

# Home Energy Conservation Act Report 2021

**Date:** June 2021 **Version:** 1.0 **Author:** Housing Strategy Team



North Tyneside Council

## North Tyneside Response HECA Report 2021

Note: All questions have a 4000-character limit (Approx. 500 words)

### Introductory Questions

Name of Local Authority: North Tyneside Council

Type of Local Authority: Metropolitan

Name, job title and email address of official submitting report: J Orton/ R Peach

#### 1. Headline and Overview

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

If yes, please provide a link: Yes, this area of work forms part of the Authority's, Climate Emergency Action Plan which is being delivered under 8 separate Workstreams. There is a specific workstream that covers borough wide emissions reduction activities and includes non-domestic properties. Another workstream focusses on progressing strategic and retained housing stock activities.

[North Tyneside Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)

##### **If no, are you planning to develop one**

n/a

##### **What scheme(s) is your Local Authority planning to implement in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation properties in the next two years?**

There are several different schemes and projects that North Tyneside are implementing over the next 2 years for residential accommodation. This are outlined below:

Green Homes Grant - The Authority has been successful in the receiving funding from LAD1b to improve 396 homes across the borough. We have also been successful in obtaining LAD 2 funding to improve 111 private homes by installing energy efficiency measures.

The Council are aware of the funding opportunities which will be available in the coming years, including the Local Authority Delivery Scheme extension, Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG). The Council will seek to maximise the opportunities which these future funding rounds will provide.

The Councils Safe and Health Homes Team assess people's current energy consumption and tariffs and refer to Warm and Safe Homes (WASH) which is a National Energy Action programme that is working with customers to ensure that they are using their energy efficiently and are on the correct tariffs.

The Council as a constituent member of the North of Tyne Combined Authority has commissioned the establishment of a retrofit database to aid the future roll out of retrofit programmes across the region including an assessment of the existing and required capacity in the area of the energy efficiency retrofit supply chain.

The Council has a long-standing Service Level Assistant with North Tyneside Citizens Advice who support people with specific debt advice and fuel poverty issues. CAB assist with switching suppliers and signpost people to the energy savings trust for more detailed advice when required. Recent statistics from April 20-March 21 show that CAB helped with 1456 issues in relation to fuel poverty.

The Council continues to work with partners to develop new home energy efficiency programmes whenever external funding opportunities becomes available.

What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of running and administering the scheme(s), such as the value of grants and other support made available, plus any other costs incurred (such as administration) as desired.

North Tyneside Council has received grant for LAD1b to the value of £3.2M, this will deliver energy efficiency measures in 396 social and private homes across the borough. The total project cost, including the capital contribution from the Council is £3,729,165. The administration costs associated with delivery, marketing and customer journey are c£324,249 with c£37,500 for ancillary support to make properties safe and suitable for the retrofit works.

We have also received £1.1m in LAD2 funding, this will deliver energy efficiency measures in 111 private homes across the borough. The total project cost is £1,122,019 with £97,001 for administration costs to provide the resource to deliver the scheme and facilitate the customer journey; and £15,844 for ancillary support to make properties safe and suitable for the retrofit works.

The “cost” of running grant funded schemes is determined to an extent by the allowance for ancillary services. However, these generally do not account for the wider involvement of staff across the organisation to facilitate and promote scheme

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

3<sup>rd</sup> sector: National Energy Action (NEA), Local Energy Action Partnerships (LEAP), Groundworks, Foundations Independent Living Trust,

Charities: Turn 2 Us, Age UK, VODA, CAB, Step change

Businesses: Borthwick Heating and Insulation, Highly Efficient Heating, Eon Energy Solutions, Fusion 21

Stakeholders: Adult Social Care, Hospital Teams, GP surgeries,

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

For LAD1b delivery the outcomes are that 396 energy efficiency measures will be installed across homes in the borough which could potential save them £360 in energy bills each year and contribute to the net zero carbon target by saving 1.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

LAD2B outcomes will allow 111 energy efficiency measures to be installed in private homes across the borough which could potential save them £360 in energy bills each year and contribute to the net zero carbon target by saving 1.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide every year.

Other Outcomes include customers being able to live in warm and insulated homes, increase in health and wellbeing, provision of energy saving measures and cost effective therefore reduction of people living in fuel poverty.

