

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.

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.

The questions which LAs are asked to report on in the digital 'Survey' are listed below:

HECA Reporting 2019 Questions

Name of Local Authority: St. Helens Council		
Type of Local Authority: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Metropolitan Borough		
Name and contact details of official submitting the report: Vicky Whittle – vickywhittle@sthelens.gov.uk Chris Birkett – chrisbirkett@sthelens.gov.uk		
Job title of official submitting the report: Assistant Manager Housing Strategy & Private Sector Initiatives Senior Affordable Warmth Project Officer		
Names of teams working on policy areas covered by this reporting tool: St Helens Council – Housing Strategy & Private Sector Initiatives - Home Improvement Agency		
Total number of staff working in above policy areas (by FTE): 3 Affordable Warmth Staff		
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/N)

2	If yes, please provide a link to your current strategy here:	
<p>Energy Efficiency for domestic properties included within the Council's Fuel Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency/sthelens-council-home-energy-conservation-act-heca-report/</p>		
3	If no, are you planning to develop one?	(Y/N) N/A
4	<p>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')</p>	
<p><i>Free text response to question 4a - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>St Helens Council's Affordable Warmth Unit (AWU) has implemented a number of schemes contributing to improvements in domestic energy efficiency. Officers qualified to City & Guilds Level 3 in Energy Awareness provide home visits and face to face advice. Visits identify if energy efficiency improvements are required, if any low cost measures are available to improve energy efficiency and also provide further advice on ways to improve energy efficiency and to reduce fuel bills.</p> <p>Schemes enable residents to access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Company Obligation (ECO) • NEA's Health Improvement Programme • National Grid Warm Homes Fund • St Helens Council Housing financial assistance • Housing emergency fund. <p>St Helens Council also commission Energy Projects Plus (EPP) to provide the Save Energy Advice Line (SEAL) a phone line to provide advice on energy efficiency, renewable energy technologies, and on the range of schemes available to residents whatever their personal circumstances.</p> <p>St. Helens Winter Warmer Scheme – Over two winters the initiative has seen the delivery of a cold weather advice line; the distribution of 12,000 winter warmer packs to vulnerable homes promoting assistance available locally to help people through the winter months. The project is undertaken with the assistance of many local partners, the main partner being Age UK Mid Mersey.</p>		

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

St. Helens Council will continue to provide the Affordable Warmth Outreach Services that will enable residents to access funding to deliver significant improvements in energy efficiency. The provision of face to face advice will provide a platform from which we can continue to provide initiatives.

We will also continue to encourage our local registered providers to implement energy efficiency measures in their properties.

As an example, the largest housing provider in the borough, Torus, have recently commissioned Scottish Southern Energy Solutions (SSE) to review poorly performing communal heating and hot water provision at key sheltered accommodation sites and are considering replacing existing systems with new renewable technology and other innovative technology.

They will be evaluating which smart building technologies such as cloud-based building management system (BMS), smart meters and wireless equipment would improve operations and also identify what long term investments in the heating system could reduce operational cost and enhance the internal environment for residents, e.g. redesign of existing heating distribution, high efficiency boilers, solid-state fuel cell, gas absorption heat pump, micro combined heat and power (CHP).

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.

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

The revenue to administer the Affordable Warmth Services is approximately £203,500 annually. This includes:

- 3 FTE staff
- Outreach Visits
- Save Energy Advice Line
- Warm Homes Discount Campaign
- Collective Energy Switching Scheme
- Promotion
- St Helens Winter Warmer scheme, including:
 - Winter Warmer Launch Event
 - Distribution of 6000 winter warmer packs

- Provision of a local cold weather advice line

The capital costs to deliver energy efficiency measures between April 2017 and March 2019 was approximately £529,500 of this £166,700 came from external sources.

In the next two years over £500,000 of funding will be available to deliver significant energy efficiency improvements.

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

St. Helens Council maintains a strong emphasis on partnership work and the benefits this can have on improving energy efficiency and reducing the effects of Fuel Poverty. The Council continues to work with a broad range of local and national partners many of which attend the St Helens Fuel Poverty Focus Group, partners include:

Age UK Mid Mersey

EPP

Foundations

Rhea Projects Ltd

Registered Providers

NEA

Citizens Advice St Helens

Association of Local Energy Officers

Merseyside HECA Forum

LCR/NW Fuel Poverty Group

Viridis / Local Enterprise Partnership

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

From April 2017 the outcomes of schemes in the borough include:

Affordable Warmth Outreach Visits – Approximately 1200 visits undertaken.

