

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy

2013 – 2018



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Foreword

Fuel poverty affects not just the elderly, long term ill health, or low income residents but also the young; the plight of children living in fuel poverty is not focused upon by the media.

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group agreed that the foreword to this new strategy should come from children who daily experience fuel poverty in their lives. (We have not provided the details of the children for security reasons).

John (age 12):

"Hi my name is John and I am 12 years old. We only get £400 a month and that goes on what we need and not what we want. We have to spend it on food and electric and gas. The electric is put on a key which goes into a box and Dad puts a fiver on it every so often, and when we run out of electric, the whole house just goes, everything just shuts off, except for battery powered stuff and candles. And when the gas runs out the whole house is freezing. When this happens I run up to my bedroom to get my blanket and I sit in bed to keep warm."

John lives with his Dad and younger brother, his Mum walked out on the family on John's third birthday. The poverty line for John's family with one parent with two children is just over £1,000 a month after housing costs, but they have to get by on far less than that.

Carly (age 7):

"I don't like winter because it's cold and because of the snow. It can be hard, because we ran out of gas and don't have none, so we had to get our jackets from upstairs and wear them. We couldn't get no hot water and so that next day when it was school I couldn't go because I couldn't get a bath because there was no hot water and we couldn't get hot water neither."

Hannah (age 13):

"My blinds are very very mouldy, they've got mould all over the place. There's all these tiny black circle damp blobs. I've been cutting the black blob damp things off. A few had green fluff with black all over, so I cut those off. I just want to cut all the blinds off. I can't sleep up my top bunk because the dampness spreads along the top, when I lie down it goes on my chest, I can't sleep on the top bunk even though I'd like to. It's really horrible and no wonder my Mum and Dad feel ill all the time and I feel sick. On Wednesday I felt really sick and wanted to go to hospital, I told my mum I wanted to go to hospital because this house is so bad. It's ridiculous."

47% of children with Asthma are from the poorest 10% of families. Asthma is not the only problem that's linked to damp living conditions, children in homes with mould are two and half times more likely to suffer from nausea and vomiting.

Summary

Definition of Fuel Poverty

A fuel poor household is one that would need to spend more than 10% of its income on adequate warmth. The lack of "Affordable Warmth" is known as "Fuel Poverty".

Health

Recent studies show that the health effects of cold have a direct impact not just upon excess winter mortality, but also morbidity and hospital admissions. Cold exacerbates common health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, physiological conditions and leads to a deterioration in mental health and wellbeing. The economic costs as well as the physical costs, of morbidity are significant. **In 2009-2010 Bolton reported a total of 760 excess winter admissions at a cost of £1,927,193 to NHS Bolton.**

Challenges

Increase Energy Efficiency

Progress in Bolton on energy efficiency works on hard to treat properties has been slow because hard to treat properties tend to be older, with solid walls and costly to treat. Approximately one third of private sector properties in Bolton fall under this category. It is difficult to obtain data to identify these properties in the private sector.

Young families make up two-fifths of households in fuel poverty

The Hill's Fuel Poverty Review 2012, commissioned by the Department of Energy and Climate Change, states that two-fifths of households classed as fuel poor contain children, and one-fifth children under 5. Residents living in private rented accommodation and old houses are at most risk.

Heat or Eat Dilemma

Recent studies indicate one in four are skipping meals to meet fuel costs. A third of families ration fuel as soaring power prices force the 'heat or eat' dilemma. The average dual fuel power bill has now hit a record £1,318 prompting families to cut back. 23.7% of people polled said they had been forced to ration food in order to meet the costs of their energy bills.

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System

Bolton has an Affordable Warmth Referral system, delivered by Bolton Council's Home Improvement Agency, Bolton Care and Repair. Through this, vulnerable private residents in Bolton (on certain benefits or on long term ill health) are assisted with grant aid for energy efficiency works in the home and free advice. Since April 2011 (to December 2012) the referral system has assisted over 700 fuel poor residents in Bolton.

Money Skills and Public Health provide free energy efficiency workshops for vulnerable residents in Bolton, advice is provided on income maximisation. Bolton Wise, Energy Wise, also provide one to one energy advice for vulnerable residents in Bolton.

Bolton has an established Affordable Warmth Steering Group, which regularly meets to address Bolton's fuel poverty issues. It works with many local organisations in assisting residents who are fuel poor e.g. through advice workshops, public events etc. Organisations include: NHS Bolton, Citizens Advice Bureau, CVS, British Red Cross, Age UK, BARLO, Bolton University, Bolton at Home and local faith centres. This list is not exhaustive.

Greater Manchester and Bolton Context

Approximately 1 out of 5 residents in Bolton are fuel poor:

Bolton has 19.7% residents who are fuel poor (2010, Office for National Statistics). The average percentage for fuel poverty in Greater Manchester in 2010 is 20%. Bolton's fuel poverty figure is 3.3% more than the England rate mean of 16.4%.

Excess Winter Deaths:

More than 1,000 people died in 2011 in Greater Manchester because of the cold weather. In Bolton this figure was 110.

¹ Bolton shows a similar pattern to national and regional figures. That is, respiratory diseases tend to show the largest seasonal effect, but circulatory diseases also cause a large number of excess winter deaths. Heart attacks and strokes increase during severe cold snaps and slips on icy ground can lead to broken legs and hips, which can also prove fatal. Chronic lung conditions are also affected. Research shows the key way to protect people from dying in winter, particularly the elderly who are at high risk, is to have consistently-heated, well insulated accommodation.²

Measures

Between the years 2011 – 2013 Bolton secured external funding from the Department of Health and Department of Climate Change for approximately £0.5M, which has enabled more grants being available for vulnerable residents in Bolton.

Bolton has delivered a cavity wall and loft insulation programme for over 8 years. Originally focusing on areas of high deprivation, and then branching to cover the whole borough:

- 52,363 – Measures (loft/cavity wall insulation) have been installed in Bolton within 12 years:
- £9M - Annual savings approximately on fuel bills for householders in Bolton.
- 36M Kg - Annual carbon dioxide savings approx. (*this is equivalent to the weight of 36,000 old fashioned minis*).

Bolton works closely with Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), on campaigns, such as the recent 'Get Me Toasty' (free insulation scheme). We are working with AGMA on the GM Fair Energy Campaign enabling Bolton residents to save an average saving of £175 per annum on their fuel bills. Non vulnerable Bolton residents can receive free energy efficiency advice through the Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service free phone number. This service is financed by all 10 Greater Manchester Local Authorities.

National Context

Rise in fuel prices

People in fuel poverty spend a disproportionate amount of their income on energy for heating, lighting, and cooking in their homes. As fuel prices rise faster than incomes more people, regardless of whether they are employed or unemployed are finding keeping their home warm unaffordable. This situation is likely to worsen as fuel prices increase further.

End of national financial incentives

Studies show home insulation and energy efficiency programmes are the most sustainable ways to tackle fuel poverty. The recent termination of national financial incentives e.g. Carbon Emission Reduction Target (CERT) (December 2012), will greatly impact the cost of home insulation for able to pay customers, who previously would have received free cavity wall and loft insulation (through CERT). These customers would now have to pay, a cost which can be anything from approximately £400 to £2,000.

Our Approach

- Maximise resources, opportunities and partnership working for tackling fuel poverty, for example through the new private sector renewal approach, targeting properties of low decency.
- Reach out to residents who have previously been inaccessible.
- Maximise on behavioural change and income maximisation projects, ensuring a co-ordinated approach.
- Work closely with AGMA for example on GM Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation.
- Maintain and develop further Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System and Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group.

¹ Office for National Statistics

² Bolton's Older People's Housing Needs Survey

Chapter 1: Vision and Objectives

This is a joint Bolton Council and Bolton NHS strategy. It has been formulated through consultation with key partner organisations that are part of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group (AWSG).

Partnership

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group is made up of local organisations. In the last 10 years many local organisations have been involved in Bolton's affordable warmth programme. Here are the names of a few organisations that have been involved, this list is not exhaustive and in no particular order:

Bolton Council, NHS Bolton, Bolton Care and Repair, Bolton at Home, Bolton Wise, Bolton Community Homes, Money Skills, Hoot, Citizens Advice Bureau, Age UK, Bolton CVS, Asian Elders, Church Groups, local Mosques, Bolton Libraries, The Kitchen, British Red Cross, St Vincent's Housing Association, Bolton University, Energy Saving Trust, Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service, Eaga Group, Carillion, UCAN centres, Area Forums, Bolton Wanderers Football Club, National Energy Action, Carbon Action Network, BARLO, Future2Reality, North West Landlord's Association.

Bolton Council has an excellent working relationship with NHS Bolton on affordable warmth. Through this relationship much has been achieved following the original affordable warmth strategy. The successful relationship has prompted the setup of the GM Fuel Poverty Group initiated by NHS Bolton to assist other local authorities and their respective NHS bodies to develop similar working relations. With the national move of public health services into local authorities this partnership will become stronger whilst maintaining links with the newly established Clinical Commissioning Group, and the local mental health and Foundations Trust.

Background:

- Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy (2004-5) established the foundations for Bolton's affordable warmth programme.
- In Bolton's Community Strategy: Our Vision 2007-2017 (and in its renewed strategy 2012-15), the two main aims are to narrow the gap between the most and the least well off and to ensure economic prosperity. The vision sets aims for reducing the gap in life expectancy between less affluent neighbourhoods, and the Bolton average, and aims to do this by improving the health of those living in the least well off areas, and increasing the life expectancy of people in these neighbourhoods. The vision aims to reduce Bolton's greenhouse gas emissions steadily over the next few years, as well as to increase the number of private homes that meet decency standards which are occupied by vulnerable people from 58% in 2006 to 75% by 2017.
- Excess cold is the main reason for failure of 'decency' and is the biggest hazard under the Health and Housing Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
- Bolton's Older People's Housing Needs survey highlighted that the main types of repairs which could enable people to remain in their own homes, related to heating and/or insulation.

Objectives

We aim to address fuel poverty in Bolton through the following objectives:

- 1) Improve awareness and understanding of fuel poverty for residents in all tenures.
 - To be achieved through public events, behavioural projects, workshops.
 - Targeted at vulnerable groups.
 - Improve communication and marketing of fuel poverty issues.
- 2) Increase the energy efficiency of Bolton's private housing stock.
 - Identify vulnerable residents and areas of poor decency standards to use to target projects.
 - Encourage the take up of local and national grants, initiatives and energy efficiency advice.

- 3) Maintain and develop Bolton’s Affordable Warmth Referral System, which is delivered by Bolton’s Home Improvement Agency, Bolton Care and Repair.
 - To work with local organisations and partners, who have access to vulnerable residents, to increase referrals; holism.
 - Train professionals enabling them to refer vulnerable residents.
 - To monitor and evaluate the referral system and to develop schemes provided.

- 4) To adopt AGMA and national incentive/policies.
 - To work closely with AGMA on AGMA led affordable warmth and domestic carbon reduction initiatives.
 - To follow closely national affordable warmth and domestic carbon reduction incentives/policies, and to incorporate these into local policy and deliverable measures where applicable.

- 5) To maximise resources and opportunities for tackling fuel poverty.
 - Improve the level and ease of debt advice that is available for vulnerable residents.
 - To improve benefit receipt, in particular to assist vulnerable fuel poor residents following the welfare reforms.

- 6) Ensure the co-ordination and development of Bolton’s Affordable Warmth Strategy.
 - Monitor and evaluate the strategy and action plan.
 - Assess the health impact of projects.
 - Maximise partnership working.

