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# HECA Report 2021 Questions

Note: All questions have a 4000-character limit (Approx. 500 words)

## Introductory Questions

- Name of Local Authority: Rutland County Council
- Type of Local Authority: Unitary
- Name, job title and email address of official submitting report  
James Faircliffe, Housing Strategy & Enabling Officer – [jfaircliffe@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:jfaircliffe@rutland.gov.uk)

## Headline and Overview

- Does your Local Authority have a current strategy on carbon reduction and/or energy efficiency for domestic or non-domestic properties?

Yes.

- If yes, please provide a link  
<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/my-community/environment/energy-switching/> (for domestic energy)

- If no, are you planning to develop one
- What scheme(s) is your Local Authority planning to implement in support of energy saving/carbon reduction in residential accommodation properties in the next two years?

Our main scheme is our partnership with LEAP (Local Energy Advice Programme), which is a free service that visits people at home with the aiming of providing affordable warmth to people of all tenures. LEAP and the Council also refer into the national ECO initiatives. The home improvement agency also assists with this as does the Council's Housing MOT scheme. The Council's public protection shared partner, Peterborough City Council, is also able to provide some energy advice and participates in the LAD scheme.

- 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.

We have estimated the overall staff cost of HECA-related activity, including our time and that of our shared service partner as 0.5 FTE. The Council generally connects customers to funding provided by third parties, via its shared service provider, its home improvement agency, the Housing MOT or LEAP.

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

We work with LEAP and a range of other partners including Citizens Advice, housing associations, the home improvement agency and teams within the Council and its

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shared service partner. LEAP promotes its services widely within the third sector. A number of contractors are used for the works.

- What has been, or will be, the outcome of the scheme(s)? These outcomes could include energy savings, carbon savings, economic impacts such as job creation and/or increased business competitiveness or societal impacts such as alleviation of fuel poverty and/or improved health outcomes etc.

In December 2012, 65% of owner-occupied dwellings, 58% of private rented and 84% of social rented were energy rated A to D. By September 2016, these figures had improved to 70%, 60% and 89% respectively. By June 2020, there had been further improvement to 72%, 69% and 93% respectively. The figures do not include recently built dwellings.

The proportion of households in fuel poverty in Rutland had changed from 10.6% in 2014 to 8.0% in 2017 and 10.9% in 2018. These nationally-produced statistics are experimental and can fluctuate from year-to-year at a local level.

Government figures show that domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Rutland (essentially arising from domestic fuels either at the power station or when burnt at home) have fallen from 87,453 tonnes in 2009 to 65,719 tonnes in 2018, a reduction of 25%. This means that the Council has met its target of reducing carbon emissions in the housing sector by 24% on 2009 levels by 2027.

- Referrals =86
- Energy Advice Assessments = 58
- Bill savings from Energy Advice (estimated 10 year savings) = £9,918.00
- Carbon Savings from Energy Advice = 39.15 (t)
- Easy Measures Installed = 349
- Bill savings from Easy Measures Installed (estimated 10 year savings) = £29,564.60
- Carbon Savings from Easy Measures Installed = 137.8 (t)
- Tariff Switching (Gas & Elec) -7
- Total Annual Tariff Saving =£711.54
- ECO/ECHO Referrals = 2
- WH FTCH Referrals = 7
- ECO Flexible Eligibility Declarations = 4 (all LIVC for FTCH)
- GHG LAD Referrals = 0

The Council is committed to making its own operations 100% carbon neutral by 2050 where it is economically and technically viable to do so and in promoting this deadline for others' operations in Rutland. Those pressures of meeting government directives hold true across every single service area; capital investment therefore has to be carefully planned and prioritised to deliver – to look at one item in isolation is detrimental in the long term. The need for holistic thinking and planning has to start at the top – government departments may have been working in silos but need to demonstrate how each directive / policy links together, demonstrating joined up thinking that will ultimately deliver lasting change of which carbon neutrality is just one indicator of success.

