

# HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

The questions which LAs are asked to report on via the digital 'Survey' are as follows:

<p>Name of Local Authority:</p> <p>Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council</p>
<p>Type of Local Authority:</p> <p>Borough Council</p>
<p>Name and contact details of official submitting the report:</p> <p>Lucy Hicks <a href="mailto:Lucy.hicks@tmbc.gov.uk">Lucy.hicks@tmbc.gov.uk</a> 01732 876395</p>
<p>Job title of official submitting the report:</p> <p>Housing Initiatives Officer (Private Sector Housing)</p>
<p>Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool:</p> <p>Planning Policy Private Sector Housing Team/Housing Services Property Services Economic regeneration, Executive Services</p>
<p>Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE) broken down by team if possible:</p> <p>A part-time resource based in our Private Sector Housing Team 0.5 (by FTE) dedicated to improving domestic housing energy efficiency and part of this role is around alleviating fuel poverty. It is also the role of the wider Private Sector Housing Team through their work in the private sector including HHSRS inspections, enforcement of housing conditions and minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector, offering energy advice and financial assistance for energy efficiency measures.</p>

<b>Headline and Overview Questions</b>		
1	Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?	(Y)
2	If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here:	
<p><b>Kent and Medway wide strategic initiatives</b></p> <p>Kent and Medway have a very strong partnership working ethos and have a number of joint initiatives covering residents, businesses and the wider public sector. The Kent and Medway Environment Strategy sets the framework, and identifies domestic energy and fuel poverty as a key strand. This is further complimented by the Fuel Poverty Strategy developed and co-ordinated by the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership</p> <p><a href="http://www.kent.gov.uk/environmentstrategy">www.kent.gov.uk/environmentstrategy</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/340014/Fuel-Poverty-Strategy-for-Kent-final.pdf">https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/340014/Fuel-Poverty-Strategy-for-Kent-final.pdf</a></p> <p>Kent and Medway have played an active role in influencing and developing the TRILEP Energy Strategy, covering the South East, Enterprise and M3 and Coast to Capital Local Enterprise partnerships. The energy projects identified range from supporting residents who are off gas to connect to the network to the identifications of areas for micro generation.</p> <p><a href="https://www.southeastlep.com/energysouth2east/">https://www.southeastlep.com/energysouth2east/</a></p> <p>Energy initiatives identified in the TRILEP Strategy have been reflected in the draft Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy going out for consultation in June 2019 which will be reported to Council members in due course. The strategy aims to create actions to eliminate poor air quality, reduce fuel poverty and deliver an affordable, clean and secure energy supply for Kent and Medway. It makes the link between supply of energy for housing, industry and transport and air quality, recognising that reducing emissions from the former will lead to improvements in the latter.</p> <p>This Draft Energy and Low Emissions Strategy goes further with regards to domestic energy, suggesting a range of strategic actions from collective switching, collective solar and domestic energy efficiency improvements through the Kent Warm Homes framework, website and call centre. The Strategy linking sustainability, housing environmental health and planning officers is one of the first of its kind and domestic energy is a key element.</p> <p>The Council's adopted Managing Development and the Environment Development Plan Document (MDE DPD) includes a suite of climate change policies that have the objective of reducing the energy demands of new residential and non-residential buildings. The MDE DPD can be accessed from the Council's website:</p> <p><a href="https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/14043/MDE_DPD_April_2010.pdf">https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/14043/MDE DPD April 2010.pdf</a>.</p>		

The Council's emerging Local Plan - which is at the examination stage - was prepared in the context of the Government's Housing Standards Review and does not include specific carbon reduction policies for new buildings. The Council expects section 43 of the Deregulation Act 2015 to eventually come into force and expects the Government to strengthen the energy performance standards for new buildings through a review of the Building Regulations, a commitment made clear in their Clean Growth Strategy (April 2018).

The Kent & Medway Environment Strategy links with other strategies and policy such as West Kent Housing & Homelessness Strategy 2017-2021, Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy and the Health & Wellbeing focus of the Sustainable Transformation Partnership.

