



BARNLSLEY
Metropolitan Borough Council

Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 - Further Report 2019

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Part 1

1.1 Introduction

Barnsley council has committed to addressing carbon reduction and energy efficiency through the Energy strategy 2015- 2025 which can be found here:

<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/5021/energy-strategy-2015-2025.pdf>

Barneslai Homes are also committed to improving the energy efficiency of council housing, as set out in their Asset Management strategy which can be found here:

<https://www.barneslaihomes.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Assetmanstrategydoc.pdf>

This report looks at the progress made by the council since 2017 and looks at its ambitions for the next two years.

1.2 Progress Since 2017

(i) Private Sector Housing

Barnsley council is a member of the Better Homes Yorkshire programme, established in partnership with ten other local authorities in the Leeds City Region in 2015. Since 2017, Barnsley have obtained funding via this programme to install first time gas central heating systems, cavity wall and loft insulation, room in roof insulation, external wall insulation and boiler replacements. 332 private sector properties have received measures through this scheme since 2017. Around 50 empty homes have received energy efficiency works before being brought back in to use. One of the aims of the new Warm Homes service will be to gather local evidence around the wider impacts that increasing energy efficiency in private sector properties has. We know that residents who have benefitted from Better Homes have reported improvements in existing health conditions and lower energy bills and several case studies have been produced around this. Through the delivery of the recent warm homes funded central heating programme, 91% of properties with an initial EPC rating of F and G were improved to a rating of C and D following installation of the system. The council ran training sessions for 157 front line staff and third sector groups around energy awareness in conjunction with the NEA.

(ii) Council Housing

In council housing, Barneslai Homes have installed air source and ground source heat pumps, solar PV, biomass heating systems and domestic solar/ battery storage in a trial project. 1,369 measures have been completed since 2017. Barneslai Homes monitor air source heat pumps in use for 12 months to ensure correct usage and cost savings for tenants. The 321 solar PV installations are monitored by Energise Barnsley and have shown collective savings of over £115,000 tenants since 2015. Some tenants have also reported as much as a 50% decrease in their bill since battery installation.

The voids energy supplier was changed in 2018 and now features a supplier who provides 100% renewable electricity. This is also available to residents in the private sector.

(iii) Council Buildings

In non-domestic properties, the SALIX Recycling Scheme has funded a number of LED lighting refits, and also other energy efficient technologies such as variable speed drives and replacement pumps. Carbon emissions across our asset base have reduced by 8,076 tonnes in the last two years.

1.3 Investment

Over the last two years, investment to the value of circa. £1.513m has been made to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy usage across buildings in the borough:

Asset management - £273,649

Private Housing - £990,000

Social Housing - £250,000

The figures quoted include external funding obtained.

1.4 Our Partners

We work with internal stakeholders within different council services and have a strategic partnership in place with Energise Barnsley, alongside Berneslai Homes. We have delivery partners to install works and work closely with organisations such as the Carbon Trust, BPL (leisure facilities management), CAB, Age UK, DIAL, Mind and the NEA to identify those residents that will benefit most from the schemes that we have available. We work with the local CCG and other NHS partners along with the police and south Yorkshire Fire and Rescue. We also work with Big Local and BCB on the refurbishment of empty properties.

Part 2

2.1 Future Plans

(i) Private Sector Housing

A further 610 private sector properties will benefit from energy efficiency measures through Better Homes, an underfloor insulation scheme and an affordable warmth capital programme. A new Warm Homes service is due to launch in April 2019 and will help to signpost residents to support available to tackle cold homes as well as provide general energy saving advice. Around a further 100 empty properties that are being brought back in to use over the next two years will also receive energy efficiency works.

A demonstrator project is underway to compare low carbon house build costs against building to current building regulations. The council is developing an Energy and Sustainability supplementary planning document which will aim to start the transition towards zero carbon development.

(ii) Council Housing

Berneslai Homes and Energise Barnsley have carried out a BEIS-funded feasibility study to look at demand side response management using properties with solar PV and domestic heat pump installations. This is to continue in to the next phase with the installation of further smart batteries to council housing. The council is also exploring the use of minewater as a source of heat for a number of council properties in a pilot scheme.

(iii) Council Buildings

The council is seeking European funding for a solar project to feed electricity to our own buildings. Further LED refits will be undertaken through SALIX funding and funding is being sought through Leeds City Region to carry out energy audits.