## **2. Communications**

**Does your Local Authority provide any advisory services to customers on how to save energy? If yes, please briefly outline how this is undertaken.**

Yes

The Authority has a detailed Communications Plan associated with the Climate Emergency Action Plan which includes energy / environmental issues media campaigns. Businesses are also accommodated in this respect via an ERDF Project (BEST), a localised Carbon Reduction Award Scheme pilot and free desk top renewable energy feasibility studies. The Safe and Healthy Homes team provide assistance to residents in the borough whose homes are having a detrimental effect on their health and wellbeing. The team provide a comprehensive advice and signposting service to deliver, emergency aid, insulation improvements, boiler repair as well as the installation of heat sensors, community fuel debt advice and community resilience for our most vulnerable residents. (Private rented or owner occupiers).

Information about saving energy, fuel poverty and general sustainability issues are also published on the Council website.

The authority has a long-standing SLA with Citizens Advice who can advise tenants of debt/fuel poverty.

Neighbourhood Housing Officers and Tenancy Support Officers will provide general advice to tenants regarding ways that they can maximise their income, reduce outgoings, improve energy efficiency, and reduce their carbon footprint,

**How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses?**

The Council publishes advice on how to save energy and other sustainability issues on its website.

## **3. Local Green Supply Chain**

**Have you made any assessment, or undertaken any analysis of the existing capacity in your local energy efficiency retrofit supply chain to support the decarbonisation of buildings by 2050? If Yes, please summarise the outcomes.**

The Authority as a constituent member of the North of Tyne Combined Authority has commissioned the establishment of a retrofit database to aid the future roll out of retrofit programmes across the region including an assessment of the existing and required capacity in the area of the energy efficiency retrofit supply chain.

**What actions are you taking, if any, to upskill and/or grow the local energy efficiency installer supply chain? This could include the facilitation of training, and local installer networking opportunities.**

The Authority is currently developing a joint Community Renewal Fund grant application in conjunction with the North of Tyne Combined Authority which has a strong element of training for internal staff in the PAS2035 standard for retrofit technologies.

It is envisaged that if successful this, grant and training provision may be the basis for wider dissemination of the standard into the supply chain by trained staff.

Early discussions with our regional procurement organisation (NEPO) has provided the opportunity to identify the role of training / information sharing and networking options for future supplier engagement.

**What actions are you taking, if any, to promote energy efficiency and the installer supply chain to consumers, and encourage households to consider energy retrofit? If no action is taking place in either of these two areas, please let us know of any barriers you have encountered.**

A specific and targeted communications plan will enable these aspects to be promoted and is currently in the process of being planned and developed.

Working with E.ON for LAD1b delivery, consumers are sent a letter outlining the benefits of the energy retrofits and how much this may save them.

There is energy information published on our website, promotional information would be handed out at events if and when they are allowed to recommence.

**How effectively is your LA able to engage (Trustmark/PAS2035/PAS2030 certified) installers?**

There is limited engagement, the Council has the facility to engage suitably certified installers through nationally recognised frameworks

**Do you have any plans to develop policies or initiatives in this space over the next five years as part of supporting your local decarbonisation efforts?**

This is something that we would like to develop in the future and the scope and scale of this work is being considered.

#### **4. Social Housing**

**What action, if any, has your LA taken to install energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures in social housing? Have these been installed to a satisfactory quality? What actions (if any) have your social housing partners taken?**

The authority are committed to reducing the level of CO<sub>2</sub> omissions within our housing stock and eradicating fuel poverty for our tenants. Our 30yr business plan has finances available to tackle circa 600 homes a year for central heating boiler replacements. These boilers can accommodate a mix of 20% hydrogen in preparation for any future infrastructure changes. Plans are also in place to retrofit 30 homes with Air Source Heat Pumps. Our business plan also allows for Cavity Wall insulation renewals as part of future structural wall tie replacement projects. Quality assurance checks are carried out on a percentage of installs along with key performance indicators tracked for the delivery of projects.

LAD1b funding will also allow the delivery of energy efficiency measures in 206 homes.

**Do you have easy access to the information/knowledge within your organisation that you would expect to need for social housing retrofit projects? (e.g. stock condition; property data; approach to procurement; alignment with existing internal maintenance/upgrade**

**plans; tenant engagement and management plans; costings), If no, would it be easy/difficult to obtain this information?**

North Tyneside Council are committed to ensuring its stock condition database is robust, accurately maintained and gives confidence to staff when utilising the data within this. Keystone Asset Management software integrates with our existing Housing Management System (Northgate) to ensure that our database is updated when element replacements are undertaken as part of ongoing investment programmes. This ensures we have an up to date and comprehensive stock condition database which can be interrogated in order to develop a sound asset management strategy moving forward. Domestic Energy Assessments are also carried out during our empty homes process with recommendations for measures being factored into investment plans.