Chapter 2: Definition of Fuel Poverty

“Affordable Warmth” means a household is able to afford to heat their home to the level required for their comfort and health. The lack of “Affordable Warmth” is known as “Fuel Poverty”. A household is in fuel poverty if they cannot keep warm and healthy in their own home at a price they can afford.

The following method is currently used to define and measure fuel poverty:

A fuel poor household is one that would need to spend more than 10% of its income on adequate warmth.

$$\text{Fuel poverty ratio} = \frac{\text{Required fuel costs (i.e. required usage x price)}}{\text{Income}}$$

The indicator is based on modelled needs. However it misrepresents trends, includes some households that are not low income, does not show policy impacts very clearly and is sensitive to technical issues.

This definition captures some relatively well-off households with high costs, especially as prices rise. The answer is not simply to put an income threshold into the current official indicator.

Since 2010 the government has been working towards producing a new definition, please see below for further details.

Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review: John Hills, March 2012

In October 2010 the Government announced it would commission an independent review, led by Professor John Hills, to look at the fuel poverty. Consequently under the review the final report was published in March 2012, review has now concluded. The findings will be used by the government in producing its new national fuel poverty strategy, including definition, in 2013.

Below is a summary of the key essential points of Professor Hill's 232 page fuel poverty review:

The Review found that fuel poverty is of major concern from three different but related perspectives: poverty and its reduction; health and well-being; climate change and reduction of carbon emissions and the impact on the Government's emissions reduction objectives. Given these different areas of concern, it concluded that fuel poverty is a problem distinct from the wider issue of poverty, with different characteristics.

The Review highlighted the varying quality of the housing stock and an inability for many households to afford the substantial capital sums required to upgrade their homes. Residents' inability to access the lowest prices for energy (due either to payment type, being off the gas network or not being able to access the internet for instance) led to households with similar levels of income having an unequal ability to turn cash into warmth and other energy needs. Particular types of households (for example pensioners and disabled people) may spend more time at home and therefore require more energy. All of these factors lead to significant variations in a household's energy bills.

The rate of Excess Winter Deaths in the UK is higher than in many other countries, and while the extent to which these are caused directly by fuel poverty is uncertain, what is clear is that fuel poverty is a factor. The Review pointed to the cost to the NHS of the medical treatment associated with the health impacts of fuel poverty, ranging from depression to cardiovascular disease. There are also wider concerns about the social impacts associated with living in cold homes, such as social isolation and poor educational attainment in young people.

The review finds that the evidence on the precise temperatures at which people need to live to avoid negative health impacts is less certain than had previously been supposed, and therefore so too is the evidence that is used as the basis for the temperature standards used within the fuel poverty methodology.

The independent review projects fuel poverty to worsen and calls for a reinvigorated national strategy, which is timely as a new national fuel poverty strategy is due to be published in 2013.

(For more details on the Hills report please see page 35 of the appendix).

Future of the fuel poverty definition in Bolton

In 2013 it is expected that a new national fuel poverty strategy will be published confirming a new definition following from an assessment of feedback received in relation to the Hills review. In Bolton we will look to incorporate this definition into the affordable warmth programme.

The Hills review raised the profile of fuel poverty by addressing factors that were previously not highlighted in national reports.

Professionals across Bolton, who work with vulnerable residents, are anxious that a new definition may complicate individual assessments of fuel poverty. It has been confirmed by various local groups that they will continue to use the old definition, as well as the new definition for fuel poverty data; this will result in two different sets of data. It is difficult to predict at this stage whether the Hills report will produce a progressive way forward for tackling fuel poverty.

In Bolton we will continue to use the established definition and reassess the fuel poverty definition and forms of measurement following publication of the new national affordable warmth strategy. A new data task group will be set up for this purpose.

Causes of fuel poverty:

According to the Department of Energy and Climate Change, there are three main causes of fuel poverty:

- Poor energy efficiency in the home
- High energy prices
- Low household income

To add to this, related to poor energy efficiency in the home is:

- Under occupancy

Vulnerability:

Living in cold homes can damage people's health and affect their quality of life. The elderly, children, and those with a disability or long-term illness are especially vulnerable, and likely to be at risk of fuel poverty as highlighted in the recent Hills review:

'It is important to consider vulnerability to the impacts of cold indoor temperatures. The groups of most concern are the elderly, children under 5 and people with a long term illness or disability.'³

However it is important to not remain transfixed with threshold bands:

'Being relatively relaxed about the fact that some people on the wrong side of a given threshold may receive assistance makes even more sense when one considers the reality that people's situations change frequently over time, for example as they move in or out of employment, as they have children or as they move home. Perfect targeting of those at risk of fuel poverty this year would still leave others in fuel poverty next year. Therefore any policies which address a wider group of homes than are occupied by fuel poor households at one particular time is very likely still to help to tackle the problem in the long term.'⁴

Examples of priority areas:

- Those who fall under the current definition of fuel poverty.
- Those who are classified as vulnerable, and in a low income household, e.g. eligible for means tested benefits.
- Long term-ill health residents.
- Vulnerable groups living in areas of deprivation and homes of a low decency standard.
- Young families, in particular lone parent families.
- Private sector properties of all ages and tenures.
- Joint works between social and private sectors on energy efficiency schemes. For example if a street has had energy efficient measures in one sector, it is important to explore the options for the other sector properties on that street.

Chapter 3: Health

Since the development of the original strategy in 2005 Bolton council has worked in partnership with NHS Bolton to alleviate fuel poverty in Bolton and decrease the level of cold related morbidity and excess winter deaths. This partnership has led to the completion of a Health Impact Assessment and contributions to regional and national pieces of research and consultations.

³ Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review: John Hills: CASE report 72, ISSN 1465-3001, March 2012

⁴ Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review: John Hills: CASE report 72, ISSN 1465-3001, March 2012

In the Assessment of the Impact on Health and Health Costs due to Fuel Poverty in Bolton, NHS Bolton proposed that the method of measuring excess winter deaths as an indicator of the effect of fuel poverty initiatives on health and health care costs was only measuring a small proportion of the issue and further research was needed especially with regards to health care costs. The study highlighted the lack of health research available at the time especially at a local level stating that 'The Department of Health December 2009 fact sheet estimated that for the North West, the annual cost to the NHS of excess cold in homes is £117,376,200, as the closest data available to recent and localised costing's.

The paper challenges the classification of fuel poor:

'For many years, the health impacts of fuel poverty were thought to be largely confined to vulnerable groups particularly senior citizens. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the health impacts of fuel poverty extend throughout a person's lifespan, from effects on new-borns (Frank et al., 2006) through to effects on people in their last months of life (Morris, 2007) and is not necessarily confined to any particular vulnerable group.'

This is supported by previous studies done in the North West in particular a study in Sefton, and a North West wide study by the North West Public Health Observatory. The Sefton study focused on the health of children with asthma growing up in a home that was having a detrimental effect on their condition and how a holistic change in their home (both fabric and behavioural) could have a positive effect on their health. With the implementation of a whole house approach which included a package of health advice and the installation of central heating systems and insulation where necessary, a noticeable effect was measured within the participant households:

- 40% reduction in 'blue' inhaler use
- 92% drop in unplanned attendances in A&E / Walk in centres
- 60% reduction in school absence

The North West public health observatory report is a paper that explores the effects of a drop in temperature over the winter months on hospital admissions:

- Over the five year period between 2005/06 and 2009/10, average winter temperatures dropped from 3.9 to 1.7°C and the number of emergency hospital admissions in winter (December to February) across the North West increased by just over 18,000. This represents an increase of 9.7%, similar to the rest of England.
- The estimated cost to the NHS for every 1,000 excess emergency admissions in the North West could be as high as £2.4 million, based on the approximate average cost of an emergency admission in the region. This would suggest the cost of excess emergency admissions to hospitals alone could be just over £86 million.
- Diseases of the respiratory and circulatory systems accounted for 22.2% of all winter emergency hospital admissions in the North West during 2009/10, 45,570 emergency admissions in total.
- In 2009/10, of all excess winter emergency admissions for a respiratory condition in the North West, 43.5% were among children aged under 5 years while a further 23.7% were for those aged 65 years and over (amounting to 1,982 and 1,080 excess emergency admissions respectively).
- People living in the most deprived areas are more than twice as likely to be admitted as an emergency for a respiratory condition than those living in the least deprived. In winter 2009/10, the very youngest (children aged under 5 years) in the North West and the very oldest (people aged 85 years and over) living in the most deprived 20% of areas nationally were at greatest risk of being admitted to hospital as an emergency due to a respiratory condition.
- Working with local authorities and partners to address fuel poverty and improve affordable warmth is a key public health intervention for local NHS organisations. Other interventions to tackle the rising numbers of winter emergency hospital admissions, particularly for respiratory conditions, include flu vaccination and self-

management programmes. Local cold weather plans should also consider measures to prevent the dramatic increase in emergency hospital admissions for falls involving snow and ice.

- The last time Bolton's excess winter admission figure were calculated were in 2009/10 with Bolton reporting a total of 760 excess winter admissions at a cost of £1,927,193.

Bolton's own Health Impact Assessment calculated the cost of fuel poverty to health of excess winter deaths alone in 2008/09 to be £5,850,000 and the cost of morbidity of those over 60 to be £2,591,500 based on Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs) and the Health and Housing Risk Rating System (HHSRS) and made the following recommendations:

- Addressing fuel poverty has traditionally been a Local Authority (LA) "owned" policy recognised by the government through National Indicator 187(NI.187) and usually driven by the housing department. The recent abandonment of this indicator and the merger of public health functions of the PCT with the L A provide an opportunity to elevate the health component of fuel poverty onto an equal footing with housing. Fuel poverty is an important and complex issue and this study and others have highlighted the importance of health as a driver when addressing fuel poverty. It is therefore recommended that the future fuel poverty agenda be an integrated equal partnership approach between Local Authority and the NHS.
- Excess Winter Deaths measurement has traditionally been used to measure the extent of the effect of fuel poverty on health; however as discussed within this report, this is often not reflective in other seasonal deaths and is just the tip of the iceberg when looking at overall cost to the NHS. More recent studies have shown that the health effects of cold have a direct impact not just upon excess winter mortality, but also morbidity and hospital admissions. Cold exacerbates many common health conditions including cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, physiological conditions and leads to a deterioration in mental health and wellbeing. The report shows that the economic costs as well as the physical costs, of morbidity are significant and have to be taken into account when measuring the effect of fuel poverty on health. Also when considering morbidity the importance of mental health and wellbeing as well as physical health, cannot be underestimated as this is also very significant. It is therefore recommended that both Excess Winter Deaths and Excess Winter Morbidity, including mental health and wellbeing, be used to measure the effect of fuel poverty on health.
- The current forms of data collection for measuring the effects of fuel poverty on health are mostly based on the data linked to excess winter mortality. This gives an incomplete picture of the effects both physical and economical that fuel poverty is having on health. A more robust and extensive form of data collection, particularly around morbidity and health and wellbeing needs to be adopted. This may well involve the creation of a database that could be interrogated on a regular basis. It is therefore recommended that new methods of data collection related to fuel poverty and health be investigated and where relevant adopted.
- Measures taken to address the issues of fuel poverty tend to revolve around the "hardware" components i.e. the installation of energy efficient home improvements. Although these measures contribute to the alleviation of fuel poverty they will not, in isolation, remove people from fuel poverty. More attention needs to be given to the components of behaviour change such as income maximisation, fuel debt, education and advice regarding using heating system, social tariffs. Working with schools and pupils. It is therefore recommended that all measures linked to fuel poverty be considered in total in order to best get people out of fuel poverty.
- Traditionally targeting has been focused on older people, i.e. the 60 plus age group, this being due to nearly 90 per cent of all excess winter deaths being of people over the age of 65, and of older people with existing health problems who are more at risk. These facts however conflict with recent studies which have identified equally vulnerable groups that would benefit from interventions. These vulnerable groups include:
 - People with conditions affected by living in cold damp homes: respiratory, cardiovascular, mobility and mental health.
 - People with disabilities and Long Term Conditions.
 - Families with young children.