Heating scheme - 123 households have benefitted from heating measures. The NEA's evaluation reported:

- 89.4% increased thermal comfort
- 68.2% perceived cost of energy bills had improved
- 40% of households saw improvement in their physical and/or mental health
- 47.3% of households thought that their health condition or disability had improved since receiving their measures
- 54.4% said they thought the change in their health was related to their WHHF intervention.

Insulation Scheme - 44 households were assisted with 47 insulation measures.

Private Housing Initiatives Emergency Fund – provides assistance with small but essential measures - 184 households assisted.

Save Energy Advice Line – Received 3994 calls to assist with:

- Warm Home Discount campaign – 2460 households assisted to apply giving discounts on electricity bills of £344,400.
- Collective Energy Switching Scheme
- General advice

St Helens Winter Warmer Scheme – 12,000 winter warmer packs distributed

All schemes can provide improvements to health; reduce the impacts of fuel poverty and also reduce excess winter mortality/morbidity – In 2012/13 the Excess winter mortality index for the borough was 34.4% reducing to 4.3% in the winter of 2016/17.

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

Following completion of the NEA Scheme the Council continued to provide funding to install energy efficiency measures. Working with Public Health to further integrate the Affordable Warmth service with the local health sector to generate referrals.

A stipulation of the NEA Warm & Healthy Homes Fund was that ECO funding could not be used as match funding. This meant the scheme was not subject to fluctuations in the availability and levels of ECO funding. A consistent and reliable source of funding for energy efficiency improvements ensures that schemes are more successful, allowing for better value for money and increased outputs.

Local Communications Strategy		
9	Does your local authority provide any advisory service to consumers (and businesses) on how to save energy?	(Y/N)
10	If yes to question 10, please briefly outline how this is undertaken (or enter 'N/A' if appropriate)	
<p><i>Free text response to question 10 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>St Helens Council commission Energy Projects Plus, a local environmental charity, to provide the Save Energy Advice Line (SEAL) a phone line which is staffed by experienced advisers who have qualifications in energy efficiency advice, renewable energy technologies, customer care standards and up-to-date knowledge of the range of schemes available to residents whatever their personal circumstances. The team is available to support domestic residents requesting assistance through various contact methods including telephone, email, web and social media. This is in addition to the Council AWU Outreach Service.</p>		
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')	
<p><i>Free text response to question 11 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>Information is promoted using local media, Council's website, and promotion through our local partners via the St Helens Fuel Poverty Focus Group.</p> <p>St Helens Annual Winter Warmer scheme involves the promotion of services available to assist residents throughout the winter period. This includes the distribution of 6000 packs by a range of local partners to vulnerable households. The scheme is launched each year with an event supported by over 20 services and attended by approximately 400 residents.</p>		
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/N)
13	If yes to question 12, please briefly detail how this promotion work is undertaken.	
<p><i>Free text response to question 13 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>At face to face energy advice visits and included in documentation left with clients we encourage residents to consider energy efficiency ratings when purchasing new appliances.</p> <p>A number of low cost measures are also available for vulnerable residents who have an advice visit; including LED lightbulbs, Radflek - energy saving radiator reflector, and draught-proofing.</p> <p>Other service delivery areas also encourage the use of energy saving products i.e. low energy</p>		

lighting is used within Disabled Facilities Grant work.		
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>Local Authorities in the Liverpool City Region (LCR) deliver Business Growth Hubs in partnership with the LCR LEP. Grant funding programmes that support business growth for all kinds of businesses are available to businesses in the low carbon economy. The Low Carbon Eco Innovatory led by University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores engages with businesses in the energy and environmental services supply chain and can support them to develop new products and services.</p> <p>All suppliers to the Council must sign a sustainability and environmental declaration to show a commitment to reducing their impact on the environment including energy efficiency and tackling the causes of climate change.</p>		
<p>Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards</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	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/N)
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>St Helens Council's Private Housing Services will be responsible for the PRS minimum standards; this service includes the Enforcement Team and Affordable Warmth Outreach Service. The Affordable Warmth Team will be taking the lead on promotion of the standards to the private rented properties locally.</p>		

