

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 ('HECA')

Background.

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. The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy 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.

HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

Name of Local Authority: Swale Borough Council (SBC)		
Type of Local Authority: Borough		
Name and contact details of official submitting the report: [REDACTED]		
Job title of official submitting the report: Technical Officer.		
Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool: Planning Policy Private Sector Housing Climate Change Officer		
Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE): 1 or insert number of teams that have some shared responsibility for responses Equivalent to 1 FTE		
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: Kent and Medway wide strategic initiatives 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	

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	<p>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>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. Link : https://www.southeastlep.com/energysouth2east/</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. 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>https://kccmediahub.net/kent-and-medway-energy-and-low-emissions-strategy745</p> <p>South East Local Enterprise Partnership – https://www.southeastlep.com/app/uploads/2019/03/Local-Energy-Strategy-FINAL.pdf</p> <p>Kent Environment Strategy-</p> <p>https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy</p> <p>Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy –</p> <p>https://www.swale.gov.uk/fuel-poverty</p> <p>Local Plan –</p> <p>https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-plan-for-swale/</p> <p>The Local Climate Impacts Profile (LCLIP) -</p> <p>https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-advice/</p>	
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	<p>data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent/environmental-policies/climate-change/kents-changing-climate</p> <p>Swale climate change -</p> <p>https://www.swale.gov.uk/climate-change/</p>	
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')	
	Kent Warm Homes scheme - https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/campaigns-and-events/warm-homes Swale works with Southern Gas Network (SGN) who offer first time central heating under the Fuel Poor Network Extension Scheme. Kent Authorities have signed an agreement with SGN to refer Fuel Poor households/ LA Flex eligible households to first time gas connections. Swale offers assistance through the LA Flex scheme Swale promotes Collective Switching schemes run by other Kent Authorities on SBC webpages/social media.	
	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 Swale hopes to continue with the Warm Homes scheme (subject to ECO funding) Swale is a member of the Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership (KEEP) who have secured funding for 210 first time gas connection properties across Kent to receive up to 50% of cost of heating (up to £2,500), hence focus will be on "off gas"	

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properties

KEEP is working with the Southern Gas Networks Vulnerability Team to support households that have been disconnected

Swale will continue to utilise Winter Warmth and Decent Home Loans funding

5 What has been, or will be, the cost(s) of running and administering the scheme(s), including the value of grants and other support, plus any other costs incurred? Please provide figures and a brief narrative account if desired.

The cost of measures delivered in Swale by Aran Services Ltd (the approved installer for the ECO funded Warm Homes scheme) totalled £41,930.62 for the period 01/04/17 to 31/03/2019. Future spend will be dependant on what ECO funding is made available and which measures are being provided.

Costs relating to SGN/first time gas connections are yet to be determined.

Swale Decent Home Loans totalled £38,831 for the financial year 2017/18.

Swale Winter Warmth spending totalled £20,185 for the financial year 2018/19

Swale has no Council Housing stock

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

Free text response to question 6 - please outline in no more than 100 words

Aran Services Ltd – approved installer for the Kent wide Warm Homes scheme

SGN – FPNES

British Gas

Swale has an in-house Home Improvement Agency

Health organisations e.g. CCG, Public Health, NHS.

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.)?

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

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

In Swale, the Warm Homes scheme achieved a carbon saving of 830.14 tonnes CO₂ for the period 01/04/2017 to 31/03/2019.

With regards to economic impact, job creation, business competitiveness and societal impacts, there is no mechanism available to collect statistics before and after installation of measures to ascertain the influence such topics may have had, and so any response would be anecdotal.

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

Free text response to question 8 - please outline in no more than 100 words

The increasingly complex design of schemes which specifically target an ever decreasing audience, and which provide easy to install insulation measures, does little in real terms to address the needs of those seeking help.

Local Communications Strategy

9 | Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy? (Y)

10 | If yes to question 10, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)

Free text response to question 10 - please outline in no more than 100 words

Swale promotes the Warm Homes scheme, it's free phone number and website.

Swale works with Aran Services Ltd to promote ECO funded measures including those via LA Flex.

Swale promotes the Collective Switching schemes run by other local authorities in Kent.

SBC provides advice through:-

In-house Home Improvement Agency which offers safety visits and loans and grants

EHO visits and advice regarding complaints excess cold etc.

Advice via Swale website <https://www.swale.gov.uk/energy-efficient-homes/>

11 | How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic

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	consumers and/or local businesses? (if you do not, please enter 'N/A' and move on to the next section 'Local Green Supply Chains')
Free text response to question 11 - please outline in no more than 100 words SBC webpages/social media and mailshots (prior to GDPR). Signpost business to Kent Sustainable Business Team for: Low Carbon Kent (network of businesses with the aim to reduce costs by cutting emissions and promote the low carbon market) STEM (Steps to Environmental Management - helps businesses to improve their environmental performance through a series of assessments and certificates) Swale/KEEP are exploring ways to promote through GPs and Pharmacies.	
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)
13	If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.
Free text response to question 12 - please outline in no more than 100 words Signpost to Kent Sustainable Business Team webpages https://www.kent.gov.uk/business/Business-and-the-environment	
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?
Free text response to question 14 - please outline in no more than 100 words Signpost business to Kent Sustainable Business Team https://www.kent.gov.uk/business/Business-and-the-environment	
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 be extended 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	

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are responsible for ensuring landlord compliance within their area.