- It is recommended that targeting is inclusive and proportional to the needs of all vulnerable groups.
- The measurement of fuel poverty is under review nationally as it is felt the current definition does not reflect the extent of fuel poverty among the population. It is therefore recommended that a more robust and exact definition comprehensively linked to measurement of fuel poverty, as opposed to overall poverty, is established. This measurement also needs to be easily recognised and understood by the general population so that they can identify if they are living in fuel poverty themselves.

The Public Health led JSNA site Bolton Health matters⁵ is a central point for local and national policy with sections on Fuel poverty and Housing that will remain a port of call for information on local and national research and policy that is continuously updated.

Since the 2005 Strategy it has become increasingly noticeable that Health and the corresponding research into the Impacts on Health resulting from fuel poverty have become very important metrics to be taken into account when devising new strategies for Affordable Warmth. For the new strategy an Affordable Warmth Research Task Group has been set up to inform the Affordable Warmth Steering Group regarding these matters.

From 1st April 2013 NHS Bolton will cease to exist and will be replaced with a newly established Clinical Commissioning Group. The Public health function will transfer over to Bolton Council; this will provide new opportunities for the existing partnership and with the new GP lead commissioning group.

Chapter 4: Challenges

Increase the energy efficiency of Bolton's private housing stock:

Background

Legislation for social housing providers to abide by levels of decency in their housing stock has greatly helped energy efficiency levels in social housing. The private sector however which is dependent upon the home owner for home improvements is not seeing vast improvements to energy performance levels. Low income private residents, unlike their low income counterparts in social housing are often left struggling with little or no support available when they find themselves in fuel poverty.

As a local authority we have targeted geographical areas of deprivation, and have expanded schemes so that they are borough wide, however in recent years we are finding that there are specific challenges, which need to be addressed:

Private Sector Stock Condition:

36,091 private sector dwellings in Bolton (36% of the total private sector stock) fail to meet the decent homes standard (The England average is 28%). Homes are 'non decent' due to issues such as lack of heating; safety; disrepair; and lack of modernisation. At an average of £6,164 per house, it is estimated that £222million would be required to repair the entire stock to the decent standard. 38% of vulnerable households live in a non-decent home and the evidence points to concentration in certain wards e.g. Crompton (46%).⁶

Child fuel poverty:

It is often wrongly assumed that it is only the elderly who are fuel poor. Evidence shows that young families are at high risk.

- DECC: The UK Fuel Strategy, 7th Annual Progress Report, 2009: 'The Government, as far as reasonably practicable, will seek an end to fuel poverty in vulnerable households... with a vulnerable household deemed to be one containing **children**, or those who are elderly, sick or disabled.'

⁵ <http://www.boltonhealthmatters.org/>

⁶ Bolton Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2011

- Not all fuel poor young families are necessarily living in fuel poor areas or are eligible for benefits, and consequently may not be eligible for local or national affordable warmth schemes. There can be several reasons why young families can fall under this category, e.g. energy inefficient home, lone parent, and rural home.
- From a health and well-being perspective: living at low temperatures is a significant contributor, to a large number of incidents of ill-health and demands on the national health service and a wider range of problems of social isolation and poor outcomes for young people.
- Low temperatures are associated with diminished resistance to infections and the incidence of damp and mould in the home (also associated with poor energy efficiency). Many of these health effects are of most concern for the youngest children and eldest pensioners.
- The Hills' Fuel Poverty review, states that around two-fifths of households classed as fuel poor contain children, and one-fifth children under 5. The review comments that this is a higher proportion, and that previously the problem of fuel poverty for many families with children may have been understated. This has also been highlighted in a recent report: *Save The Children, Rising Energy Costs: The Impact on Low Income Families (2012)*.
- *'The Winter Forecast for NHS Emergency Care, Synthesis', (November 2010):*
'In 2009/10, of all excess winter emergency admissions for a respiratory condition in the North West, 43.5% were among children aged under 5 years... (Amounting to 1,982 excess emergency admissions respectively).'
- *Save the Children: The impact of Fuel Poverty on children* by Prof Christine Liddell: 'Adolescents living in fuel poor homes are at significantly greater risk for multiple mental health problems when other contributory factors have been accounted for.'

Adverse effects on children's education:

- Health studies have shown that home energy improvements have led to an 80% decrease in the rate of sickness absence from school for children with asthma and recurrent respiratory infections. In many cold homes, only one room may be heated, which causes difficulties for children doing homework. Loss of education can lead to loss of job opportunities for life, itself a risk of early mortality.

Lone Parent Families:

- One of the groups at high risk of fuel poverty are those on low income who are single-person households of working age. This is notable because this group has not been the focus on previous government strategies, which has tended to focus on children, older people and deprived urban areas. This has now come to light through the Hills review as well as other recent studies.
- The English Housing Survey, 2011, (**see page 38 of the appendix**) for a chart which shows that single- person households are much more likely to be in fuel poverty than other household types, both overall and among those in low income. The survey indicates that children belonging to lone parent families are at greater risk of falling under the fuel poverty category, rather than children in a two parent household unit, and these lone parent families may not necessarily fall under the poorest category yet still be fuel poor.
- Single-person households - working-age singles as well as single pensioners - are more likely to be in fuel poverty than either couples or larger families. Overall, averaging across 2006 to 2008, around 30% of single pensioners and 20% of working-age singles were in fuel poverty compared to around 15% of lone parents (the next highest group), 10% of pensioner couples, and 5% of working-age couples. Because of their relatively high risk, half of all the households in fuel poverty in England are single-person households even though only a quarter of all households are single-person households.
- Prioritising young families and lone parents is encouraged by several established bodies. The charity Save the Children, state: 'Being employed offers only limited protection from Fuel Poverty for couples with families. For lone parents it offers even less since lone parents who work part-time are more likely to be fuel poor than are lone parents not in work. Fuel Poverty is unlike most other forms of Child Poverty and should be accorded special status in policymaking and legislation concerning the young.'

Heat or Eat:

- Soaring fuel bills are leading to acute power rationing among many families. A recent study by Onepoll reveals that 70% of British homes are forced to limit their power consumption. According to the research 10% of people have defaulted on energy bills in 2012, while a further 14.5% claim they will be unable to pay their next fuel bill. The study indicates that over a fifth of families have begun wearing outdoor clothing such as hats, coats and scarves indoors to keep warm, along with over a quarter who drape themselves in blankets to avoid turning on the heating. Studies indicate one in four are skipping meals to meet fuel costs. A third of families ration fuel as soaring power prices force a 'heat or eat' dilemma.
- In a developed country as ours it is surprising to see statistics which show children who are underfed. According to the study by The Children's Society, more than half of the UK's teachers are seeing hungry pupils at school. This raises the questions as to whether these children whose parents struggle to afford to adequately feed their children are also struggling to adequately heat the family home.
- Research figures show the average dual fuel power bill has now hit a record £1,318 prompting families to cut back. 23.7% of the people polled said they had been forced to ration food in order to meet the costs of their energy bills. One in 13 people said they had begun to get into debt to meet their energy bills, with no long-term plan to pay it back.
- Figures collected by the Citizens Advice Bureau claim 38% of people cut back on food shopping to pay for other household bills.
- In 2012 food bank usage increased dramatically locally and nationally, indicating a need for further strategic action and the newly formed Bolton's Food Poverty Group. The Affordable Warmth Steering Group has a representative on the Food Poverty Group.
- Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group e.g. through NHS Bolton have ran projects to promote the importance of eating warm healthy food and how to do so economically (e.g. minimal use of fuel). These have been teamed up with free energy advice. Recently AWSG have worked with Bolton's Urban Outreach to assist in their emergency food bank efforts. It is important that food projects are supported with exploration of how we can assist vulnerable residents who face the "Heat or Eat" dilemma.

Chapter 5: Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System

Established centralised referral system:

Following the 2005 AW strategy Bolton worked with key partner organisations to establish a centralised referral system, AWARM (Affordable Warmth Access and Referral Mechanism). Through the referral system vulnerable residents received bespoke energy advice (e.g. debt, fuel bills, energy efficiency) and access to heating and insulation grants. AWARM was delivered through the GM Energy Saving Trust. Other local authorities joined the referral mechanism as a result of its successes. With an increasing number of local authorities joining the system, the demands of the system increased dramatically, issues developed that were difficult to address. In 2011, Bolton made the strategic decision to leave AWARM and to have an in house referral system enabling delivery of a 'local' service. Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System, funded by Bolton Council, and is now delivered by Bolton Council's home improvement agency: Bolton Care and Repair.

Bolton Care and Repair:

Bolton Care and Repair, Bolton's Home Improvement Agency, provide a free bespoke service for vulnerable residents in Bolton (homeowners and private tenants). The service assists vulnerable residents who may need advice about keeping warm, heating/insulation grants, reducing fuel bills, home repairs, fire safety, security enhancement or money and benefits. The service aims to be all encompassing. Professionals who work directly with vulnerable residents are encouraged to refer vulnerable customers who they think would benefit from the referral mechanism. The service has been marketed through the AWSG, local media and presentations to targeted staff and local groups.

(Please see page 43 of the appendix for further information on Bolton Care and Repair).

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Schemes:

These are funded through Bolton Council and where appropriate external funds.

- **Better Behaving Boiler Scheme:** Grants are available for residents (on benefits or of long term ill health) who have no working boiler or poor efficiency. Grants are available for boiler repairs for those who are on means tested benefits.
- **Emergency Heaters:** These are provided to vulnerable residents in extreme circumstances.
- **Green Loans:** Available to all Bolton residents for energy efficient measures and 'A' rated appliances. The maximum loan available to an individual is £3k. The loan is interest free, provided that repayments are on time. If late with repayments the interest charged is very low. The scheme is ideal for vulnerable customers who are not eligible for local or national grants. Green Loans are managed by the Credit Union Hoot, a non-for profit organisation, Bolton Council pays Hoot's administration fees to deliver this service.
- **Cavity wall and loft insulation:** Currently delivered through the AGMA led "Get Me Toasty" Scheme, free loft and cavity wall insulation is available to all Bolton residents who have been deemed eligible through a free non-obligation house survey. Loft top ups are available through the scheme. Bolton Council funds a small element of this for Bolton residents; Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) funds the majority of the scheme. CERT is a national fund and the government are to end it by spring 2013, ECO will replace CERT. With the end of CERT it is likely that the scheme will end. Please see below for details on CERT and ECO.

Chapter 6: Greater Manchester and Bolton Context

Bolton's first Affordable Warmth strategy was developed through strong partnership with key stakeholders. These relations have continued and strengthened. Additional organisations are now part of the steering group, and it is a hub of joint working on affordable warmth initiatives.

With the development of Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), Greater Manchester authorities including Bolton work closely together on affordable warmth initiatives. Examples of GM led initiatives with local authority involvement include "Get Me Toasty" (free home insulation scheme) and The GM Fair Energy Campaign (collective energy switching). Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group is actively involved in GM initiatives.

Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service (GMEAS)

The Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service, formerly known as the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre, provides a Freephone advice service for all residents in Greater Manchester. Bolton residents who enquire through the service about affordable warmth schemes are directed to Bolton Care and Repair. The GMEAS have been pivotal in GM led schemes such as 'Get me Toasty' (insulations scheme) and the GM Fair Energy Campaign. GM local authorities contribute a small financial fee towards this service. The future of this service however is not certain, with the new Green Deal it is envisaged that the service may prioritise Green Deal advice over general energy efficiency advice.