17	Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.	
<p><i>Free text response to question 17</i></p> <p>Vicky Whittle – vickywhittle@sthelens.gov.uk</p> <p>Chris Birkett – chrisbirkett@sthelens.gov.uk</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>St Helens Council has delivered forums for landlords in partnership with the NLA. Presentations are provided from a variety of partners on subjects that affect the PRS including energy efficiency and wider housing standards.</p> <p>Comprehensive information is also made available on the St Helens Council website; this provides information for landlords and their tenants.</p> <p>We also undertake joint working with St Helens Council's Revenues and benefits team and the local DWP via mail outs and events as required ensuring local landlords are kept up to date with current standards and broader issues affecting the PRS.</p>		
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/N)
<p><i>Free text response to question 19 - please outline in no more than 100 words</i></p> <p>We have recently undertaken an innovative piece of work with BRE to identify domestic private rented properties in the borough by cross referencing land registry data with Council Tax data. It is hoped that we can use this information with EPC data, once up to date bulk EPC data is made available, to undertake a targeted promotion ensuring landlords and their tenants are made aware of the PRS minimum standards.</p>		
<p>Financial Support for Energy Efficiency</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.</p> <p>(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>Heating – St Helens Council provide a boiler replacement / central heating scheme to owner occupied low income households where there is a resident vulnerable to cold. Since April 2017 we have assisted 123 properties access a major heating measure at a total cost of</p>		

approximately £435,000. Funding for these measures has been provided by:

- St Helens Council's Housing Capital funding - £296,000
- NEA's Warm & Healthy Homes Fund - £87,000
- ECHO scheme (a scheme funded through the Warm Homes Discount wider industry initiatives) - £48,000
- ECO - £3,700

Insulation – Since April 2017 we have directly assisted 44 properties with 47 insulation measures at a total cost of over £29,000, this includes an ECO subsidy of just over £4000.

St Helens Council – Private Housing Initiatives Emergency Fund – This fund provides assistance to owner occupied low income households where there is a resident vulnerable to cold. The scheme provides assistance with low cost measures including boiler servicing, heating repairs, upgrades to heating controls etc.... From April 2017 – March 2019 we have assisted 184 properties costing approximately £65,500. Funding for these measures has been provided by:

- St Helens Council's Housing Capital funding - £41,500
- FILT Gas Safe Charity Funding - £24,000

Fuel Poverty

21	<p>Does your local authority have a fuel poverty strategy?</p> <p>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.</p>	(Y/N)
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Free text response to question 21 - please outline in no more than 300 words

The Council's key strategic commitments to the reduction of fuel poverty and provision of affordable warmth are contained within the current Fuel Poverty Strategy. The Strategy's action plan is reviewed on an annual basis and aims:

- To provide information, education and advice on affordable warmth
- To work together to achieve affordable warmth
- To reduce fuel poverty by maximising income
- To improve health and well-being through affordable warmth
- To improve energy efficiency to achieve affordable warmth

The Council works with a number of partners to achieve these aims and progress is monitored by members of the Fuel Poverty Forum.

Affordable Warmth & Welfare Outreach – St. Helens Council's Public Health supports this work and forms part of a wider initiative to reduce the rates of Excess Winter Deaths in the borough. The main function of the Affordable Warmth & Welfare Outreach is to provide a home visiting service to help residents access affordable heating, insulation measures, and other low cost/no cost measures to make homes warmer, healthier, and more energy efficient,

thereby reducing the levels of fuel poverty within the borough.

In addition to the physical improvements that can be made to a property residents are assisted to maximise their income by providing welfare advice to ensure clients access financial support they are entitled to and also to assist in reducing their fuel bills by accessing the Warm Homes Discount, by providing advice about switching supplier to get cheaper tariffs (via both direct price comparisons and through collective energy switching schemes), and assist those people who are in debt with their energy supplier through referrals to our local Citizens Advice service.

St Helens Fuel Strategy - <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency/sthelens-council-home-energy-conservation-act-heca-report/>

22	What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? (enter 'N/A' if not appropriate)
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Free text response to question 22 - please outline in no more than 200 words

Due to data limitations and the relatively difficult way of assessing whether a household is fuel poor or not we target assistance to those households most at risk from cold related illness, those households on low incomes and vulnerable to cold.

Targeting of assistance since 2017 has focussed on areas with highest rates of excess winter deaths. We have worked with the Council's Public Health data analysts to identify areas and interrogated Council databases to generate address lists in areas with the most vulnerable residents. We have also worked with a number of local GP's to identify clients not known to the Authority.

These properties are then sent letters offering support. Where we have obtained an address list we follow up with a door knock, this significantly improves access/response rates to 38% compared to a response rate of approximately 5% where we are asking clients to respond to a letter sent by a GP on our behalf.

We continue to incorporate EPC data into the Council's UNO energy efficiency database as bulk data is made available and have also been working with BRE to update our Housing Stock Condition database this ensures updated information is available to effectively target interventions.

