

HECA Report 2019 Wealden District Council

HECA REPORTING 2019

Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 ('HECA') requires all 326 local authorities ('LA's) in England to submit reports to the Secretary of State demonstrating what energy conservation measures they have adopted to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within that LA's area. This covers measures to improve properties in the owner-occupier, private rented sector, and social rented sector. BEIS uses data submitted through LAs HECA returns to inform policy thinking on energy efficiency, and to build an ongoing picture of local and national energy efficiency policy delivery.

These guidance notes are issued in accordance with the Secretary of State's powers under section 4 of the Act and are to alert LAs of amendments to the HECA reporting framework in advance of May 2019 when the next reports are due. In previous years, reporting rates have been disappointing, with 282 reports submitted in March 2015 out of 326 LAs, and only 151 in March 2017. The refreshed reporting system for 2019 streamlines the process and reduces LA reporting burdens. Newly structured around a series of questions and direct information points, the amended framework aims to support LAs to provide information and updates on the key energy efficiency topics of interest to BEIS Ministers. It will also enable LAs to provide a consistent picture of energy efficiency promotion and delivery across England within a standardized framework. Following the principles of open data, the department may publish the information in an open data format to allow wider access and interpretation of the data, while ensuring that such publication complies with the terms of GDPR.

HECA 2019 Reporting Requirements

The Report is to be divided by sections to capture information on a range of key themes:

Headline & Overview

- What main strategy and schemes LAs currently have to promote carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency, stakeholders involved and impact at a societal and economic level.

Communication

- How LA engage stakeholders (including consumers and businesses) to promote awareness of energy efficiency.

Green Local Supply Chain

- How LAs engage local businesses involved in the promotion of energy savings products and the societal benefits alongside any local economic impact this might have.

Private Rental Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards

- How LAs enforce and promote awareness of the PRS Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards that came into force in April 2018.

Financial Support for Energy Efficiency

- Financial programmes used by LAs to promote energy efficiency.

Fuel Poverty

- How LAs identify those in fuel poverty and any initiatives used to address this.

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

- How LAs are using the recently introduced ECO 'flexible eligibility' programme to refer certain households in fuel poverty or with occupants on low incomes, who are vulnerable to the effects of cold homes, to ECO obligated suppliers for support.

Smart Metering

- How LAs promote awareness and uptake of smart metering.

All questions are optional, but responses highly encouraged. While reporting is focused on energy savings related to homes, you are welcome to provide additional information on energy efficiency improvements in non-domestic properties, but this is fully optional. There will be a final free response section permitting local authorities to discuss any additional activities which they feel are relevant.

Submission of HECA 2019 Reports

For the 2019 reporting year, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is piloting the submission of reports via a digital platform, and for this year LAs will be asked to populate their HECA Report and submit materials via a SurveyMonkey submission. No other reporting material or submissions will be required. LAs continue to be required to publish their responses, and they can do this in whichever form they wish, so long as the published report contains relevant information submitted via the digital platform. It is not necessary for LAs to publish all the information submitted via the digital platform. Before the online survey is completed, the chief executive or director of the LA should approve the submitted content. If this approach proves effective and supports the engagement and compliance of a greater number of authorities than in recent previous years, BEIS will consider how this approach can be further improved for the 2021 reporting year. The questions which LAs are asked to report on in the digital 'Survey' are listed below:
HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

Name of Local Authority: Wealden District Council		
Type of Local Authority:		
• District		
Job title of official submitting the report:		
Home Energy Efficiency Officer.		
Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool:		
Private Housing.		
Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE):		
1		
Headline and Overview Questions		
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: www.wealden.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=4188&SID=1453	
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').	

Wealden promotes the Warm Homes Check a local service aimed at helping residents keep warm and well during winter by providing a free warm homes check. The service includes an assessment of the home and implementation of minor measures where applicable. It also provides major energy saving measures when external funding permits. Referrals are managed by 1066 Citizens Advice which adds value through exposure to additional services such as charitable grant applications, debt write offs, claiming unclaimed benefits etc. In our own housing stock we maintain a programme of works focussed on energy saving including:

Upgrading NSH's to gas central heating.

Upgrading NSH's to Rointe, HHRSH or ASHP's depending on property size.

Radbot trial to test product application with a view to implementation in fuel switch properties pending outcome.

Full stock analysis to identify properties needing loft and cavity wall insulation as well as any associated remedial works insulating where required. We have also been doing cavity extraction and re-fill due to failure or damage. Some room in roof insulation has been carried out.

LED lighting and sealed unit double glazing installed in void properties. LED lighting installations have been completed in all retirement living courts and communal areas in blocks of flats.

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')

In 2019 we targeted 1000 properties flagged as needing insulation measures with the aim of generating referrals for Flexible Eligibility. We also targeted a further 370 properties identified as in need of full gas central heating to try and boost take-up of the Warm Homes Funding available via Warm Homes Check. In the private rented sector we will be promoting the minimum energy standard later in the year. We currently have the opportunity to participate in the Warmer Sussex project which is BEIS funded to create a retrofit programme for West and East Sussex for the 'able to pay' customer. For information on programmes related to social housing see question 4a.

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

Local authorities, retrofit works, food banks, home improvement agencies, iChoosr.

6 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.)?
This does not have to be measured against national data or benchmarks, but rather focuses on the local authority's own monitoring and evaluation.