Strategic Planning:

The Core Strategic Planning Strategy is the central policy document that guides strategic planning in Bolton. It includes policies that relate to affordable warmth and fuel poverty, albeit sometimes indirectly. The Core Strategy is supported by other documents, including the Supplementary Planning Document, Sustainable Design and Construction.

Policies require the council, partners and/or developers:

- To have regards for how climate change and extreme weather affect developments;
- To improve energy efficiency; and to promote renewable energy options.
- Measures to reduce fuel poverty.⁷

⁷ Core Strategic Planning Strategy: para 4.45 and policy CG3.6.

These policies mean that new build houses should be resilient to the pressures faced by our changing climate, including extremely cold or hot weather – both of which currently present risks to more vulnerable residents.

Energy efficiency and the development of renewable heat and power generation (both centralised and decentralised) should reduce the impacts that rising fuel prices will have, although it should be noted that investment in renewables currently have direct and indirect cost implications.⁸

Below are sets of data in relation to fuel poverty and affordable warmth for Bolton as well as Greater Manchester.

Fuel Poverty affects 1 out of 5 residents in Bolton:

The following data demonstrates how fuel poverty in Bolton affects approximately 1 out of 5 residents:

The most recent fuel poverty data produced by the Office for National Statistics is for 2010, Bolton is shown to have 19.7% who are fuel poor. The average percentage for fuel poverty in Greater Manchester in 2010 is 20%. Manchester had the highest percentage and Stockport and Trafford jointly had the lowest figure 18.5%.

In 2010 Bolton’s fuel poverty figure is 3.3% more than the England rate mean of 16.4%.

In the 2011 national census, Bolton is ranked as the 95th highest local authority district in England and Wales for households that do not have central heating. In Greater Manchester as a local authority we rank as the 2nd highest under this category. As a percentage these figures do not appear too alarming: 3% of Bolton’s population do not have central heating, whereas 97% do have central heating, however this will equate to over approximately 4,000 people in Bolton living without central heating.

Fuel Poverty Figures for Greater Manchester Local Authorities, including Bolton (2010):⁹

LA Name	All Households	Fuel Poor Households	Percentage of Fuel Poor
Bolton	114,319	22,515	19.7%
Bury	77,929	14,857	19.1%
Manchester	187,249	41,874	22.4%
Oldham	89,259	17,639	19.8%
Rochdale	85,334	17,033	20.0%
Salford	100,722	21,057	20.9%
Stockport	123,796	22,875	18.5%
Tameside	94,024	18,556	19.7%
Trafford	94,008	17,422	18.5%
Wigan	133,107	26,365	19.8%

(Please see page 35 of the appendix for fuel poverty further data).

⁸ Core Strategic Planning Strategy:

(1) para 3.32, Strategic Objective 10; policy CG2.1; policy CG2.2; para 4.45 and policy CG3.6; policy IPC1

(2) para 3.36, Strategic Objective 14; para 4.37-4.38 and policies CG1.6, CG2.1 & CG2.2; para 4.45 and policy CG3.6; policy IPC1

(3) Para 4.37-4.38 and policies CG1.6, CG1.7, CG2.2, CG2.3, para 4.45 and policy CG3.6; policy IPC1

⁹ Office for National Statistics: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics 2010 data, release date 17 May 2012 Summary: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics (England only)

Excess Winter Deaths

Excess deaths in winter (EWD) continue to be an important public health issue in the UK, potentially open to effective intervention. This excess death is greatest in elderly people and for certain disease groups. It also varies from area to area. EWD are also associated with cold weather, but it has been observed that other countries in Europe especially the colder Scandinavian countries have relatively fewer excess winter deaths in winter compared to the UK.

Information on excess winter deaths is important in:

- Tackling certain premature deaths;
- Supporting energy efficient interventions in housing;
- Encouraging fuel poverty referral.

Recently, the Public Health Outcomes Framework 'Healthy lives, healthy people: Improving outcomes and supporting transparency' published in January 2012 proposed reducing excess winter mortality as one of the outlined outcomes for the "Healthcare public health and preventing premature mortality" domain.¹⁰

Greater Manchester and Bolton:

- More than 1,000 people died last year in Greater Manchester because of the cold weather. In Bolton this figure was 110.¹¹
- There were 1,050 deaths in the region in the winter of 2011/12, and 1,200 the year before. The vast majority of deaths were of people aged over 75.
- Bolton shows a similar pattern to national and regional figures. That is, respiratory diseases tend to show the largest seasonal effect, but circulatory diseases also cause a large number of excess winter deaths. Heart attacks and strokes increase during severe cold snaps and slips on icy ground can lead to broken legs and hips, which can also prove fatal. Chronic lung conditions are also affected.
- It is thought the number of deaths dropped in 2011/12 as there was much less flu recorded – the lowest level on record.¹²
- Research shows the key way to protect people from dying in winter, particularly the elderly who are at high risk, is to have consistently-heated, well insulated accommodation.¹³ It is likely to still see more sickness in people living in private rented accommodation particularly old houses which have been converted for multiple occupancy.
- Higher fuel costs, and low incomes are large contributing factors to excess winter death figures. With changes to the national benefit system in 2013 it is likely that the difficulties in keeping warm over winter will only worsen rather than alleviate. **(See page 39 of the appendix for detailed charts).**

Retrofit: Physical Measures (Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation)

Background:

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy 2005 identified the links between fuel poverty and the indices of multiple deprivation, identifying geographical target areas in Bolton where to focus insulation measures. These identified areas received free insulation measures. Once these geographical areas were saturated the scheme was expanded across the borough. Initially the borough wide insulation scheme prioritised vulnerable residents providing free insulation to those residents who were eligible. However with national government incentives for energy companies to actively reduce CO2 emissions it soon became possible for Bolton's borough wide insulation scheme to offer home insulation to non-vulnerable residents at a reduced price. During 2010-11 Bolton Council were offering the cheapest insulation rates for able to pay customers, compared to other GM local authorities, and private companies in Bolton, this was possible through the Carbon Emission Reduction target funds (a national incentive). Prior to the GM wide insulation scheme, launched in 2011, Bolton Council was the only local authority in Greater Manchester with a borough wide scheme, and Bolton's scheme was used as a model for the Greater Manchester "Get Me Toasty" insulation scheme. Bolton joined

¹⁰ <http://www.wmpho.org.uk/excesswinterdeathsinEnglandatlas/>

¹¹ Office for National Statistics

¹² Health and Housing Safety Rating System

¹³ Bolton's Older People's Housing Needs

the “Get Me Toasty” scheme, led by AGMA, and delivered by the Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service (previously part of the Energy Saving Trust). “Get Me Toasty” will end in early 2013 as CERT funding ends.

Physical outcomes to date:¹⁴

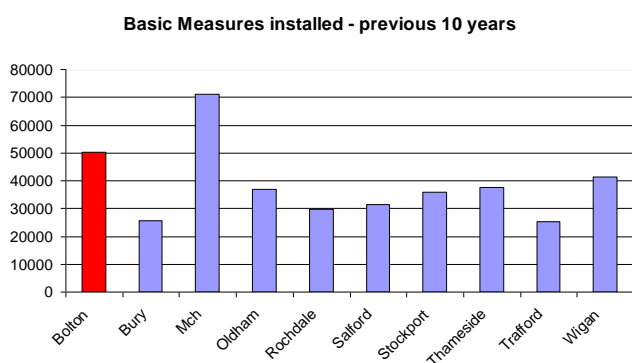
- 52,363 – Measures (loft/cavity wall insulation) in 12 years (approximate figures up to and including 2011-12) have been installed in Bolton:
 - Annual savings approximately £9M on fuel bills for householders in Bolton.
 - Annual Carbon Dioxide Savings approx. 36M Kg (*this is equivalent to the weight of 36,000 old fashioned minis*).
- In 2011-12 over 1,100 private sector properties received energy efficient measures, thus reducing their annual carbon dioxide emission and annual fuel bill.
 - This calculates to an approximate total annual carbon dioxide saving for Bolton of 628,340kg, and an approximate annual saving of over £150k on fuel bills.

Bolton’s Measures against National Figures:

- Data from 2008 to 2012 shows that Bolton has a significant higher number of measures installed than the average national figure. These figures have been on a steady incline.¹⁵
- Cavity Wall Insulation:
 - Bolton (2008/09) = 4,925 Installations. This was 3,543 MORE than the GB mean of 1,382 Installations.
 - Bolton (2011/12) = 15,207 Installations. This was 10,148 MORE than the GB mean of 5,059 Installations.
- Loft Insulation:
 - Bolton (2008/09) = 4,066 Installations. This was 2,285 MORE than the GB mean of 1,781 Installations
 - Bolton (2011/12) = 12,946 Installations. This was 5,997 MORE than the GB mean of 6,949 Installations

(See page 41 of the appendix for detailed charts).

The graph below demonstrates how Bolton positively fairs in comparison to other GM local authorities for number of measures installed¹⁶:



Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA):

34% of AGMA’s carbon emissions come from the domestic sector and AGMA aim through the Low Carbon Economic Area programme to reduce CO2 emissions from the existing domestic sector by 26% by 2015.

One of the methods for achieving this is:

Deliver basic (loft and cavity wall insulation) energy efficiency measures to 75% of all remaining homes (= approx. 400,000 measures) with under-insulated lofts or un-insulated cavities by 2013.¹⁷

(See page 42 of the appendix for further details).

¹⁴ Energy Saving Trust. Please see the appendix for further details on the calculations.

¹⁵ <http://www.decc.gov.uk/>

¹⁶ Energy Saving Trust 2010

¹⁷ Report: AGMA, Wider Leadership Team, LCEA Housing Retrofit Programme, Delivery of Loft and Cavity Wall Insulation Targets, 8 November 2010.

It is likely that following this target, and analysis as to whether this target was met, GM schemes will focus around ECO and the Green Deal.

As Bolton is reaching close to saturation for basic measures, any future specific targeting of insulation measures will need to focus on areas that have not been intensely targeted previously. With national changes such as the introduction of ECO in 2013, Bolton can further explore the opportunities for targeting hard to treat properties, i.e. solid walls, as this is an area which has not previously benefited from any targeted efforts.

Energy Bill

The government this year published the Energy Bill that will allow energy companies to charge households an extra £7.6bn, money that will go towards low-carbon electricity infrastructure. The advisory committee on climate change estimates this will add about £110 to the average household energy bill by 2020.¹⁸

Bolton's Domestic Energy Consumption:¹⁹

Electricity:

Bolton (2009) = 3,910 kWh / consumer. 360 less than the GB mean of 4,270 kWh / consumer

Gas:

Bolton (2009) = 15,700 kWh / consumer. 390 more than the GB mean of 15,310 kWh / consumer

Bolton (2010) = 15,190 kWh / consumer. 90 more than the GB mean of 15,100 kWh / consumer

This may imply that more people in Bolton use Gas to heat their homes rather than with electricity. This may have certain implications if there was a sudden increase in Gas prices.

Chapter 7: National Context

Below is an outline of national policies relating to fuel poverty. Some of these policies have been devised directly or indirectly to assist in the alleviation of fuel poverty. As a local authority, Bolton Council, are obligated or in some cases recommended to utilise national policy directed at local authorities. Some of the below policies have been developed specifically by the government with energy providers in mind, which can be directed to benefit the fuel poor, and it is encouraged that local authorities proactively engage with energy companies to direct them towards fuel poor residents in the borough.

