial year 2016/17, a total of 435 households engaged with the Keep Herefordshire Warm scheme.</p>	<p>2016-19</p> <p>2015-18</p>

	<p>Energy Company Obligation (ECO)</p> <p>KHW acts as a vehicle to leverage in additional funding and maximise national funding mechanisms including ECO. Working with energy companies and installer partners KHW helps residents to access ECO funding and other funding streams. The council are currently drafting a Statement of Intent (SOI) with local partners in order to access the Flexible Eligibility element of the ECO Transition period and are in discussions with energy companies regarding flexible eligibility schemes. This is likely to be targeted to off-gas fuel poor households.</p> <p>Health and Housing</p> <p>The council is currently supporting residents with broken or no central heating to access replacements through ECO or other funding options, by providing grants to help with funding shortfalls. To strengthen the business case for further investment a pilot evaluation project is assessing health and wellbeing parameters before installation of measures and after a 6 month period to assess health and wellbeing benefits of any council supported interventions. This project is being delivered in close co-operation with Herefordshire Public Health, Occupational therapists and the Home Improvement Agency, all of whom are able to identify and target the most in need.</p> <p>Data on this particular project will be available in late 2017.</p> <p>BESN and Age UK Home Energy Checks Programme</p> <p>In recent years, KHW has successfully delivered programmes under the Government's Big Energy Saving Network (BESN) programme. In partnership with Age UK Hereford and Localities, KHW have also supported the delivery of 110 Home Energy Checks to vulnerable elderly residents.</p> <p>Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Network (HAWN)</p> <p>Herefordshire Council and Marches Energy Agency support an active partnership. The Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Network brings together numerous public and voluntary sector partners to better enable effective action to tackle fuel poverty issues. This is done through regular communication and meetings to discuss ongoing projects and boost referrals and signposting across services. The network is vital in helping reach the most vulnerable residents in need.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2016 - 18</p> <p>2016-17</p> <p>2015-18</p>
	<p>Boilers & Heat Pumps</p> <p>Keep Herefordshire Warm continues to provide advice to all residents in relation to boilers, heat pumps and other renewable heating technologies. As a county, Herefordshire continues to do well in regard to the deployment of renewable heating and accessing the Renewable Heat Incentive. According to central data there have been 609 accreditations registered in Herefordshire since April 2014.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

	<p>As a non-domestic stock holding authority, the council are leading the part European funded Sustainable Energy in Public Buildings project, which aims to support the installation of innovative heating technologies, such as heat pumps, as well as other renewables and energy efficiency measures. The council are also members of the Marches Sustainable Housing Partnership and continues to be kept abreast of developments in the renewable heating sector and supports housing providers in the region through the partnership.</p> <p>The council's building control team operate within a competitive market and therefore capture and inspect new build installations of energy efficiency measures that they are selected for, this is currently estimated to account for approximately 10-15 new builds per week. With regards retro-fit installations, compliance for the majority of these are through competent persons schemes and notification is legally required within 30 days of completion.</p> <p>The council have benefitted from funding and support from the Heat Network Delivery Unit (HNDU) and are currently receiving support under round 6 of the programme. Initial heat mapping and master planning indicated that there was potential for a heat network focussed around the urban village development area. Further work will be undertaken in the coming years.</p>	<p>2015 - 2018</p>
	<p>Smart Meters</p> <p>The council and Marches Energy Agency have sought to embed free and impartial advice regarding smart meters into the provision delivered through Keep Herefordshire Warm, working in partnership with SmartEnergyGB. The council will assess funding opportunities presented by SmartEnergyGB in future, with a view to helping vulnerable resident's access information that helps them engage with the UK Smart Meter rollout.</p> <p>Smart Meters and more accessible tariffs also made up a key part of recent BESN activity in the county.</p> <p>The council have not looked in detail at potential uses of smart meter data, however they would be interested in assessing whether such data could help target services delivered through the Keep Herefordshire Warm scheme (e.g. targeted behavioural change advice or support and grants for energy efficiency measures) based on available data such as high energy usage, under-heating etc. Other potential uses will be discussed with members of the Affordable Warmth Steering Group to gauge interest / ideas.</p> <p>The council is keen to access more local data showing smart meter installation by areas (e.g. by Local Authority area) and this may help promote smart meters and drive uptake and or underline the need for further involvement from the council and local partners to engage more closely with the rollout.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2018-19</p>

	<p>Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)</p> <p>Keep Herefordshire Warm will continue to promote impartial advice to private rented tenants and will continue to assist landlords to make improvements to their rental properties. Regular engagement with the local landlord's forum and National Landlord Association will continue. KHW engaged over 50 private landlords and tenants throughout 2016/17.</p> <p>MEES will be the responsibility of the council's Environmental Health and Trading Standards (EHTS) teams through regulation of letting agents and landlords as well as enforcement where required. Through the council's membership of the strategic group Homestamp residents also have access to a 'Check before you rent' application (http://bit.ly/2qncTGu), which will advise tenants to ask for an EPC before starting their tenancy. The app will also give the tenant the option of referring any due concerns, including the lack of an EPC prior to rental, to the council.</p>	<p>2016 -</p>
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Action	Details	Timescale
<p>iii)</p>	<p>Measures which the authority has developed to implement energy efficiency improvements cost-effectively in residential accommodation by using area-based / street by street approaches</p>	
	<p>It remains difficult to deliver area-based / street by street projects in Herefordshire, because of its largely rural nature and the spread of fuel poverty across the county as opposed to pockets of urban deprivation.</p> <p>Significant resource is directed to supporting more rural fuel poor households, particularly those in off gas homes / areas. Typically, such households are less likely to benefit from national support schemes (e.g. warm homes discount, ECO) and therefore they require additional support to help them access grants and benefits. Experience shows that the council needs to take a more proactive role in these areas to leverage in funding as the challenges presented by the characteristics of the area (rural, sparsely populated) mean that energy companies and installers are not often active within these areas without explicit council support.</p> <p>Park Homes Insulation Project</p> <p>The council are investigating an area based park homes insulation project in partnership with an energy company looking to deliver ECO funding. It is possible that such a project could be delivered under the 'Flexible Eligibility' element of the ECO2 transition period.</p>	<p>2017-19</p>

Action	Details	Timescale
iv)	Timeframe for delivery and local and national partners	
	<p>The Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Strategy recognises the importance of partnership working. Keep Herefordshire Warm, the affordable warmth steering group and the Herefordshire Affordable Warmth Network have partnership working at their core.</p> <p>Partners who Herefordshire council currently engage with include;</p> <p>Marches Energy Agency (as delivery partner for Keep Herefordshire Warm), Age UK, Hereford & Worcester Fire & Rescue service, local housing associations, local installer partners and energy companies.</p> <p>Regionally, the council are members of the Marches Sustainable Housing Partnership (MSHP), which brings together three councils in the Marches area and around seven registered housing providers. The partnership seeks to boost activity to improve efficiency by shared knowledge and co-operative delivery.</p>	2016 - 2019

If you would like help to understand this document, or would like it in another format or language, please call the Energy and Environmental Management Team on 01432 383262 or email: eem@herefordshire.gov.uk