

Daventry District Council - HECA Report April 2019

Aims and Purpose

This report has been produced to comply with the requirements of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) 1995. The Act requires local authorities to submit two-yearly reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures have been adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation. This covers measures to improve properties in the owner-occupier, private rented and social rented sectors.

In an effort to improve HECA reporting rates, the department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) are trialling a new online reporting system for the 2019 submissions which involves answering a set of questions on a number of key themes. This report has been produced to amalgamate the digital reporting questions required by BEIS with background information in order to publish a complete summary.

Organisation Information

Daventry District Council is a small rural Council employing approximately 180 full time equivalent employees. The main offices at Lodge Road are located in Daventry and the Council is responsible for other buildings in the town, notably the Leisure Centre, currently outsourced to Sports and Leisure Management and the Abbey Centre consisting of office space that is occupied by a range of organisations. The Abbey has recently undergone a renovation and from 2019 will house the new Daventry Library. The Council owns and manages a range of other commercial/ industrial properties in different parts of the town which are let to a variety of third party tenants.

In June 2018, the Council and Norse Commercial Services entered into a joint services venture called Daventry Norse. Daventry Norse manage a new 1-2-3 waste collection system for households which has seen food waste and dry recycling drastically improve alongside a reduction in general household waste. Daventry Norse also manages the grounds maintenance activities, the management of open spaces and Daventry Country Park. The Council transferred its social housing to Daventry & District Housing in November 2007. The Council has completed building 32 domestic properties for private rental and 13 as affordable rentals as part of its 'homes for rent' investment portfolio.

Partnership Working

Daventry District Council works in partnership with a number of organisations on energy efficiency matters including -

- Northants Warm Homes Partnership (NWHP)
- Northants Climate Change Officers Group (NCCOG)
- East Midlands Association for Local Energy Officers (ALEO)

Policies and Procedures

As a Council we monitor our carbon emissions and environmental initiatives in a number of ways:

Environmental Policy

The Council has an environmental policy detailing its commitment to sustainable development and minimising local and global environmental impacts. The policy forms part of the environmental management system which is accredited to the Investors in the Environment scheme and has achieved the 'green level' for six consecutive years.

Carbon Management

The Council monitors its carbon emissions through an annual greenhouse gas emissions report. Previous achievements through the Carbon Management Plan resulted in a 31% reduction in carbon emissions by 2016/17 against a 2008/09 baseline.

Environmental Goals

The environmental goals link in with Council initiatives to encourage 'green' behaviour for employees and promote green behaviour throughout the wider district.

BEIS Reporting Questions

The Council's official responses to these questions have been submitted via the online digital platform and are copied below.

Headline and overview questions	
1.	<i>Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?</i>
	No - Carbon Management Plan from 2009-2014 to reduce emissions by 30% from baseline year. Target achieved in 2016/17. Emissions still monitored annually through greenhouse gas report. Introduced corporate plan target (2017-2020) to increase the percentage of commercial Council floor space with minimum EPC rating of E.
2.	<i>If no, are you planning to develop one?</i>
	Ongoing monitoring is in place identifying opportunities when they arise, but no formal strategy is in place currently as this is not required for the authority and the initial voluntary target for carbon reduction has been met.
3.	<i>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?</i>
	<p>DDC belongs to Northants Warm Homes Partnership (NWHP) a countywide group whose aim is to reduce fuel poverty and increase energy efficiency in residential accommodation. The group has recently produced an ECO Flex statement of intent to enable more households to benefit from energy saving measures through ECO obligations.</p> <p>DDC have continued to promote our Big Switch energy scheme which provides householders with an opportunity to secure cheaper energy tariffs through a collective scheme with switching provider, iChoosr. Since the Council joined in 2015, over 3,000 residents in Daventry District have registered to take part saving an average of £216 on their energy bills by switching providers. We have also started to promote the smart meter movement working with National Energy Action (NEA) to provide front facing staff with information about the benefits of smart meters to enable them to inform residents.</p> <p>The NWHP have recently been successful in securing funding through the Warm Homes Fund (WHF) to connect households to the gas grid and provide first time central heating to approximately 1,400 homes across Northamptonshire. This is primarily a fuel poverty project but a secondary impact of the project will be a reduction in carbon emissions in residential accommodation. Funding was approved in 2018 and the project will run until 2022. This project is being led by Corby Borough Council.</p> <p>We also refer householders to Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service (NESS) for domestic energy advice.</p>
4.	<i>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</i>