National Strategies

The government commissioned 'Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review' by John Hills, March 2012. This will form the background of the new national Fuel Poverty Strategy which is to be published in 2013. **(Please see page 35 of the appendix for further details on the Hills review).**

CERT

The Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (expired December 2012) required all major domestic energy suppliers to make savings in the amount of CO₂ emitted by householders. Suppliers were to meet the target by promoting the uptake of low carbon energy solutions to household energy consumers, thereby assisting them to reduce the carbon footprint of their homes. The primary aim of CERT was to make a contribution to the Kyoto protocol. The cost to suppliers to achieving CERT is estimated by DECC to be a total of £5.5 billion.²⁰

In Bolton, in previous years, we have received money from energy suppliers, for CO₂ figures, from works that we have conducted to improve energy efficiency in homes. On the GM Insulation scheme (Toasty) we received the CERT funding from source, meaning that insulation is heavily discounted and is available for free to all customers (in most cases, e.g. with the exception of additional costs such as air vents etc.).

¹⁸ <http://www.decc.gov.uk>

¹⁹ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/local_auth/interactive/domestic_ge/index.html

²⁰ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/funding/funding_ops/cert/cert.aspx

CESP

Community Energy Saving Programme (expired 31 December 2012) targeted households in areas of low income to improve energy efficiency standards, and reduce fuel bills. There are 4,500 eligible areas for CESP. CESP is funded by an obligation on energy suppliers and electricity suppliers, it is administered by OFGEM.²¹

Nationally CESP projects have predominantly taken place in the social housing sector due to the restrictive CESP criteria which better suits inefficient tower blocks, i.e. high energy inefficiency in a high density area of low income. There have been only a handful of private sector CESP schemes (and these have been joined with social housing CESP schemes). In Bolton we explored the options of delivering a CESP project both with a social housing provider and also without; however with the nature of our private housing stock and with the conditions of CESP, CESP projects were not viable.

There have been a few social housing CESP projects in Bolton, all at a very small scale and it has not been viable for private sector properties to join onto the schemes. Examples include an Irwell Valley CESP project, where 31 back boilers were replaced.

Green Deal

From winter 2012 the Government aim to introduce The Green Deal Scheme, covering all tenures, making possible for homes to have energy efficient improvements made to their properties at no upfront cost.

The Energy Act 2011 includes provisions for the new Green Deal, which intends to reduce domestic carbon emissions, revolutionising energy efficiencies of properties. It will contain various elements such as ECO and affordable warmth which will replace CERT and CESP.

The Green Deal hopes to enable private firms, utility companies, local councils and charities to offer these energy efficiency improvements by offering up to approx. £10,000 in Green Deal Funding via Green Deal Finance. Paying back Green Deal Finance will be by recoupment of instalments, over 25 years or less, from a charge on the property's electric bill. The Green Deal Finance is not like a personal loan. The Green Deal debt will be attached to the property's electric bill so if the householder moves house the new owner or tenant will carry on paying back the Green Deal Finance via the property's electric bill (probably using a smart meter) as they will now be benefiting from the improvements that you had done via the Green Deal Scheme.

Energy Company Obligation (ECO):

The Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) is a government scheme designed to reduce the UK's energy consumption and support those living in fuel poverty by funding energy efficiency improvements worth around £1.3 billion every year.

The ECO Order was made on 4 December 2012 and is now in effect. The ECO will run from January 2012 until March 2015, supporting the installation of energy efficiency measures in low-income households and properties that are harder to treat. It will work alongside the Green Deal to give consumers new ways of funding energy efficiency improvements in their homes.

The Green Deal and ECO will also help reduce carbon emissions from the UK's domestic building stock, which is essential to meet statutory domestic carbon emission reduction targets by 2050.

Scope of ECO

There are 3 obligations under the ECO:

- **Carbon Saving Communities Obligation**
This provides insulation measures to households in specified areas of low income. It also makes sure that 15% of each supplier's obligation is used to upgrade more hard-to-reach low-income households in rural areas.
- **Affordable Warmth Obligation**
This provides heating and insulation measures to consumers living in private tenure properties that receive particular means-tested benefits. This obligation supports low-income consumers that are vulnerable to the impact of living in cold homes, including the elderly, disabled and families.

²¹ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/funding/funding_ops/cesp/cesp.aspx

- **Carbon Saving Obligation**

This covers the installation of measures like solid wall and hard-to-treat cavity wall insulation, which ordinarily can't be financed solely through the Green Deal.

How ECO is funded

The ECO will be funded by energy suppliers. Energy suppliers obligated to provide the scheme will determine how much subsidy they provide to each consumer. This may depend on consumers' individual circumstances and the amount of Green Deal finance being used.

The ECO is worth around £1.3 billion every year. The ECO Affordable Warmth and Carbon Saving Communities obligations will deliver support worth around £540 million per year to low-income households. The ECO Carbon Saving Obligation is worth around £760 million per year.

How ECO will be delivered

ECO will be delivered to customers either directly from energy suppliers or by organisations working together who have made special arrangements, such as Green Deal Providers.

ECO Brokerage is a market-based mechanism that has been introduced to support an open and competitive market for the delivery of the ECO. Brokerage operates as fortnightly anonymous auctions where ECO providers will be able to sell "lots" of ECO Carbon Saving Obligation, ECO Carbon Saving Communities and ECO Affordable Warmth.

Compliance and monitoring of ECO

Compliance under the ECO will be monitored and enforced by the Office for Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem). Energy suppliers will be required to report on their delivery against their obligation to make sure they are on track to meet their target by 2015. Under the ECO Order, energy suppliers will now need to report on costs of delivery and if there is any impact on consumer bills.

HECA:

Using powers under section 5(1) (b) the Act the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change requires all English authorities to prepare a report by 31 March 2013 setting out the energy conservation measures that the authority considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in its area.

The government has issued guidance to local authorities in England on meeting their obligations to the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995. The publication requests the delivery of a report detailing local authority measures to improve household energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, to be delivered to the DECC Secretary of State by 31 March 2013, and every two years thereafter.

(Please refer to page 44 of the appendix for further details).

Smart Meters

These show how much energy is being used inside people's home, through a display. They communicate directly with energy suppliers, meaning that utility companies do not need to go to homes to read meters in the future.

Smart meters will:

- Enable residents to manage their energy usage better, save money and reduce emissions
- bring an end to estimated billing – residents will only be billed for the energy they actually use

Most households will have smart meters installed by their energy company between 2014 and 2019.

Smart meters will be rolled out as standard across the country by 2019. But there will not be a legal obligation on individuals to have one. Energy companies will be required to install smart meters and take all reasonable steps to reach everyone.²²

Chapter 8: Maximise resources and opportunities for tackling fuel poverty

There are many ways of maximising resources and expanding opportunities for addressing fuel poverty, in this chapter we will review a few of these:

- **Promoting Awareness of fuel poverty in Bolton:**
- **All tenures**
- **All properties including 'hard to treat'**
- **Renewable Energies**
- **Funding**

Promoting Awareness of fuel poverty in Bolton:

Events:

To promote affordable warmth, Bolton's AWSG hold annual events and take part in events led by other organisations. Notable events include Bolton's Annual Energy Shop, organised by AWSG, for duration of approximately a week, targeting vulnerable residents in deprived areas. A recent successful event in November 2012 was the promotion of free insulation at a public event attended by over 20,000 people.

Members of the AWSG promote affordable warmth at events where possible. For example Money Skills successfully deliver energy efficiency workshops for vulnerable members of the public, incorporating affordable warmth advice. NHS Bolton regularly promotes affordable warmth through general NHS events or specific affordable warmth events including workshops.

Working with schools:

Examples of past engagements with schools include energy efficiency competitions and promotion of affordable warmth schemes. However with changes internally in the Council such as the elimination of a school officer post, it has been difficult to develop links with schools.

Marketing:

Affordable warmth schemes and events are marketed as reasonably possible and through free avenues wherever possible to minimise costs. Marketing is targeted to reach vulnerable residents for example we have marketed schemes through the free newspaper Bolton Scene which is delivered to all houses in areas of multiple deprivation in Bolton. Other targeted marketing includes: GP surgeries, hospitals, libraries, voluntary groups, groups that work with vulnerable residents in Bolton. Our schemes have been promoted widely through local press including non-free newspapers, busses, town centre boards, BWFC football stadium.

With the recent rise of social media, Keep Warm Keep Well Bolton since 2012 has an active twitter account, allowing twitter followers to receive up to date information on affordable warmth in Bolton.

Behavioural Change:

Behavioural change is acknowledged by experts in the field of fuel poverty, as an important, yet often underestimated, area by which fuel poor residents may be assisted.²³ Examples of on-going behavioural change projects in Bolton includes a Bolton Wise (Energy Wise) project providing vulnerable private sector and social residents in Bolton with bespoke energy advice in their own homes.

²² <https://www.gov.uk/smart-meters-how-they-work>

²³ The Missing Quarter: Integrating Behaviour Change in Low Carbon Housing Retrofit; Low Carbon Housing Retrofit Greater Manchester: LCEA Behaviour Change Retrofit Group

Money Skills successfully run energy efficiency workshops and have been doing so for several years, with low income Bolton residents attending.

NHS Bolton actively run projects aimed at engaging with members of the public for the purpose of energy behavioural change, for example a recent project involving workshops across UCAN centres.

Training

Training of ground level staff on behavioural change has been regarded as very important for behavioural change messages to be cascaded to members of the public. NHS Bolton provide training for NHS staff on affordable warmth and on Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System, so to enable staff who have direct contact with vulnerable residents to be able to advise and make referrals to the system where appropriate.

Fuel Debt

The above programmes actively work towards assisting those who are in fuel debt as well as preventing those from entering into it. Income maximisation is essential in preventing fuel debt, e.g. through improving benefits take up, or switching energy tariff.

All Tenures:

Social Housing

Bolton's Affordable Warmth strategy focuses on improving the energy efficiency of private sector properties in Bolton. In the public sector social landlords are obligated to provide decent and relatively energy efficient properties to their tenants.

Since the transfer of Bolton Council's housing stock to the newly formed registered social landlord Bolton at Home, Bolton at Home (the largest social housing provider in Bolton) have provided for the affordable warmth needs of the majority of social housing tenants in Bolton. Bolton at Home is a member of Bolton's AWSG and we have actively worked together on projects where possible to enable us to reach effectively to larger fuel poor audiences.

Officers from other social housing providers in Bolton are members of Bolton's AWSG. This has enabled effective joint working and sharing of knowledge and expertise.

Bolton Community Homes (BCH) are also an active member of the steering group and have worked at co-ordinating affordable warmth initiatives amongst social housing providers.

Private Rented Sector

With a high prevalence of poorly insulated, energy inefficient buildings, the Private Rented Sector has some of the biggest improvements to make. For example;

- The sector has the highest proportion of least energy efficient homes – 5.8% of G rated properties compared with 3.4% in owner-occupier.
- 20% of households in the private rented sector are fuel poor. ²⁴

DECC have in recent years embarked on closely regulating this sector. The Energy Act 2011 enables the Government to regulate to help ensure the take up of cost effective energy efficiency improvements in the Private Rented Sector:

- from April 2016, domestic landlords should not be able to unreasonably refuse requests from their tenants for consent to energy efficiency improvements, where financial support is available, such as the Green Deal and/or the Energy Company Obligation (ECO); and
- From April 2018, all private rented properties (domestic and non-domestic) should be brought up to a minimum energy efficiency standard rating, likely to be set at EPC rating "E".

²⁴ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/tackling/green_deal/gd_industry/private_rented/private_rented.aspx

In Bolton we have excellent links with landlord groups such as BARLO and the Northwest Landlord Association. These groups are members of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group and they actively promote schemes that are relevant to their landlords such as insulation, green loans.