The Government's approach to HECA needs to consider the bigger picture of enabling organisations to support the target of reaching carbon neutral by 2050 or sooner. This would need to include both realistic delivery timescales and realistic funding for a wide range of initiatives, to maximise collaborative working across regions to make the best use of expertise and resource. The Council wishes to emphasise the challenge that there

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will be to convert or replace existing gas central heating systems. The use of hydrogen within the existing supply infrastructure may prove to be part of this solution.

### **Communications**

- Does your Local Authority provide any advisory services to customers on how to save energy?

Yes

- If yes, please briefly outline how this is undertaken.

There is information on the Council's website providing links to other organisations. We run a Housing MOT service. Our shared service partner Peterborough City Council also provides an advisory service. They also enable the operation of LEAP, which is the main advice service and they work with IncomeMax which is a financial welfare rights agency.

- How do you communicate or encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers and/or local businesses?

We encourage energy saving amongst domestic consumers through the Council's website, occasional press releases and publicising LEAP with the Council and partners. LEAP is accessed both through agency and self-referrals.

### **Local Green Supply Chain**

- Have you made any assessment, or undertaken any analysis of the existing capacity in your local energy efficiency retrofit supply chain to support the decarbonisation of buildings by 2050? If Yes, please summarise the outcomes.

No.

- What actions are you taking, if any, to upskill and/or grow the local energy efficiency installer supply chain? This could include the facilitation of training, and local installer networking opportunities.

This is an area for potential policy development.

- What actions are you taking, if any, to promote energy efficiency and the installer supply chain to consumers, and encourage households to consider energy retrofit?

This is an area for potential policy development.

- If no action is taking place in either of these two areas, please let us know of any barriers you have encountered.

This is an area for potential policy development.

- How effectively is your LA able to engage (Trustmark/PAS2035/PAS2030 certified) installers?

This is an area for potential policy development.

- Do you have any plans to develop policies or initiatives in this space over the next five

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years as part of supporting your local decarbonisation efforts?

This is an area for potential policy development.

## **Social Housing**

- What action, if any, has your LA taken to install energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures in social housing? Have these been installed to a satisfactory quality? What actions (if any) have your social housing partners taken?

The Council owns only one social housing property. The Council's housing stock was transferred to a registered provider in 2009 and the information below is based on the responses of that registered provider. They have installed cavity wall insulation and loft insulation.

- Do you have easy access to the information/knowledge within your organisation that you would expect to need for social housing retrofit projects? (e.g. stock condition; property data; approach to procurement; alignment with existing internal maintenance/upgrade plans; tenant engagement and management plans; costings)

No.

- If no, would it be easy/difficult to obtain this information?

Previous answer is really a 'yes' and 'no'. In part – the quality and amount of information/data is improving.

- Have you experienced any challenges to retrofit, including during any previous government schemes you have taken part in (e.g. supply chain, funding, tenant cooperation, mixed tenure, split incentive, policy clarity, etc)? Please provide some detail. Have social housing partners reported any challenges to retrofit?

With cavity wall insulation / first time heating – there was scope to improve communication and quality of work. Similarly, with air source heat pump installation within off-gas locations, customers found it hard to adjust to the relatively low heat output from these appliances and also there were initial complaints within some areas of noise nuisance with some specific appliances.

- How does your LA currently/how will your LA in future plan to go about identifying suitable housing stock and measures for retrofit? How do social housing partners identify suitable stock? By the same measures or via a different method?

The RP identifies stock from EPC data/ stock condition/ build type and age information, following financial viability assessments.

- What considerations would make you more or less likely to apply for government funding? If known, what is the opinion of your social housing partners?

According to our RP partner, these are ease of application / level of funding / property type or tenure & usage restrictions/ complexity of supporting evidence required/ quality of contractors to deliver improvements.

- To what extent are social housing tenants willing or unwilling to undergo retrofit, and

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what are the barriers and facilitators to their participation? If known, is this the same opinion across all social housing tenants or is it different with HA and ALMO tenants?