In particular the housing strategy action plan sets out priorities and actions to tackle identified housing needs in the Borough including private sector renewal and energy efficiency and assisting vulnerable households.

3	If no, are you planning to develop one?	(N)
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')	

The Council's Housing Assistance policy seeks to target financial assistance to those most in need to improve their living conditions in the private housing sector. Warm Homes Assistance is made available to ensure homes are appropriately insulated and adequately heated through provision of affordable efficient heating systems.

The policy was amended in February 2019 to make available funding to encourage private sector landlords to improve the least energy efficiency homes, where a Category 1 Excess Cold hazard.

Local authorities in Kent offer the Warm Homes scheme to help residents save energy. The scheme makes available ECO discounted loft and cavity wall insulation and heating to ECO eligible households.

The Council participates in Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex).

Kent Local Authorities have an agreement in place with Southern Gas Networks to refer fuel poor/ LA Flex eligible households for first time gas connections.

Our energy saving/carbon reduction schemes are promoted through our website, social media, targeted mailings, West Kent Landlord Forum, attendance at local events, press releases to local newspapers and Parish/Borough wide magazines.

The Council is helping residents to pay less on energy bills by offering a collective switching scheme.

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')

*Free text response to question 4b - please outline in no more than 200 words*

The Council will continue to support referrals to:

- TMBC Warm Homes Assistance making available funding to provide a safe, warm environment for vulnerable residents including energy efficiency measures.
- The Kent Warm Homes scheme which offers discounted (ECO funded) energy efficiency measures to residents across Kent.
- Local Authority Flexible Eligibility scheme

Kent Local Authorities are in the process of finalising contract details with Southern Gas Networks who have agreed funding for 210 first time gas connections to properties across Kent (50% of cost of heating up to £2,500). We also plan to work with SGN Vulnerability team to support households that have been disconnected.

The Council funds the following health improvement roles which can assist, as part of their wider role, in identifying and reducing the impact of cold homes through making referrals to national and local funding/schemes where available, to help residents keep their homes warm:

- One You Advisors based in the Council's Health Improvement team and a One You Your Home Officer based at a GP practice in Tonbridge
- West Kent Health and Housing Coordinator roles based at two local hospitals
- Occupational Therapist roles based in the Housing team

5 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? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.

*Free text response to question 5 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

Our annual Housing Assistance budget is a limited resource. Warm Homes Assistance can be useful to 'top-up' Energy Company Obligation (which does not cover the full cost of heating measures) so there is no upfront cost to the resident. Assistance becomes repayable on the sale of the property. Between 2017-19 Warm homes Assistance totalled £76,992.

Administrative resource is required to promote national and local energy efficiency schemes and process Warm Homes Assistance applications.

The Kent & Medway Warm Homes scheme has a free phone service.

6	What businesses, charities, third sector organisations or other stakeholders do you work with to deliver the scheme(s)?
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*Free text response to question 6 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

We work with many local organisations through our Housing & Health work including:

- Kent Local Authorities
- Kent & Medway Sustainable Energy Partnership
- Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership
- Kent County Council, social services
- Public Health
- West Kent CCG and local NHS hospitals and services including falls prevention service
- Local GPs
- Warm Homes scheme provider
- Southern Gas Networks Fuel poor Network Extension Scheme
- Peabody South East–local Home Improvement Agency
- Age UK
- Voluntary organisations and other Kent based partnerships.
- collective energy switching scheme provider
- Citizen Advice
- Involve (care navigation and carers support services across West Kent)

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

*Free text response to question 7 - please outline in no more than 200 words*

The following schemes/plans have taken place to help reduce fuel poverty and deliver financial assistance to private sector housing residents to help fund energy efficiency improvements:

- TMBC Housing Assistance funding -23 heating measures, 1 insulation measure. Total spend £76,992.21 (including VAT)
- Kent Warm Homes scheme -9 measures including heating and insulation. Total cost £18,488.90, ECO funding £10,535.15 (excluding VAT)\*
- Estimated sum of yearly £ saving -£4,494\*\*
- Estimated sum of yearly carbon saving - 31,219.67\*\*
- Estimated sum of lifetime £ saving - £104,100\*\*
- Estimated sum of lifetime carbon saving - 483,240\*\*

Annual savings calculations are based on property /fuel type and using EST saving estimation figures\* including 3 boilers funded through Warm Homes Assistance scheme. \*\* Includes 1 x park home assessed as bungalow type

The estimated savings to health and wider society from installing insulation and heating in a cold home is £7,410.00 per year and £18,525.00 per year respectively.