Bolton's Affordable Steering Group has presented at several private landlord forums for example, BARLO, Northwest Landlord Association and Future2reality, to raise awareness of fuel poverty and local schemes e.g. insulation. These were successful and resulted in several landlords registering for home insulation through Bolton's insulation campaign.

We have actively worked with BARLO at providing incentives to landlords to assist fuel poor residents, e.g. by providing them with standby savers and energy monitors for their tenants. We have promoted the free energy advice telephone number to these groups who can then cascade the information to vulnerable tenants.

Pre-payment Meters

It is widely recognised that the most vulnerable of energy customers are those that pay via a prepayment meter as there is a risk of 'self-disconnection' and there may be debt attached to the meter. The AWSG has always worked towards helping those most at risk but with the rise of food poverty further action will be needed to monitor and lower the rates of 'self-disconnection' in these vulnerable households. For vulnerable customers who are not on alternative payment methods debt prevention will be a priority.

All Properties including 'hard to treat':

'Hard to treat' properties

'Hard to treat' properties tend to be old, and energy inefficient, and as the name suggests difficult to treat or make energy efficient. Solid wall insulation, often the most suitable measure to address hard to treat properties is very costly, too costly for a low income householder to consider to fund by themselves. However it is 'hard to treat' properties that are now most in need of energy efficient measures, with fuel prices rising and the cavity wall market becoming saturated. Previous Council led schemes have concentrated on initiatives for easy to treat properties that have been low cost to deliver such as cavity wall and loft insulation. It is difficult to identify 'hard to treat' properties (e.g. properties with a solid wall) in the private sector. In Bolton we envisage that at least one third of the properties fall into the definition of 'hard to treat.' Nationally there appears to be a shift in focus towards 'hard to treat' properties with the new emerging Green Deal and ECO.

Renewable Energies:

Solar photovoltaic installations:

With the growth of the renewable energy market in the UK and national incentives placed upon the adoption of renewable energies (e.g. Renewable Heat Incentive, Feed-in-tariff), renewable energies are emerging as a possible solution to cheaper and sustainable energy, an ideal solution for fuel poverty.

Data from DECC shows that Bolton is below the national average for number of domestic solar photovoltaic (PV) installations:

Bolton (Sep 2012) = 702 Installations. This is 113 LESS than the GB value mean of 815 Installations.²⁵

Reasons for this may be geographical and environmental. For example in the south of England sunnier weather may make solar PV a more attractive venture.

Apart from the initial set up cost which is often a considerable amount, renewable energy can be viewed as a route to address fuel poverty issues, as in the long run renewable energy can be a cost efficient way to keep warm and obtain

²⁵ http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/local_auth/interactive/domestic_solar/index.html

fuel etc. In recent years there have been various government incentives to encourage members of the public (i.e. private residents), and social housing providers to install renewable energy producers.

As a local authority we have not conducted a domestic solar PV project, or any other domestic renewable energy scheme, primarily due to financial constraints. It has also been difficult to deliver such projects on private properties, where as a local authority we do not own the properties; other issues have also included reduction of the national feed-in tariff incentive. We have liaised with social housing providers and have supported their renewable projects and where possible explored the possibilities of including private sector properties onto those projects. Bolton Council's Green loan scheme, delivered by Hoot, is an avenue by which Bolton private residents are able to access an interest free loan for energy efficient measures including renewables.

Funding

Funding has been secured for the affordable measures in 2013-14 and 2014-15 through Bolton Council funds.

It is essential for longevity of Bolton's affordable warmth initiatives that all viable avenues of funding are explored and secured where possible. For example national funds such as Warm Homes Healthy Discount and DECC local authority funds have been successfully obtained in the past from central government.

It is important to continue developing relations with local organisations to further develop local relations and to utilise local resources.

Chapter 9: Our Approach

This chapter summarises Bolton's current position in relation to the key objectives set out in Chapter 1 of this strategy, as well as what we aim to do to progress on those objectives.

What we have achieved so far

In 2005 Bolton Council launched Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy; it was produced through collaboration with Bolton's Primary Care Trust as well as other local organisations and partners, through Bolton's Affordable Warmth Steering Group. The strategy was pivotal in establishing in Bolton the need for affordable warmth and efforts to minimise fuel poverty. Consequently other local authorities, locally and nationally, have used Bolton's Strategy as a base for establishing their own strategies.

To date the aims, and actions of the 2005 strategy have been met largely, i.e. achieved or are on-going. Additional actions that support the strategy have also been achieved since 2005. We are now at a timely position to look at national changes, and local changes to see what needs to be addressed and achieved to further alleviate fuel poverty in Bolton and to assist those who are most vulnerable.

Objective 1)

Improve awareness and understanding of fuel poverty for residents in all tenures.

What we have done...

- Public events attended by all tenures, articles in the media, radio coverage, information easily accessible through leaflets, the internet, and via a free telephone service.
- Worked with several organisations to achieve this, e.g. Primary Care Trust, social housing providers, Energy Saving Trust, Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service, Age UK, this is not an exhaustive list.

What we will do...

- Continue on the above and reach out to residents who have previously been inaccessible, e.g. residents who are too vulnerable to attend public events, or who have not been targeted extensively e.g. schools.

- Utilise where possible new and upcoming social media to access groups who have previously not been accessed.
- Follow the new national fuel poverty strategy and its recommendations when it is published in 2013.

Objective 2)

Increase the Energy Efficiency of Bolton's private housing stock:

What we have done...

Fuel Poverty Areas in Bolton and targeting:

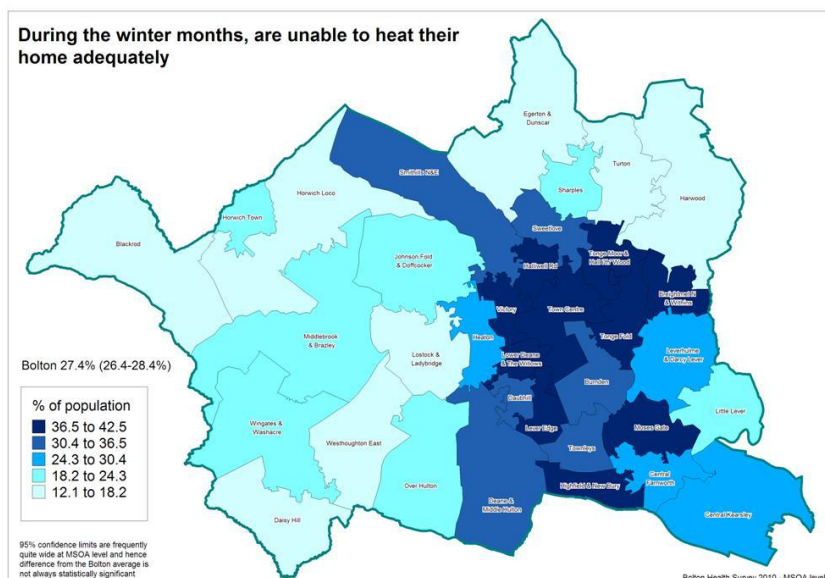
Previous areas targeted for insulation measures, have been areas of deprivation as highlighted by the index of multiple deprivation. This has been in lower super output areas. Following the saturation of these areas, the scheme expanded to borough wide.

What we will do...

Following recent data, as seen in the below map, future targeted efforts may take place at middle super output area level, and areas of poor decency, please see below details of private sector renewal.

Bolton Health Survey 2010:²⁶

The map below shows current levels of population that during the winter months are unable to heat their home adequately within Bolton at MSAO (Middle Super Output Area) level. This data has been taken from Bolton Health Survey 2010.



Private Sector Renewal

The Council is proposing to undertake a new approach to Private Sector Renewal focusing on small targeted areas of the worst condition private sector properties and ensuring that the properties are brought up a decent standard, moving away from the large scale group repair and environmental schemes that have been undertaken in the past. Using the evidence from the Private Sector Stock Condition Survey, health data, troubled Families and benefits data, clusters of properties will be identified that are occupied by vulnerable people and are non-decent. This new approach

²⁶ Office for National Statistics: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics 2010 data, release date 17 May 2012 Summary: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics (England only)

will allow us to pool current housing resources to tackle identified housing problems in these areas and will include targeting the Affordable Warmth programme (Better Behaving Boiler scheme, insulation etc.), Empty Homes Programme and Private Sector Renewal funding with activity by BARLO, Housing & Public Health and Bolton Care and Repair to ensure appropriate referrals are made to services. This would create decent, healthy and safe living conditions along with reduced fuel bills.²⁷

Target groups will be:

- Private residents on a low income (identifiable through means tested benefits).
- Private residents of long term ill health (who have credible evidence from their GP).
- Young families with lone parents on low incomes will be targeted; a specific plan is to be produced for this purpose.

Objective 3)

AGMA and national incentives

What we have done...

- Worked effectively with AGMA on GM affordable warmth/low carbon domestic initiatives, e.g. Get Me Toasty (insulation scheme), GM Fair Energy Campaign (collective energy switching). These collaborated campaigns have been fruitful in assisting fuel poor residents in Bolton by improving their thermal comfort and lowering their energy bills.
- Utilising national incentives, e.g. CERT which largely funded Bolton's borough wide insulation scheme.
- Actively encouraged and assisted, Bolton residents, (through Bolton Care and Repair) to apply for the former national Warm Front grant.

What we will do...

- Continue to work with AGMA on affordable warmth initiatives e.g. GM ECO initiative.
- Utilise national incentives that are available that will benefit fuel poor residents in Bolton.

Objective 4)

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System: Bolton Care and Repair

What we have done...

- Since the launch of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System in April 2011, over 500 fuel poor residents have benefited from the services provided (data is for the period April 2011 to December 2012).
(Please see page 43 of the appendix for further information).

What we will do...

- Continue to deliver and improve on this service provided to vulnerable private Bolton residents, through monitoring the referral system and developing it to suit the needs of customers.
- Continue to work closely with Bolton Council officers, AWSG, and Bolton Care and Repair staff, and other relevant external and internal bodies to ensure the smooth holistic working of the referral system, and to develop this further.

²⁷ Bolton Private Sector Stock Condition Survey 2011

Objective 5)

Maximise resources and opportunities for tackling fuel poverty

What we have done...

This has two elements:

i) Maximising resources for individual residents

- Assisted fuel poor residents to maximise on their own resources for example by providing advice on income maximisation through Bolton Care and Repair, Money Skills.

ii) Maximise resources for Bolton's collective Affordable Warmth programme

- We have been worked with different organisations in Bolton on affordable warmth projects, for example Citizens Advice Bureau, Bolton CVS, British Red Cross, Bolton Wise, Age UK, BCH, Bolton at Home, this list is not exhaustive. Through working with others we have been able to exceed labour resources, expertise and drive for affordable warmth projects in Bolton. This has proven hugely beneficial in assisting vulnerable residents. Without involvement from such groups certain projects may not have been feasible. For example the 'Hug in a Box' project (winter 2011/12) delivered 1000 boxes of winter essentials to vulnerable residents in Bolton to their own homes.
- We have utilised national funding where possible for example CERT, CESP, Warm Homes Healthy People Fund, DECC LA funds etc.

What we will do...

- With the impending Welfare reform (2013) it will be important to continue providing income maximisation advice to fuel poor residents and residents who are at risk of becoming fuel poor; to improve on this service e.g. by collaborating further with existing services in Bolton.
- Continue to nurture existing relations with organisations in Bolton and in Greater Manchester.
- Develop new relations to assist fuel poor residents in Bolton.
- Seek out new forms of funding which may assist our affordable warmth efforts.

Objective 6)

Co-ordination and development of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy

What we have done...