View of partner RP: various – regularly concerns of validity of offer/funding. Customers tend to expect all communications to come via RP. Level of upheaval, inconvenience to them.

- Does the approach to retrofit change for leaseholders in mixed tenure blocks? What encourages them to co-operate?

Guidance would be needed around condition of lease and incentives for the leaseholder.

Clarity is needed regarding the main point of contact and who the liability of works is with.

More in-depth consultation would be needed before any works were carried out.

### **Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards**

- Is your authority aware of the PRS Minimum Efficiency Standards regulations requiring private rentals in England and Wales to meet a minimum energy performance rating of EPC Band E as of April 2020, unless a valid exemption applies?

Yes.

- Which team within your authority is responsible for, leading on enforcement of the PRS minimum standard? Please provide the contact details of the person leading this team.

Peterborough City Council under a shared service agreement. Prevention & Enforcement Team within the Communities Directorate. [redacted] Housing Enforcement Manager – [redacted]@peterborough.gov.uk The Team have delegated authority from Trading Standards for the legal requirement to have an EPC.

- What method or methods does your authority use to communicate with landlords and tenants about the standards and other related issues?

Direct Housing Enforcement Officer contact, direct emailing of landlords and agents, website, dedicated marketing material to landlords and tenants. Utilisation of Council Tax records.

- What barriers, if any, does your local authority face enforcing these regulations (e.g. identifying non-compliant properties/landlords, budgeting/resourcing, any legal issues)?

No dedicated resource. This activity is embedded into business as usual for Housing Enforcement Officers. Identifying non complaint landlords and properties. Securing Landlord contribution.

- Do you directly target landlords of EPC F and G rated properties to enforce these regulations? If yes, how? If no, please explain.

Yes. By merging EPC data to the dataset of known private rented properties.

Utilise Council Tax information.

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## Financial Support for Energy Efficiency

Where possible, please set out your answers to the following questions by tenure (owner occupied, privately rented, or social housing).

- What financial programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic energy efficiency or energy saving? If applicable please outline the budget (and % of the budget that is used), where such funding is sourced and where it is targeted.

Share of £4,339,192 Warm Home Funding across Warm Homes Consortium (first come/first served basis), from Affordable Warmth Solutions targeting privately owned and privately rented properties with inefficient electric storage/panel heaters and properties not connected to the gas network.

Share of £3,100,500 GHG LAD1a – across Warm Homes Consortium (first come first served basis) from BEIS.

Share of £6,267,504 GHG LAD 1b – across Warm Homes Consortium (first come, first served basis) from BEIS.

### Both LAD 1a & b targeting

- Direct email targeting of tenants of known privately rented properties operating properties with an E, F or G SAP rating. This ties in with the Council's MEES Project which fines landlords without a valid EPC and uses the LAD funding contribution as an opportunity for landlords to get assistance to bring their F & G properties up to a D or E rating ahead of taking any formal enforcement action.
  - Targeting Park Home Residents.
- What future investment for energy efficiency or low carbon heat measures do you have planned, and when are these investments planned for?

Rutland County Council has considered the use of LAD2 funding for 2021/22. However, this has a different delivery mechanism to LAD 1a & b and was not viable (from both a staffing and financial viewpoint) for a county with less than 18,000 properties of all tenures and no established consortium available for us to join. We will continue to consider other forms of funding and to work closely with Peterborough City Council and the LEAP project.

## Fuel Poverty

- Does your Local Authority have a Fuel Poverty Strategy?

Yes.

- What steps have you taken to identify residents/properties in fuel poverty? What blockers, if any, have there been in identifying households in fuel poverty?

We have used the website and targeted publicity through partners and mail-outs.

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This has included use of the EPC dataset to target certain types of properties.

- How does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall Carbon Reduction Strategy?

Work on a new carbon reduction strategy will begin in 2021/22, which will link with fuel poverty issues.

- Please highlight any fuel poverty issues specific to your area.