	as administration) as desired?
	To support the WHF project, DDC have budgeted £60,000 over three years to contribute towards the funding gap for eligible homes in the district. The total funding to be received from WHF is £3.9m for the county.
5.	<i>What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?</i>
	Key partners for the WHF include NWHP, WHF, Agility ECO, Surefire Management Services (SMS) and Green Dynamo. Other partners include Daventry District Council's Care and Repair team.
6.	<i>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, social impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc.)?</i>
	The outcome of the WHF project over the next few years will be measured by customer satisfaction, energy saving and alleviation of fuel poverty.
7.	<i>What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?</i>
	Lessons learned to be assessed on an ongoing basis throughout the duration of the project.
Local Communications Strategy	
8.	<i>Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?</i>
	Yes
9.	<i>If yes to question 8, please briefly outline how this is undertaken</i>
	Adhoc business enquiries are received and answered by the Environmental Improvement Officer drawing on expert advice from the Carbon Trust and other partners. Domestic energy efficiency advice is available on our website and any telephone enquiries are directed to Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service.
10.	<i>How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses?</i>
	Primarily through our website and also sharing information and tips via social media. The collective energy switching scheme in partnership with iChoosr helps residents to switch energy providers through an approved council scheme. Also referrals to Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service.
Local Green Supply Chains	
11.	<i>Does your Local Authority promote the use of energy efficient products amongst consumers (and businesses)?</i>
	Yes
12.	<i>If yes to question 11, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.</i>
	Signpost local businesses to organisations who can support with improving energy efficiency such as the Carbon Trust and Investors in the Environment.

13.	<i>What engagement (formal or informal) does your local authority have with local business/supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?</i>
	None at present
Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards	
14.	<i>Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018?</i>
	Yes
15.	<i>Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard, and what are their contact details?</i>
	Environmental Improvement (Environmental Health) Karen Pell, Interim Environmental Health Manager (Environmental Improvement) kpell@daventrydc.gov.uk 01327 302251
16.	<i>What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?</i>
	DDC introduced a landlord forum in 2016, amongst other topics this forum will be used to inform landlords about their obligations with regards to home energy efficiency under the MEES regulations. Other methods include through the licensing application process, direct liaison after complaints, information is also provided via the council website, social media, council newsletter to all residents, local press and advertisement banner on the foot of team emails. Landlords will also be incentivised to upgrade their heating systems by taking advantage of the warm homes fund grant which will enable them to install gas central heating in affected properties. Landlords will be required to contribute towards this as opposed to the tenant but it will improve the energy efficiency of their property and conditions for the tenant.
17.	<i>Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties?</i>
	No
18.	<i>If yes, how? If no, please explain.</i>
	Resource does not allow for us to target these landlords specifically although those who come to our attention through other means are questioned on the poor energy efficiency of their property. Some work is being undertaken by officers to map the location of E, F and G properties in the district who may be targeted for improvements through the warm homes fund.
Financial Support for Energy Efficiency	
19.	<i>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.</i>
	Primarily the WHF project to achieve energy saving and also the Big Switch scheme referred to above.
Fuel Poverty	
20.	<i>Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy?</i>

	DDC is a member of the countywide Northants Warm Homes Partnership who have a work plan in place to reduce fuel poverty across the county.
21.	<i>What steps have you taken to identify resident/properties in fuel poverty?</i>
	National data from BEIS as well as data on EPC ratings to try and identify those likely to be living in hard to heat homes.
22.	<i>How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy?</i>
	Carbon reduction strategy not in place. However we have a corporate plan measure to provide people with the housing they need, bringing homes up to a decent minimum standard will help achieve this measure and alleviate fuel poverty.
23.	<i>What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty and if so what partnership with business or energy providers have you undertaken?</i>
	Working with the NWHP whose aim is to reduce fuel poverty. Referrals to NESS for energy advice. Big Switch collective energy switching scheme in place to encourage households to switch energy tariffs to reduce expenditure on fuel costs. Partnership with all LAs in Northamptonshire through the NWHP and referrals to NESS. Working with iChoosr for the Big Switch collective switching scheme.
The Energy Company Obligation	
24.	<i>Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (SOI) for ECO flexibility eligibility?</i>
	Yes. A countywide SOI has been produced on behalf of the Northants Warm Homes Partnership - https://www.northantswarmhomes.com/files/2018/11/SOI-FINAL.pdf
25.	<i>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.</i>
	No comment.
Smart Metering	
26.	<i>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.</i>
	DDC worked with NEA during 2017 to provide frontline staff with information on the smart meter rollout. Two members of staff have been trained as smart meter champions and undertake work with the elderly in the district through public forum events. Smart Energy GB flyers have been handed out to residents during these forum events. Information has also been provided through the Council magazine and website to reach a wider audience. Promotion of smart meters forms part of the Council's environmental goals which are reported quarterly to the senior management team and portfolio holder.
27.	<i>Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to: Integrate your approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential</i>

	<i>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</i>
	Due to the complication with first generation smart meters losing smart functionality when switching energy providers, we decided to delay further promotions until this had been resolved and the second generation meters were starting to be installed. This was because we felt the lack of interoperability when switching providers with a smart meter already installed conflicted with our advice and current scheme to encourage householders to secure cheaper tariffs through our Big Switch scheme. As the target date for smart meter installations approaches, we will continue to utilise the resources available from smart energy GB.
28.	<i>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).</i>
	Care and repair hardship fund is available. Signposting to Daventry Contact a charity who recycle unwanted furniture and white goods to households in need.
29.	<i>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).</i>
	No current arrangements.
Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives	
30.	<i>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').</i>
	N/A