- Current strategy is the product of collaboration between Bolton Council, NHS Bolton and Bolton's Affordable warmth Steering Group.

What we will do...

- Continuing of this working relationship, through regular monitoring and review updates of the objectives and actions of the strategy.
- Evaluation of data:
 - An Affordable Warmth Research Task Group will be developed to present the Affordable Warmth Steering Group with relevant data gathered from the use of the most current definitions, tools and models linked to affordable warmth.

Main Objectives of the Group will be:

- To discuss the Hills report and corresponding definitions of fuel poverty and their effect on the Affordable Warmth strategy

- To discuss methods of data collection and identify those which are most relevant to the affordable warmth strategy
- To look at models for compiling all relevant data linked to fuel poverty and affordable warmth and which best suits the needs for access to this data across the relevant departments
- To compile reports and present relevant findings to the Affordable Warmth Steering Group

Glossary:

AGMA: Association of Greater Manchester Authorities

AWSG: Affordable Warmth Steering Group

DECC: Department of Energy and Climate Change

ECO: Energy Company Obligation

GMEAS: Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service

PCT: Primary Care Trust

Action Plan

This action plan sets out how Bolton Council and its partners will deliver this strategy and the outcomes that will be achieved.

Key Aims:

- 1. Improve awareness and understanding of fuel poverty for residents, in all tenures.**
- 2. Increase the energy efficiency of Bolton's private housing stock.**
- 3. Maintain and develop Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System, which is delivered by Bolton's Home Improvement Agency, Bolton Care and Repair.**
- 4. To adopt AGMA and national incentives/policies.**
- 5. Maximise resources and opportunities for tackling fuel poverty**
- 6. Ensure the co-ordination and development of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy.**

Key Abbreviations:

AGMA: Association of Greater Manchester Authorities

AW: Affordable Warmth

AWSG: Affordable Warmth Steering Group

BCH: Bolton Community Homes

C&R: Bolton Care and Repair

GMEAS: Greater Manchester Energy Advice Service

HECA: Home Energy Conservation Act

Objective 1:	Improve awareness and understanding of fuel poverty for residents, in all tenures.			
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
To define fuel poverty locally and within a national context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand DECC definition • Agree Bolton definition • Market Bolton definition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach that is relevant to Bolton 	AWSG	June 13
To have an annual AW programme of public events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted events and monitoring of events. • Inclusion at AW events of all sectors • Behavioural change incorporated into AW public events • Action plan for working with schools • Action plan for communicating with BME groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased AW awareness • AW Presence at public events • Innovative and effective AW events 	AWSG	On going
To develop awareness of AW through social media and traditional methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AW on twitter, internet sites • Up-to-date AW educational and promotional materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on AW easily accessible 	Public Health	On going
Develop and implement an AW behavioural change programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinated approach in Bolton • Incorporate income maximisation, health and energy advice, water efficiency • Communications with organisations where conflicting interests exist e.g. safe guarding children boards (correct temperatures for babies), Greater Manchester Police (house lights to prevent burglary) • Money Skills workshops and Money Mentors assisting fuel poor residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified approach of behavioural change projects in Bolton • Behavioural change projects collaborating with AWSG • Residents benefiting from behavioural change projects 	Public Health	On going

Objective 2:		Increase the energy efficiency of Bolton’s private housing stock.		
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
AW programme to link with the new private sector housing approach: ‘safe, warm and dry’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and monitor a delivery structure in conjunction with new approach • Address BME communities, and overcrowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A co-ordinated delivery approach 	Strategic Housing	On going
To assist vulnerable fuel poor residents with domestic retrofit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and development of schemes • Targeting of schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual AW programme 	Strategic Housing	On going
To address Bolton’s “hard to treat” private sector properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine Bolton’s approach to “hard to treat” housing • Identification of properties • Scale of problem and develop solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear vision on addressing hard to treat properties 	Strategic Housing	On going

Objective 3:		Maintain and develop Bolton’s Affordable Warmth Referral System, which is delivered by Bolton’s Home Improvement Agency, Bolton Care and Repair.		
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Develop Bolton’s AW referral system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure future funding • Monitoring and holistic development of the referral system • Updated customer questionnaire • Raised awareness of the AW referral system • Targeted approach established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased referrals • Excellent quality of service • Quarterly summary of AW schemes • AW programme produced annually 	Strategic Housing	On going
Data Task Group to be established.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to fuel poverty data • Combining of housing (IMD, Private Sector Stock Condition) data and health data • Access to Building Control data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data relevant to AW in Bolton easily available 	Public Health	On going

Development of an AW training programme for professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual summary of training conducted and its impact on referrals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased AW referrals 	Public Health	On going
To increase awareness of the health issues related to fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of AW issues amongst NHS staff • Post of Public Health Affordable Warmth Health Practitioner to be supported and sustained • Brief annual note of key NHS studies/findings linked to AW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased health referrals from NHS staff to the AW referral system 	Public Health	On going

Objective 4: To adopt AGMA and national incentives/policies.				
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Bolton instrumental in AGMA led initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton in AGMA groups • Contribute to development and delivery of AGMA initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton residents to benefit from AGMA initiatives 	Strategic Housing Public Health	On going
To incorporate national incentives and policy in Bolton's AW programme, e.g. ECO, Green Deal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton's approach to national initiatives determined • Incorporation of the approach into the AW Programme • Market the approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton residents benefiting from national incentives • Further investment into the AW programme through national incentives 	Strategic Housing	On going
To meet national HECA requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HECA report produced and monitoring facilities in place • Work with AGMA on the GM HECA report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bolton to have a HECA report, and involvement in the GM HECA report 	Strategic Housing	On going

Objective 5:		Maximise resources and opportunities for tackling fuel poverty.		
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Maximise partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of AWSG members and potential stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further developed AW network in Bolton, with support from key bodies 	AWSG	On going
Develop and implement a communications and marketing plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable residents adopting energy efficient changes, and contact with services, as a direct result of marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of the AW programme Increase in AW referrals 	AWSG	On going
Utilisation of free resources and application for additional funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual summary demonstrating additional funding sourced and received 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional sources of funding available for AW 	AWSG	On going

Objective 6:		Ensure the co-ordination and development of Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy.		
Task	Milestone	Outcome	Lead	Timescale
Develop monitoring and evaluation systems for the strategy and action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to date action plan Inclusive Strategy and action plan, co-ordinating AW efforts in Bolton 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A current and relevant AW action plan Regular AWSG meetings 	ASWG	On going

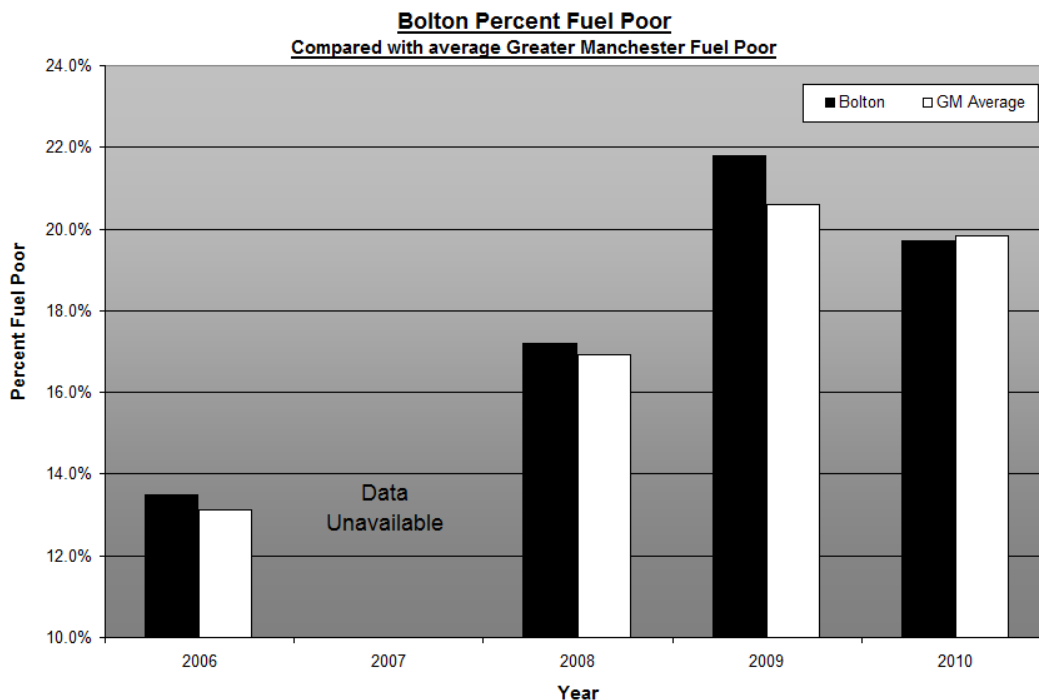
Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy

Appendix

2013 - 2018

Fuel Poverty

Bolton Fuel Poverty Compared to GM Fuel Poverty:²⁸



Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review: John Hills, March 2012

Below is a summary of the key essential points of Professor Hill's 232 page fuel poverty review:²⁹

Alternative: Low Income and High Costs indicator and the fuel poverty gap

The approach set out in the report captures households where required spending is higher than the median (typical) required levels and where spending this amount would reduce household income below the poverty line. The report finds that 7.8 million people in 2.7 million households were in this position in England in 2009, compared to 7.2 million people in 2.8 million households in 1996. On average the fuel poverty gap for each household was £415, or a total of £1.1 billion. The gap shows how badly fuel poverty affects those households who experience it. It has risen since 2003 as rising prices have increased bills and have pulled more people into fuel poverty.

This definition reflects the wording of the Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000, which states:

*"A person is to be regarded as living "in fuel poverty" if he [sic] is a member of a household living on a **lower income** in a home which cannot be kept warm at **reasonable cost**."*

The Act establishes a duty to produce a strategy setting out how the following objective will be met:

"As far as reasonably practicable persons in England or Wales do not live in fuel poverty."

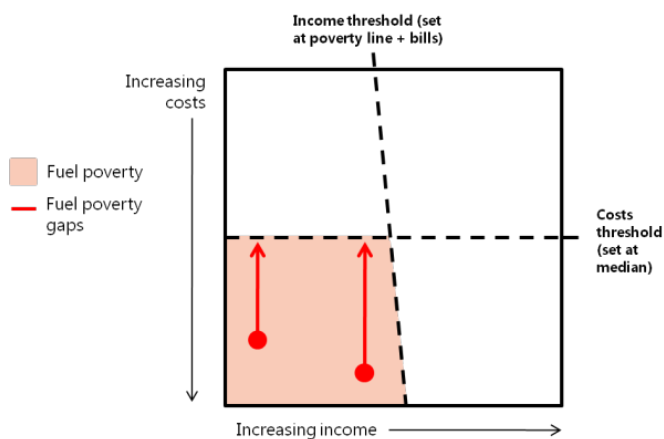
A fuel poor household is one that has both high modelled costs and low income.

The fuel poverty gap represents the amount a household's energy bill would need to be reduced by in order for them not to be in fuel poverty.

This provides an indication of the severity of the problem, both for individual households, and for the fuel poor as a whole.

²⁸ Office for National Statistics: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics 2010 data, release date 17 May 2012 Summary: Fuel Poverty sub-regional statistics (England only)

²⁹ Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Final Report of the Fuel Poverty Review: John Hills: CASE report 72, ISSN 1465-3001, March 2012



Together, the indicators show both the extent and depth of fuel poverty (rather than conflating them)

The fuel poverty gap provides a means for understanding who is worst affected by fuel poverty through the depth of their problem (for instance rural, off grid households have an average fuel poverty gap that is twice as high as the average fuel poverty gap for all households). An additional strength of the dual indicator approach is that as energy prices change, this impact is reflected both through an increase in the extent of the problem (through a change in the income threshold) as well as a change in the depth of the problem through the change in the gap.