We have a large number of historic stone or brick properties with solid walls. Many of these are off the gas grid. The different occupiers will have a range of income and savings levels. There are also particular issues with social housing tenants, who may live in properties that are reasonably energy efficient but who still struggle to pay their bills. On occasion, problems with the social housing property such as damp or expensive heating will exacerbate these issues.

- What measures or initiatives have you taken to promote fuel cost reduction for those in fuel poverty? Include information on partnerships with local businesses or energy providers you have.

We encourage householders to switch to a better deal through the LEAP initiative and also through information and help through the Council's website.

### **Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery**

Of the £2bn Green Homes Grant scheme introduced in summer 2020, £500m was assigned for Local Authority Delivery (LAD). LAD enables Local Authorities to bid for grant funding to support low income households in their area with energy efficiency and low carbon heating upgrades. £200m was made available through Local Authority grant competitions in 2020, known as phases 1A and 1B and £300m was allocated under Phase 2 between the five regional Local Energy Hubs.

- Has your Local Authority Participated in GHG: LAD?

Yes.

- If yes, please indicate which phase you participated in and briefly outline the project.

Yes - share of £3,100,500 GHG LAD1a and £6,267,504 GHG LAD 1b - across Warm Homes Consortium (10 LAs).

Targeting private rented properties with an E, F or G SAP rating. This ties in with the Council's MEES Project which fines landlords without a valid EPC and uses the LAD funding contribution as an opportunity for landlords to get assistance to bring their F & G properties up to a D or E rating ahead of taking any formal enforcement action.

Targeting Park Home Residents - as we are reviewing all the Mobile Home Park Licensing.

There are barriers to Rutland County Council participating in LAD2 as the energy hub and LEP areas cut across our existing consortium (which had handled LAD1a

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and LAD1b). It would not be viable, both financially and from a staffing perspective, for the Council to do LAD2 on its own and there is no established consortium available for us to join.

- If no, please indicate what barriers prevented you from participation in the scheme.
- Would your Local Authority be in a position to manage the delivery of upgrades through a scheme such as LAD in 2022?

No.

- If yes, please indicate the anticipated number of homes that could be upgraded per year.
- If no, please indicate what barriers would prevent you from delivering upgrades in your area.

There are barriers to Rutland County Council participating in LAD2 as the energy hub and LEP areas cut across our existing consortium (which had handled LAD1a and LAD1b). It would not be viable, both financially and from a staffing perspective, for the Council to do LAD2 on its own and there is no established consortium available for us to join.

### **The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)**

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 ECO “Local Authority flexible eligibility” (LA 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 in the LA Flex programme 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.

- Has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility? (Y/N)

Yes.

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Please answer the following questions to help us to understand LA Flex delivery in more detail:

- How many declarations were issued for low income vulnerable households?

4

- How many declarations were issued for Fuel Poor households?

0

- How many declarations were issued for in-fill?

0

- What is the highest income cap published in your Sol?

£36,600

- If you have used an income over £30k gross, what reason have you given?

Based on 2 adults + 4 children.

- Do you charge for declarations to be signed? If so, please state how much?

No.

### **Smart Metering**

- Please provide a brief statement outlining your current or planned approach to promote smart meter take up and supporting residents to achieve benefits.

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

- Please provide further information on activities relating to smart metering, including but not limited to:

- a. Integrating approaches to delivering energy efficiency improvements in residential accommodation

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

- b. Arranging for smart meters to be installed by energy suppliers in vacant social housing premises

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

- c. Using social landlords to promote smart meter uptake

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

- d. Including smart meters in landlord licencing schemes

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

- e. Supporting residents who have had appliances condemned for safety reasons

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The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

f. Other supporting activities

The Council has not to date developed any specific initiative to support the take up of smart meters.

**Future Schemes and Wider Incentives**

- Please outline any further schemes or wider initiatives not covered above that your local authority has carried out or is planning to undertake to improve energy efficiency in residential accommodation.

Not applicable.