Formal landlord enforcement action has been taken under the Housing Act 2004 for 6 private rented homes to remove a category 1 excess cold hazard.

We promote the Energy Deal collective switching scheme and since joining the scheme the sum of savings to residents over 13 participating auctions is £194,093.83.

8	What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?
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*Free text response to question 8 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

We seek to combine funding strands to enable residents to benefit from the installation of heating measures at no up-front cost, which is difficult given the ever changing funding agenda and complexity.

ECO funding is focussed on low cost insulation measures (an increasingly smaller target audience as many residents will have benefitted from earlier schemes). The funding available for external wall insulation requires substantial resident contribution making it unaffordable.

Local authority wide EPC bulk data download includes transactions to 2016. It would be helpful for targeting energy efficiency scheme information and MEES enforcement if this could be regularly updated.

### **Local Communications Strategy**

9	Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?	(Y)
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10	If yes to question 10, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)
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*Free text response to question 10 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

The Private Sector Housing Team offer advice to residents and private sector landlords on:

- Energy efficiency measures
- Funding/grant availability
- Signpost to energy saving information
- Category 1 Excess Cold hazards
- Signpost to Kent & Medway Warm Homes scheme webpages and free phone service
- Collective switching scheme, which enables wider advice to be offered at registration.

The Council does not own any stock and the principal registered social housing provider Clarion Housing offers an advisory service to their tenants on how to save energy.

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')
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*Free text response to question 11 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

- Council website and social media
- targeted mailings
- Kent & Medway Warm Home scheme helpline, website and leaflets
- Private Landlord Forum
- press releases, parish newsletters
- community events and forums for example, health and wellbeing, older person days
- Look at innovative ways to promote through partnerships for example with GP surgeries, other professionals working in our community
- We actively promote energy saving/carbon reduction initiatives to local business through social media, business e-newsletter, referrals and business networking events.
- Signpost business to Kent Sustainable Business Team for Low Carbon Kent and LOCASE funding.

### **Local Green Supply Chains**

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')	(Y)
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13	If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.
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*Free text response to question 12 - please outline in no more than 100 words*

TMBC webpages provide information on renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency advice to householders.

The Council signposts to Kent Sustainable Business Team.

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?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 14 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>Signpost businesses to Kent Sustainable Business Team, Low Carbon Kent and LOCASE funding scheme</p>		
<p><b>Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards</b></p>		
<p>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).</p> <p>The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to local authorities, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.</p>		
15	<p>Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018?</p> <p>(if you answered no, please move on to the next section 'Financial Support for Energy Efficiency')</p>	(Y)
16	Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 16</i></p> <p>Private Sector Housing Team</p>		
17	Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.	
<p><i>Free text response to question 17</i></p> <p>Senior Environmental Health Officer (Private Sector Housing)  privatesectorhousing@tmbc.gov.uk  01732 876395</p>		