2.2 Investment

Over the next two years, investment will be circa. £1.55m:

Asset management - £200,000

Private Housing - £600,000

Social Housing - £750,000

It is expected that the schemes will continue to be administered by the same number of staff as currently involved in this policy area. The figures quoted include external funding obtained. Over the last two years, the council has had a relatively small pot of capital funding to use for energy efficiency works in private sector housing. From April 2019, £250,000 will be made available over the next 3 years in the form of an Affordable Warmth programme where energy efficiency will be linked to health needs. This fund will be topped up with ECO Flex and HHCRO funding, warm homes funding when available and health through warmth funding via N Power. Better Care Funding is accessed for energy efficiency works to properties receiving adaptation works. Warm Homes category 3 funding is being used to establish the Warm Homes and Hospital Discharge service. For non-domestic council properties, the SALIX Recycling fund, which is a match funded revenue budget of £409,000, is available to fund energy saving projects. Typically this creates a budget of around £200,000 annually to invest in energy saving technologies which result in energy savings for the Council.

2.3 Community Engagement

Advice has been offered to residents at events in the community and through dedicated energy advice sessions held at various locations. These will continue, particularly through winter months. Over the next three years, the council will be operating a single point of access Warm Homes service, which will have dedicated case-workers who will go out and visit people in their own homes and also visit patients in hospital that are due to be discharged. This visit will include an element of energy saving advice as well as referring residents who can benefit from energy efficiency schemes.

The Housing & Energy team have its own dedicated facebook page which is used to promote energy saving advice to the public. The team also engage with and promote national campaigns such as Big Energy Savings week to highlight key messages to local residents. We also run media releases that are picked up by the local press and try to link in key messages to further help and support that is available locally.

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

Our Safer Neighbourhoods Service has the responsibility for monitoring these standards. Information is published on-line and via newsletters around policy updates and changes. We hold regular events for landlords to pass on information - our most recent one included a session

on MEES. Landlords and tenants are contacted reactively when a housing complaint is received. Where a property is an EPC is F or G rated notice would be served under the relevant Act to ensure works are carried out. For excess cold hazards, landlords are given advice on remediating action and referred on for assistance with energy efficiency works. Upon completion we ensure that requirements have been met.

2.5 Tackling Fuel Poverty

A reduction in the incidence of fuel poverty along with a reduction in carbon emissions are two key outcomes of the Energy strategy, although the two are not explicitly linked within it. However, by investing in schemes to tackle fuel poverty by making homes more energy efficient, using more renewable energy and influencing the cost of energy, carbon reduction will occur.

Various data sources have been used to try to identify fuel poor households including EPC data matched with mosaic data, off-gas data, fuel poverty statistics, building control data and IMD scores. Local knowledge has been used from area councils to identify areas of the borough where properties are poorly efficient, usually because of solid walls, and residents are generally on low incomes. Mailshots to specific areas have been used followed up by visits. Training has been provided to front line workers by the NEA so that they can recognise the signs of households in fuel poverty and refer residents through to the Housing & Energy team for assistance. Events have been held in and around the areas identified as having the highest levels of fuel poverty according to statistics, to promote the energy efficiency schemes available and also offer advice on general energy savings and behavioural change.

The council have established a local energy supply offer in partnership with Great North Energy. This is predominantly targeted at those who are in fuel poverty because they are paying excessive fuel costs, usually as a result of never having switched supplier. By using the council brand to endorse a particular tariff, it is hoped that this will help to encourage residents to look in to switching and seeking out a better deal. In addition, all council void properties are automatically switched to Great North Energy and any pre-payment meters are replaced with smart meters as standard, following recognition that those with pre-payment meters often pay more for their energy and are on low incomes.

Our partners, Great North Energy, are a provider for Robin Hood Energy. We have also used established partnerships at area council level to fund energy advice sessions for those in fuel poverty as well as talking to residents directly about managing fuel costs as part of wider budget management.

2.6 The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

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 asserted in its response that ECO3 would fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households.

The recently introduced ECO “flexible eligibility” 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.

The council's latest version of our Statement of Intent can be found here:
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/9935/statement-of-intent-v4.pdf>

To date, over a 100 residents have benefitted from this funding and this number will continue to increase over the coming years.

2.7 Smart Metering

Support to encourage residents to switch to smart meters is currently provided on an ad-hoc basis through community events and third sector organisations. The new warm homes service will be an integral part of promoting the use of smart meters when they conduct their home assessment visits. The council has met with Smart Energy GB to better understand the roll out programme and have done some promotion of this on our social media platforms.

Great North Energy is committed to replacing all pre-payment meters with smart meters as standard in all council properties as they become void. Other properties with traditional credit meters will also receive a smart meter when they become void. Help will be given to the new residents by the tenancy support teams to ensure that they are aware of the benefits of having a smart meter when they move in to the property and a display unit and full instructions are left at each property when it is ready to be re-let.

Signed:	<i>Richard Burnham</i>	Date:	<i>22 Mar 2019</i>
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