23	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 23a - please outline in no more than 200 words

Energy Projects Plus (EPP) is commissioned to deliver the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Collective Energy Switch - Switch Together, Save Together. This includes local authority partners, Knowsley, Sefton, Wirral, Liverpool, and Halton.

The LCR Collective Switch has proved to be an effective mechanism in engaging with vulnerable residents and generating household savings for residents. In St Helens, the Collective Switch scheme has now saved residents over £250,000 on their fuel bills. The average saving is over £243.00 per household; however some residents saved considerably more.

In addition to the collective switch we also undertake a Warm Home Discount campaign promoting the availability of the discount. We work with the Council's revenues and benefits team to identify those residents most likely to qualify for the broader group scheme. We then send out letters advising residents of how to apply, further assistance to apply for the discount is available via the Save Energy Advice Line. From April 2017 2460 households have been assisted to apply giving discounts on electricity bills of £344,400.

We also assist clients at affordable warmth visits to carry out energy tariff comparisons and refer those in fuel debt for support at Citizens Advice St Helens.

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 23b - please outline in no more than 200 words

See response to 23a.

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	<p>Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility?</p> <p>If yes, please include a link to your Sol below.</p>	(Y/N)
<p><i>Link to Sol: https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency/sthelens-council-home-energy-conservation-act-heca-report/</i></p>		
25	<p>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.</p>	
<p><i>Free text response to question 25 - please outline in no more than 200 words</i></p> <p>St Helens Council worked with the Liverpool City Region Authorities to produce a joint statement of intent (SOI). The advantages of the combined approach are that it offers economy of scale for funders; maintains a consistent message with the public and; uses the collaborative strengths and experiences of all the partners. We have recently been working with our sub regional partners to review and update the joint SOI.</p> <p>Up to the end of March 2019 St Helens Council have issued 290 LA Flex Declarations. According to data from BEIS there has been 447 HHCRO measures installed between April 2017 and December 2018, of these 85 were through LA Flexible eligibility. To the end of December 2018 127 declarations were issued.</p>		
<p>Smart Metering</p>		
26	<p>Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p><i>Free text response to question 26 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>St. Helens Council will maximise all opportunities to support the roll out locally. We have recently assisted Age UK Mid Mersey with a Smart Energy GB Communities Fund application to support a programme of Smart Meter take up promotion throughout the borough. If successful this will link with our Winter Warmer campaign which targets 6000 vulnerable residents with advice and support to stay warm and well throughout the winter.</p>		

27	<p>Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to:</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 27– please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>This potentially would have been possible if Energy Suppliers installing Smart Meters had to inform Local Authorities of where Smart meters were installed. This could have been followed with an advice visit from the Local Authority, dependent on capacity of services.</p>	
28	<p>Please detail any:</p> <p>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).</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 28 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>Support is available for those residents on a low income and vulnerable to cold via St Helens Council’s Housing Emergency Fund and, when available to the Council, via Foundations Independent Living Trust (FILT) Gas Safe Funding. The funding provides assistance with emergency interventions including heating and gas safety issues such as servicing, safety checks and repairs.</p> <p>From April 2017 – March 2019 we have assisted 184 properties costing approximately £65,500 of this funding approximately £24,000 was provided by FILT Gas Safe Charity Funding.</p>	
29	<p>Please detail any:</p> <p>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).</p>
<p><i>Free text response to question 29 – please outline in no more than 150 words.</i></p> <p>St Helens Council transferred all housing stock to Helena Housing around 2002, so have no control over any domestic properties. Since that time however St Helens Council has continued to work closely with Helena, which now forms part of the Torus Group.</p> <p>Torus have trialled an energy provider to switch energy provision from out-going tenants to utilise Spark Energy as the new energy provider for the incoming tenant. This switchover is completed whilst the property is void and the incoming tenant benefits by having a fresh contract with an energy provider who is comparable with the Big 6, and this also provides an</p>	

income for Torus. This income is then re-invested in energy and social projects across the group.

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').

Free text response to question 30 - please outline in no more than 500 words

The LEP Energy Strategy (currently in draft) highlights the importance of tackling housing as significant contributor to carbon emissions that must be addressed if local ambitions to decarbonise in the next two decades are to be realised. It recommends that retrofit of housing for energy should be prioritised as part of a wider drive for quality housing and recognises the recommendations of each home counts. The need to tackle the reduction of fossil fuel sources of heat in homes with both options of electrification and hydrogen having major infrastructure implications that must be addressed at the strategic level with coordinated action across agencies delivering infrastructure. ERDF funding has been awarded to social landlords in the Liverpool City Region to implement home energy retrofit, though this will make only a small contribution to the scale of the challenge.