15	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)
16	Which team within your authority is responsible for, or will be responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard?	
Free text response to question 16		
Private Sector Housing		
17	Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.	
[REDACTED] Private Sector Housing Manager.		
18	What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?	
Free text response to question 18 - please outline in no more than 100 words		
Swale Landlord Forum Guidance leaflets for both Landlord and Tenants. SBC website provides advice EHO visits in response to complaints from tenants.		
19	Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties? If yes, how? If no, please explain.	(N)

Free text response to question 19 - please outline in no more than 100 words

We currently respond to complaints from tenants and can then identify properties that fall into these categories.

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Financial Support for Energy Efficiency				
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.</p> <p>(If you do not have any financial assistance programmes, please enter 'N/A' and move onto the next section 'Fuel Poverty')</p>			
Free text response to question 20 - please outline in no more than 200 words				
<p>Up to £17,000 (means tested interest free loan to redress a serious hazard under HHSRS). Max grant of £7,000 for heating or insulation (usually replacement boilers) – also provides assistance to people over 65 years of age with long term health condition.</p> <p>ECO – HHCRO eligible residents through the Warm Homes schemes and LA Flexible Eligibility for households in receipt of a Low Income and vulnerable to the cold</p> <p>SGN – FPNES</p>				
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)		
Free text response to question 21 - please outline in no more than 300 words				
<p>The Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy has been endorsed by SBC</p> <p>https://www.swale.gov.uk/fuel-poverty</p>				
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				
<p>Swale has previously worked on mail shot projects with British Gas and Aran Services Ltd to promote assistance available under ECO fund schemes (prior to GDPR)</p> <p>Home visits by Swale EHO's and the in-house HIA</p> <p>Swale works with Occupational Therapists dealing with hospital discharge patients</p>				

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who have heating/home energy issues.

Swale is working with SGN to map off gas areas

Working with KEEP, data analysis has been carried out to identify Lower Layer Super Output Areas.

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

The strategy forms an integral part of the Kent wide partnership working.

South East Local Enterprise Partnership –

<https://www.southeastlep.com/app/uploads/2019/03/Local-Energy-Strategy-FINAL.pdf>

Kent Environment Strategy-

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>

Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy - <https://www.swale.gov.uk/fuel-poverty>

Local Plan - <https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-plan-for-swale/>

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)

Free text response to question 24a - please outline in no more than 200 words

Swale promotes Energy Switching schemes

KEEP works with SGN to identify vulnerable local people

Swale employs an Occupational Therapist to liaise with hospital discharge teams and identify necessary home adaptations e.g. boiler repairs etc.

Swale is using Better Care Funding to offer grants up to £5000 to local residents over the age of 60 with specific health issues for boiler replacement etc.

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)

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

Swale has previously organised mail shots with British Gas and Aran Services Ltd to vulnerable local households to promote availability of ECO funded measures,

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but GDPR now prevents this activity.

Through membership of KEEP, Swale works with Southern Gas Networks to identify off gas areas which may qualify for assistance under FPNES

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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<https://www.swale.gov.uk/fuel-poverty>

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

Local authorities have difficulty understanding the complexity of schemes and calculating available funding due to the convoluted carbon saving scoring.

BEIS needs to understand why measures cannot be installed e.g. a loft full of possessions which cannot be removed by the householder due to age/disability and they have no-one to help them.

BEIS need to ensure that local authorities, who are active in levying funding for their community, require positive outcomes from bids. Currently many organisations that are not local government, levy funding but cannot deliver without local authority input, but they cannot help due to protracted procurement

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procedures and/or data protection issues. Local government should be provided with the funding directly as it has the power to deliver measures in a quick and clear concise way that reach the vulnerable households in need. Historically energy grants worked well when delivered through local authorities.

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.

Some officers from LAs in Kent have attended a smart meter training session and can provide information when discussing energy tariffs/ advice.

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.

SBC has no housing stock

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.

Swale has not received any referrals from Smart Energy GB on properties in our area.

30 Please detail any:

Existing relationships with energy suppliers to help ensure that the opportunities presented by vacant properties under your control are

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	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.	
Swale has no 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	
This is dependant on funding and resources. Swale will signpost local people and businesses onto organisations that may be able to provide help e.g. The LOCASE project provides support to low carbon businesses to improve their energy efficiency and environmental performance or grow their green business. Renewable energy installers and private sector landlords have been helped to reduce their emissions, their properties and their services https://locase.co.uk/	