18	What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?	
<p><i>Free text response to question 18 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>Kent Local Authorities have worked together to provide MEES literature for both landlords and tenants. Our cross borough Kent Private Sector Housing Group Vice Chair is the South East National Landlord Association representative.</p> <p>TMBC communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing advice from Housing Officers</li> <li>• Enforcement of housing standards</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Landlord forum</li> <li>• Targeted mailings</li> </ul>		
19	<p>Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties?</p> <p>If yes, how? If no, please explain.</p>	Y
<p><i>Free text response to question 19 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>The Council has raised awareness of MEES (Domestic) to help ensure Band F and G rented stock are raised to at least Band E before re-let, visiting and leafleting local letting agents and through an initial targeted landlord mailing in 2018.</p> <p>From April 2019 we aim to proactively target private rented property, subject to available resources, which have an F &amp; G EPC banding where the EPC indicates the property is rented and as part of this work will offer energy efficiency advice to landlords and identify properties with Category 1 Excess Cold hazard present.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Support for Energy Efficiency</b></p>		
20	<p>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')</p>	
<p><i>Free text response to question 20 - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>Our Housing Assistance Policy makes available funding of up to £10,000 (repayable on sale of property) to redress serious hazards under Housing Act 2004 HHSRS or to ensure a home is adequately heated and insulated. Eligibility criteria includes owners or tenants with a repairing obligation who are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In receipt of an HHCRO benefit</li> <li>• have a health condition which could be made worse by living in a cold home</li> </ul>		

The Housing Assistance policy was amended in February 2019 to make available funding to encourage private sector landlords to improve the least energy efficiency homes, where a Category 1 Excess Cold hazard present.

The Council participates in Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex) to assist HHCR0 eligible households who are low income and vulnerable to cold.

## Fuel Poverty

21	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.	(Y)
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*Free text response to question 21 - please outline in no more than 300 words*

The Council has adopted **Delivering Affordable Warmth, A Fuel Poverty Strategy for Kent**. The Strategy has the aim of reducing fuel poverty, in line with national targets, and reducing the negative impact of cold homes on the health and wellbeing of Kent residents.

[https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0012/340014/Fuel-Poverty-Strategy-for-Kent-final.pdf](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/340014/Fuel-Poverty-Strategy-for-Kent-final.pdf)

We signpost households to:

- income and benefit maximisation advice in the voluntary sector i.e. Citizens Advice, Age UK
- Kent & Medway Warm Homes Freephone referral line for heating and insulation measures
- Private Sector Housing Team for grant and private sector housing advice.

This may involve referral for insulation or heating measures through:

- Fuel Poor Network Extension scheme for gas connection (ECO & LA FLEX)
- Kent & Medway Warm Homes scheme (ECO & LA FLEX)
- TMBC Warm Homes Assistance (ECO or vulnerable to cold due to a health condition)
- Other available funding for example SGN's Central Heating fund (ECO & LA Flex)

The Council participates in Local Authority Flexible Eligibility

[https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/654452/Flexible-Eligibility-Statement-of-Intent-Version-3.pdf](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/654452/Flexible-Eligibility-Statement-of-Intent-Version-3.pdf)

TMBC makes available Warm Homes Assistance to ensure owner occupier and private tenants with a repairing obligation have adequate heating and insulation where they receive an income related benefit or a member of the household has a health condition that may be exacerbated by living in a cold home. The Housing Assistance policy was amended in February 2019 to make available funding to encourage private sector landlords to improve the least energy efficient homes.

The Council has launched and funds the following health initiatives:

- One You Your Home Officer (FTE) based for two days a week in a GP surgery
- West Kent Health and Housing Coordinators based at two local hospitals, and
- Occupational Therapists based in the Housing team.

The Council does not own housing stock, the main registered social housing provider Clarion Housing has a regional energy advice service for their tenants.

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

*Free text response to question 22 - please outline in no more than 200 words*

- We are in the process of commissioning an updated dwelling level housing stock modelling exercise which will estimate the presence of fuel poverty
- We utilise available datasets for example EPC
- We promote national and local energy efficiency initiatives on our website, social media
- We have undertaken targeted energy efficiency schemes to households in the borough
- We work with the local Home Improvement Agency who assist eligible residents to organise energy efficiency measures
- Our collective switching scheme which enables wider advice to be offered at registrations
- We liaise with SGN regarding off gas network property and the Fuel Poor Network extension scheme
- We work with key partners such as health, GPS, CCG, Care Navigators to deliver schemes which seek to address hazards in the cold homes

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

*Free text response to question 23 - please outline in no more than 200 words*

N/A

24	a. What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)
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*Free text response to question 24a - please outline in no more than 200 words*

The Council is helping residents to pay less for energy by operating a collective switching scheme. 'On line' registrations is available to all households and the Council can register 'off line' registrations for households without an email address enabling them to take part in the scheme.