**Have you experienced any challenges to retrofit, including during any previous government schemes you have taken part in (e.g. supply chain, funding, tenant cooperation, mixed tenure, split incentive, policy clarity, etc)? Please provide some detail. Have social housing partners reported any challenges to retrofit?**

Historic programme with the NEA to install energy saving measures to Social Housing Stock which included Voltage Optimisers and RAD Fans. Challenges resulted in:

- Tenant engagement and access to homes.
- Tracking performance data of measures installed.
- Acquiring tenant utility bills for tracking monetary savings of measures installed.

Historic programme of Solar PV Retrofit project with E.ON as part of the Government's FIT Scheme. Challenges resulted in:

- Changes to the FIT tariffs.
- Limited time for installations.
- Tenancy sign up prior to starting.
- Suitability of properties to receive PV.

**How does your LA currently/how will your LA in future plan to go about identifying suitable housing stock and measures for retrofit? How do social housing partners identify suitable stock? By the same measures or via a different method?**

SAP Ratings for our Social Housing stock are recalculated annually following the installation of energy saving measures through Capital Investment programmes. This allows us to target homes with a low SAP rating for future investment or Grant funded schemes. EPC's are also produced during our empty homes process which identifies recommendations for energy saving measures to be installed.

**What considerations would make you more or less likely to apply for government funding? If known, what is the opinion of your social housing partners?**

A wider range of eligibility for households to be included within schemes.

More time to prepare for a bid and longer delivery programmes for the measures to be installed.

**To what extent are social housing tenants willing or unwilling to undergo retrofit, and what are the barriers and facilitators to their participation? If known, is this the same opinion across all social housing tenants or is it different with HA and ALMO tenants?**

Tenants are willing to have measures installed but not willing to share their personal information relating to finances for Audit purposes.

Concerns about disruption or mess during the works.

Questions are usually asked about whether they need to change energy suppliers and what happens if they want to buy the property.

**Does the approach to retrofit change for leaseholders in mixed tenure blocks? What encourages them to co-operate?**

No. Leaseholders would be asked to pay a contribution for the measures that are installed to the block. Advice would be offered about the potential savings that the measures would bring. Any contribution could be spread over several years to minimise their outlay.

**5. Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards**

**Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards regulations requiring private rentals in England and Wales to meet a minimum energy performance rating of EPC Band E as of April 2020, unless a valid exemption applies?**

Yes

Which team within your authority is responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard? Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.

Joanne Lee – Public Protection Manager, Capita Email: [Joanne.Lee@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:Joanne.Lee@northtyneside.gov.uk)

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

The Authority has information on the website to communicate with landlords. Written communication is used when alerting landlords/tenants of any issues and is followed up via a home visit.

**What barriers, if any, does your local authority face enforcing these regulations (e.g. identifying non-compliant properties/landlords, budgeting/resourcing, any legal issues)?**

Resourcing and the lack of additional budgets are the main barriers, there is a need for additional staff resources to enforce these regulations. This would assist in identifying non complaint properties.

**Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties to enforce these regulations? If yes, how? If no, please explain.**

The service has proactively targeted this group, although proactive programmes have been virtually curtailed during the Covid pandemic due to risks to staff and occupants.

**6. Financial Support for Energy Efficiency**

Where possible, please set out your answers to the following questions by tenure (owner occupied, privately rented, or social housing).

**What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable please outline the budget (and % of the budget that is used), where such funding is sourced and where it is targeted.**

For Social Housing there is an annual Capital Investment programme to target central heating boiler replacements and Cavity wall extract / refill amounting to circa £1.4m a year.

We also received £1.2 million in LAD1b funding to deliver energy efficiency measures for 206 social housing homes.

For Owner Occupiers - We have received £2 million in LAD1b funding to deliver energy efficiency measures in 190 homes.

**What future investment for energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures do you have planned, and when are these investments planned for?**

For Social Housing we have an annual Capital Investment programme to target central heating boiler replacements and Cavity wall extract / refill amounting to circa £1.4m a year.

The Council continues to bid for future funding programmes from the Government to determine this.

**7. Fuel Poverty**

**Does your Local Authority have a Fuel Poverty Strategy?**

No

**What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? What blockers, if any, have there been in identifying households in fuel poverty?**

In 2016, North Tyneside Council commissioned the Building Research Establishment (BRE) to produce a Housing Stock Modelling Report which included data and analysis on fuel poverty. This report informs the work of the Council to identify residents / properties as being in fuel poverty allowing specific areas of the borough to be targeted, along with other evidence and statistics from other sources, including IMD indicators, EPC data, official fuel poverty statistics, etc. When required it is possible to provide maps of the borough to show levels of fuel poverty by using the latest available data.