Wealden does not hold energy/carbon reductions data for referrals made into the Warm Homes Check.

7 What lessons have you learned from delivering this scheme(s)?

Partnership working is key. A cross county partnership with a joint provider has enabled streamlining of processes, a partnership with CAB, marketing funding and enabled to highlight practices which have not proved effective. Publicly available Energy data is essential for use for effective targeting.		
Local Communications Strategy		
8	Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?	Y
9	If yes to question 10, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)	
Face to face Telephone Email Presentations Events Drop ins In the non-domestic sector we give advice to consumers via regular newsletters, business breakfasts and on enquiry. We also sign post to sources of grant funding and specialist advice.		
10	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')	
Social media Webpages Newsletters Magazine articles Rent statements Council Tax bills Mail outs Presentations Events Drop ins ** Nudge theory integrated into certain promotions.		
Local Green Supply Chains		
11	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
12	If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.	
Wealden promotes the use of energy efficient products but does not recommend specific manufacturers or products. Promotional work varies and could include any or all of the approaches listed in our response to Q10.		
13	What engagement (formal or informal) does your local authority have with local businesses/supply chains involved in promoting energy efficiency products or carbon reduction?	
Wealden engages businesses when it relates to fuel poverty this could include anything from discussing funding bids to switching campaigns.		

Domestic 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 (please see BEIS's published guidance documents for the full details on the standard). The PRS Regulations give enforcement powers to local authorities, and authorities are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.		
14	Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards which came into force in April 2018? (if you answered no, please move on to the next section 'Financial Support for Energy Efficiency')	Y
15	Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard? Private Housing	
We currently do not have an enforcement policy for MEES but all landlords are being advised and offered information with regard to their obligations under the regulations at initial contact in relation to enforcement action. It is anticipated that a policy for MEES will be adopted in 2019/20. Presently the HHSRS is being used to alleviate excess cold hazards. Wealden has a relatively low private rented sector sized at only 11%. Many of these properties are non-traditional construction and hard to treat. HHSRS does not have exemptions and thus is deemed more effective in these cases.		
16	What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?	
Threshold (tenants magazine). Letters sent using property data for council stock. Contractors handing out information on maintenance visits. WealdLet landlord's magazine. Letters sent using rent deposit data. My Alerts – electronic newsletter going out weekly.		
17	Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties? If yes, how? If no, please explain.	Y
We use EPC data to target letters at properties rated F or G.		
Financial Support for Energy Efficiency		
18	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')	
We promote the Warm Homes Check in our area which is a free service delivered across East Sussex using funding from Public Health. We also have a small fuel poverty budget for marketing and events.		
Fuel Poverty		
19	Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy?	Y

	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.	
www.wealden.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=4188&SID=1453 Strategy targets affordable warmth to all residents and focusses on targeting government help to those in the lower EPC bands vulnerable to the effects of fuel poverty. Also focusses on helping those on low incomes through collective switching, debt write offs, income maximisation, charitable grant applications etc. as facilitated through winter warmth referrals. We aim to work with new partners to develop referral pathways e.g. water companies, ECO Flex delivery partner, gas network operators. This year we focussed on working with a food bank to develop a fuel voucher scheme.		
20	What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)	
Some analysis has been done on our EPC dataset including sorting properties according to EPC rating and heating system type. We have also identified properties that need loft and cavity wall insulation: Cavity (no insulation assumed) – 8901 Pitched roof 100 mm or less – 10,396 ** Data sourced from 2016 EPC dataset and maybe subject to data inconsistencies.		
21	How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall carbon reduction strategy? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)	
The council's fuel poverty strategy contributes to the overall carbon reduction of any other climate change or sustainability policies held by the council. Carbon reduction is embedded within the work the council does more broadly across its own stock.		
22	a. What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)	
Collective switching has helped facilitate 1445 switches saving a total of £371,087 during 2017 - 2018: 2017 = 953 switchers collective saving £217,000. 2018 = 294 switchers collective saving £99,087. Outside of auction cycles we also provide bill checking to residents. Fuel switching is also facilitated through events such as pop up energy shops as and when delivered. We are also working in partnership with CAB and a local food bank to trial a fuel voucher scheme.		
23	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)	
We work with iChoosr to deliver collective switching schemes.		
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.

24	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:

Partnership Sol

www.wealden.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=23582&SID=2350

Standalone Sol

www.wealden.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.aspx?IID=25186&SID=2350

25	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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N/A

Smart Metering

26	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.
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Wealden has already undertaken a programme to promote smart meters in rural areas through a grant obtained from Smart Energy GB. This project was delivered in 2017 in the format of roadshow across 11 rural communities through a series of ‘Pop Up Shop’ style energy events. The campaign was supported with a ‘Smart Energy Guide’ that went out to 45,000 households as well as a Q&A session on social media.

27	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.
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We were not aware of the Smart Meter Energy Efficiency Materials project but in future will aim to integrate these materials when delivering energy events. Will also think about including this material on our webpages when they are revised later in the year.	
28	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).
We are not aware of any situations where an appliance has been condemned as a result of a visual safety check during a smart meter installation.	
29	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).
The Council has a contract for empty property fuel supply in its own housing stock. Many of the dwellings have pre-payment meters and/or are on economy 7 tariffs for which the smart meter technology is still developing. We will be working with the utility provider to establish appropriate smart meter roll out to all void properties.	
Future Schemes or Wider Initiatives	
30	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').
N/A	