We promote the Energy Deal collective switching scheme and since joining the scheme the sum of saving to residents over 13 participating auctions is £194,093.83

The Council's Warm homes Assistance is available to eligible households to ensure homes are adequately heated and insulated through the provision of affordable heating systems.

The Council refers applicants to SGN's Fuel Poor Network Extension scheme where appropriate.

The Councils One You Advisors and Housing Options & Support Officers all carry out affordability checks as part of their assessment with clients. Fuel cost is one element of this that is considered.

	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)
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*Free text response to question 24b - please outline in no more than 200 words*

We work with the Warm Homes appointed scheme provider to ensure affordable heating measures are installed.

The Council and 4 other Kent local authorities have procured a collective switching energy provider.

We are working in partnership with SGN to refer eligible households to the Fuel Poor Network Extension scheme.

## 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.

25	Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility?  If yes, please include a link to your Sol below.	(Y)
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*Link to Sol:*

[https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/654452/Flexible-Eligibility-Statement-of-Intent-Version-3.pdf](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/654452/Flexible-Eligibility-Statement-of-Intent-Version-3.pdf)

26	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.
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*Free text response to question 26 - please outline in no more than 200 words*

We updated our LA Flex SOI in December 2018 to reflect changes to HHCRO eligibility criteria.

We have undertaken two targeted mailshots to 3,729 households since January 2019 to raise awareness of LA Flex funding with limited response. We have made 1 LA Flex declaration to date. Going forward there is clearly a need to allocate resources to the resident engagement process to support harder to reach vulnerable residents.

The LA Flex scheme does not provide full funding for heating which means further funding strands need to be accessed to assist low income vulnerable to cold households to whom any upfront cost may pose a barrier to installing an energy efficiency measure.

Procurement and data protection issues have proved challenging and could be an issue going forwards.

## Smart Metering

27 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.

*Free text response to question 27 – please outline in no more than 150 words.*

We will signpost residents to smart meter information through our website and at local events.

28 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.

*Free text response to question 28 – please outline in no more than 150 words.*

We will signpost residents to smart meter information through our website and at local events and as part of the work of the Private Sector Housing Team.

29 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).

*Free text response to question 29 – please outline in no more than 150 words.*

If the Council receives enquiries or referrals for example from SGN where heating appliances have been condemned our Private Sector Housing Team can offer advice and/or visit to carry out an inspection and signpost owner or landlord/tenant to funding assistance where applicable. ECO funding or Warm homes Assistance may apply depending on household circumstances.

The Council has a stock of oil filled electric heaters for emergency situations.

30 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).

*Free text response to question 30 – please outline in no more than 150 words.*

The Council does not own residential housing stock.

### **Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives**

31 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').

*Free text response to question 31 - please outline in no more than 500 words*

#### **Wider initiatives**

Through the link to Energy Deal (collective energy switching scheme) there has been 181 enquiries to the Make It Cheaper energy switching service for SMEs that can compare prices from different suppliers, help the SME choose the right tariff and set up their contract, and supports SMEs through the switching process if they wish to change supplier; and 40 of them decided to switch.

The Council has signposted/referred local businesses to the following initiatives:

- West Kent LEADER is focussed on supporting the rural economy and 'encouraging renewable energy' is an objective. To date 26 enquiries have been received leading to 15 approvals to date and 2 currently being processed. Total grant funding of approximately £700,000 (with a further £99,400 in the system) and two local businesses have gone on to become carbon neutral.  
<http://www.westkentleader.org.uk>
- Kent Sustainable Business scheme for Low Carbon Kent (network of businesses with the aim to reduce costs by cutting emissions and promote the low carbon market)
- LOCASE a grant and advice scheme aimed at helping businesses become more efficient and reduce carbon footprint. As at end of 2018, 21 local businesses had secured LOCASE funding. <https://locase.co.uk/>