As part of the first phase delivery programme of Local Authority Delivery we have worked in partnership with EON to identify households in fuel poverty. A range of sources were used to target households in fuel poverty, such as:

- Low Income High Costs (LIHC) fuel poverty statistics
- Benefits data
- Housing stock condition data
- Mosaic household income data

**How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall Carbon Reduction Strategy?**

There are some associations with the Climate Emergency Action Plan especially around domestic retrofit activities. Fuel poverty is however, bound more closely with the general suite of policies linked to addressing poverty.



**Please highlight any fuel poverty issues specific to your area.**

Fuel poverty issues are those common to many areas (high fuel cost, low income, inefficient properties) but this is monitored by mapping our levels of fuel poverty across the borough so that a targeted approach can be used to tackle the properties with the lowest fuel poverty.

**What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? Include information on partnerships with local businesses or energy providers you have.**

The Authority was not able to embark fully on any new initiatives over the reporting period. The Green Doctors Project was launched in Autumn 2019 in association with Ground Work North East but progress, however, has been stalled due to the COVID Pandemic.

**8. Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery**

Of the £2bn Green Homes Grant scheme introduced in summer 2020, £500m was assigned for Local Authority Delivery (LAD). LAD enables Local Authorities to bid for grant funding to support low-income households in their area with energy efficiency and low carbon heating upgrades. £200m was made available through Local Authority grant competitions in 2020, known as phases 1A and 1B and £300m was allocated under Phase 2 between the five regional Local Energy Hubs.

**Has your Local Authority Participated in GHG: LAD?**

If yes, please indicate which phase you participated in and briefly outline the project.

Yes. North Tyneside secured funding from LAD1b and LAD2 to carry out energy improvements to homes in North Tyneside.

LAD1b funding was £3.2 million to deliver energy efficiency measures to 396 homes of this 206 were to social housing and 190 to private homes. Lad2 funding is £1.1 million to deliver energy measures in 111 homes. Please see the energy measure by type and bid below.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Numbers LAD1b</b>	<b>Number LAD2</b>
Solar PV	249	51
Air Source Heat Pump	90	15
External Wall Insulation	57	20
Double Glazing	0	15
Loft Insulation	0	10
Other – Smart meters	10	5
<b>Total Measures</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>116</b>

If no, please indicate what barriers prevented you from participation in the scheme.

**Would your Local Authority be in a position to manage the delivery of upgrades through a scheme such as LAD in 2022?**

Yes, work is underway to procure an appropriate framework and procure a delivery partner

If yes, please indicate the anticipated number of homes that could be upgraded per year.

Approx. 600+

If no, please indicate what barriers would prevent you from delivering upgrades in your area.

## 9. 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 set out in its response that ECO3 will fully focus on Affordable Warmth – low income, vulnerable and fuel poor households. The ECO “Local Authority flexible eligibility” (LA 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 in the LA Flex programme 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.

**Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility? (Y/N) Please answer the following questions to help us to understand LA Flex delivery in more detail:**

How many declarations were issued for low income vulnerable households? None

How many declarations were issued for Fuel Poor households? N/A

How many declarations were issued for in-fill? N/A

What is the highest income cap published in your Sol? £26K

If you have used an income over £30k gross, what reason have you given? N/A

Do you charge for declarations to be signed? If so, please state how much? N/A

## 10. Smart Metering

**Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to promote smart meter take up and supporting residents to achieve benefits.**

All Social Housing new build homes are installed with smart meters.

E.ON Lad2 bid (10)

Please provide further information on activities relating to smart metering, including but not limited to:

- a. Integrating approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation

b. Arranging for smart meters to be installed by energy suppliers in vacant social housing premises

British Gas void care package currently in place for Social Housing empty homes.

b. Using social landlords to promote smart meter uptake

N/A

d. Including smart meters in landlord licencing schemes

N/A

e. supporting residents who have had appliances condemned for safety reasons

Annual gas servicing programme in place for Social Housing. Checks carried out on those homes identified as GAS CAP.

Lorraine may have info to support in private

f. Other supporting activities

## **11. Future Schemes and Wider Incentives**

**Please outline any further schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve energy efficiency in residential accommodation.**

The Council are working with neighbouring authorities and the North of Tyne Combined Authority and have appointed consultants to establish a common evidence base and retrofit database to aid the future roll out of retrofit programmes across the region. This will include an assessment of the existing and required capacity in the energy efficiency retrofit supply chain and procurement of an appropriate delivery framework.

Work is underway for the Council to procure a delivery partner for further energy efficiency works.

We actively look for chances to deliver new programmes whenever new opportunities/funding become available.