Setting the thresholds for low income and high costs

Each threshold is adjusted annually, making the indicator **relative** over time. It tracks the position of each household compared to current norms and creates a kind of moving target. The extent of fuel poverty depends on how costs change for all households not just the fuel poor. This approach captures the risk that the poor could lose ground as housing improves in general.

Income threshold

Professor Hills recommends setting the income threshold using the official poverty line (60% of median equalised household income measured after housing costs have been deducted). Hills recommends making an adjustment for a household's fuel costs. This is because some households might be just above the official poverty line (DWP's Household's Below Average Income), but were they to spend the amount required to achieve a reasonable standard of warmth, they would be pushed below the poverty line. The income threshold is adjusted to include modelled fuel costs, which results in a poverty line that is slightly angled, reflecting the increased risk of poverty amongst those with higher fuel costs.

Hills also recommended that income should be measured after housing costs. This is because income spent on housing costs is not discretionary and is not available to be spent on energy.

Fuel poverty action groups such as the National Energy Action agree with his judgement in that an adjustment for fuel bills should be made. Households with a similar level of income face an unequal ability to turn income into warmth and many face barriers to improve their situation. As such, to some extent, energy expenditure shares some of the same characteristics as housing expenditure and does not represent a fully disposable element of a household's income.

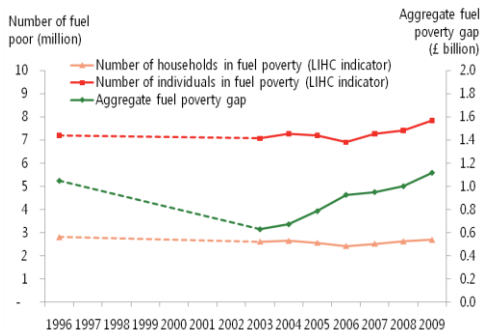
Energy costs

Hills recommends that the Government should set the reasonable costs threshold at the level of the contemporary median energy requirements for the population as a whole. The Hills proposal uses 100% of median costs. The key advantage of this approach is that over time the threshold will move, as it reflects improvements in energy efficiency and therefore costs, as well as reflecting changes in energy prices. As the energy efficiency of Low Income High Cost households is improved, the threshold will potentially shift upwards. This means that a small number of households which had previously been below the threshold (i.e. were deemed to have low costs), would be brought into fuel poverty for the first time. Using average energy costs, provides the clearest rationale for setting the threshold, on the basis that costs above those of a typical household are unreasonable. A feature of this approach is that it is likely that the households that are in the deepest fuel poverty will be the focus for policy interventions. As standards improve over time, other households will become the focus of efforts to tackle fuel poverty. This gradual change in the composition of fuel poverty will also help to inform the strategy for interventions.

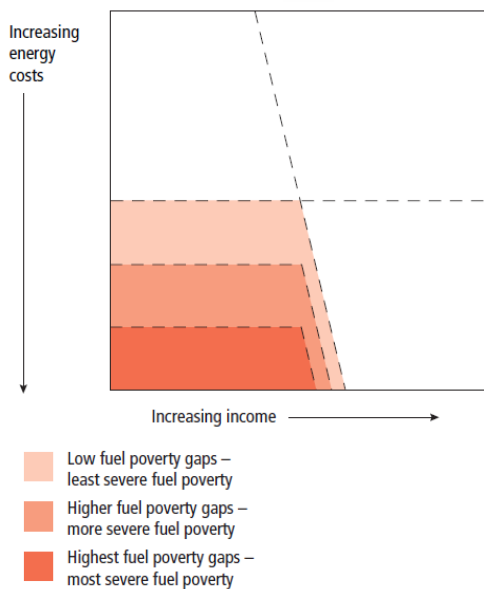
Fuel poverty under twin indicators:

1996-2009

Under the LIHC indicator, the number of fuel poor households has remained broadly stable over this period. The fuel poverty gap increased by three-quarters between 2003 and 2009.



Just over 50 per cent of the 2009 fuel poverty gap was accounted for by recipients of means-tested benefits living in houses with solid fuel heating or off the gas grid or solid walls or built pre-1945. Of course, some houses showing these characteristics are not fuel poor.



One of the features of the LIHC indicator is the way in which it can show the impact of policy choices. A criticism of the LIHC indicator is that the way in which it is constructed places climate change and energy efficiency goals and fuel poverty goals in conflict with one another. It is true that if the energy efficiency of households with a relatively higher income improved at a faster rate than those with a lower income this would lead to the numbers in relative fuel poverty increasing even though their absolute standard of living had not declined. This might at first glance seem to

create the wrong incentives but, as Professor Hills argues, it reflects two important factors. Firstly, the general risk that those on a lower income get left behind (reflecting the overall relative approach to measuring this problem). Secondly it allows us to understand how potential future policies may impact across all households, and to take account of these distributional concerns when devising policies.

The fuel poverty gap in particular allows us to understand which types of households are suffering from the deepest fuel poverty and so may be a priority for action.³⁰

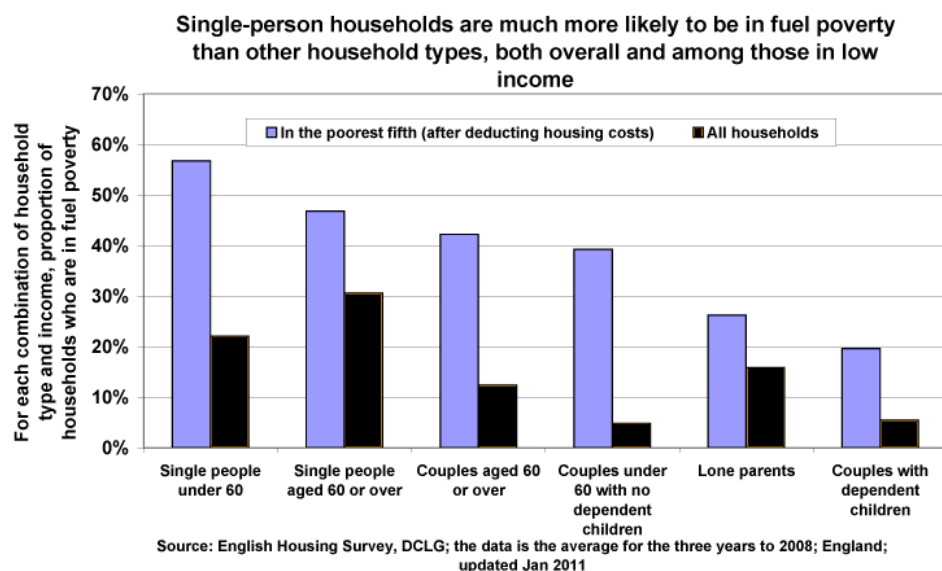
It is recommended by the review:

- That the Government should adopt a new indicator, fuel poverty definition, of the extent of fuel poverty under which households are considered fuel poor if:
 - They have required fuel costs that are above the median level; and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
- The Government should count the number of individuals in this position as well as the number of households they live in.
- The Government should adopt a new indicator of the depth of fuel poverty as represented by the average and aggregate fuel poverty gap, defined as the amounts by which the assessed energy needs of fuel poor households exceed the threshold for reasonable costs.

Using the fuel poverty gap:

- The fuel poverty gap can provide a bridge between targeting and the measurement of fuel poverty. Importantly, the fuel poverty gap also helps identify those who are deepest in fuel poverty who are priorities for assistance.

Lone Parent Families:

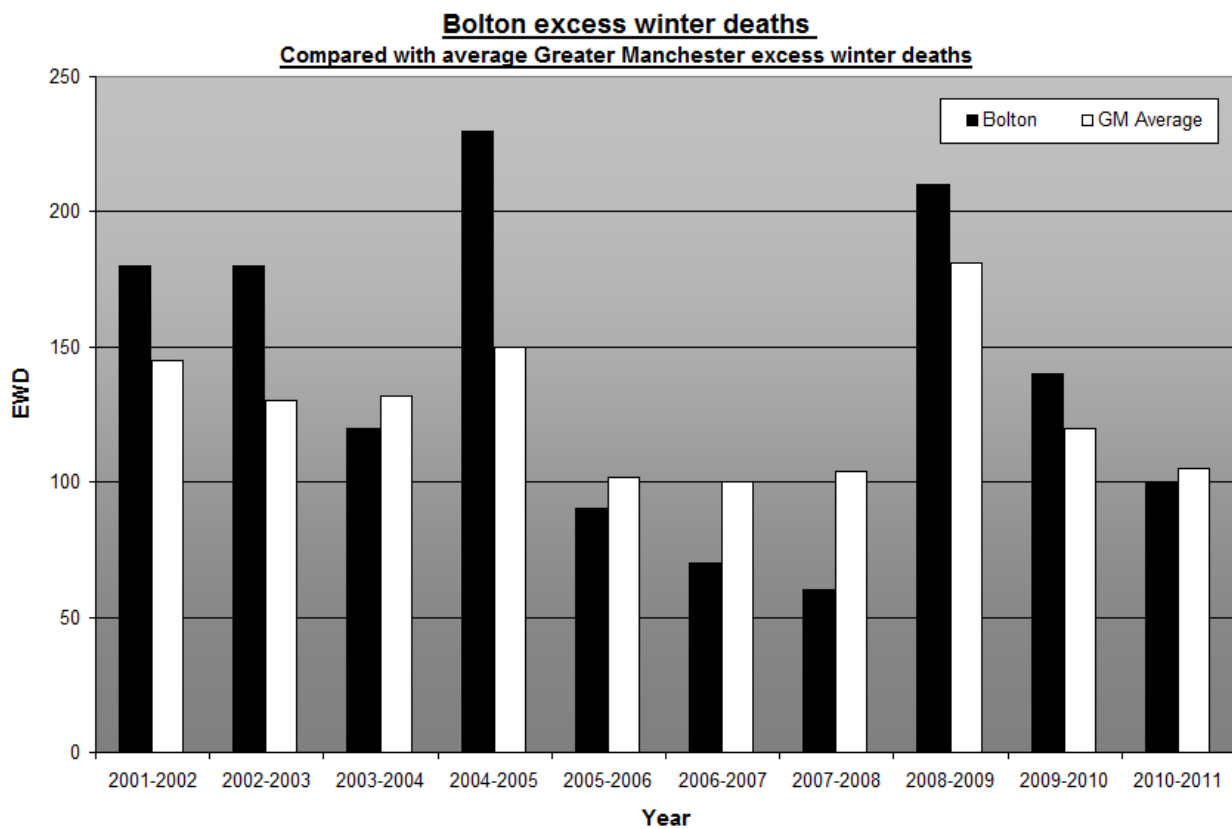


³⁰ National Energy Action: North West Fuel Poverty Forum, Policy Update, Diane Bland, www.nea.org.uk

Excess Winter Deaths

Excess Winter Death Statistics:³¹

Excess Winter Deaths	2010/11	2011/12
Bury	140	100
Bolton	120	110
Manchester	240	120
Oldham	50	100
Rochdale	130	100
Salford	50	10
Stockport	120	90
Tameside	60	110
Trafford	130	120
Wigan	160	190
Total	1,200	1,050



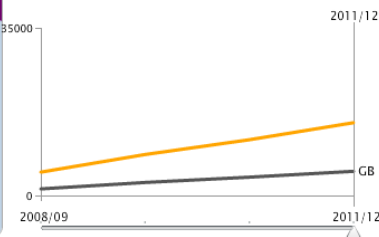
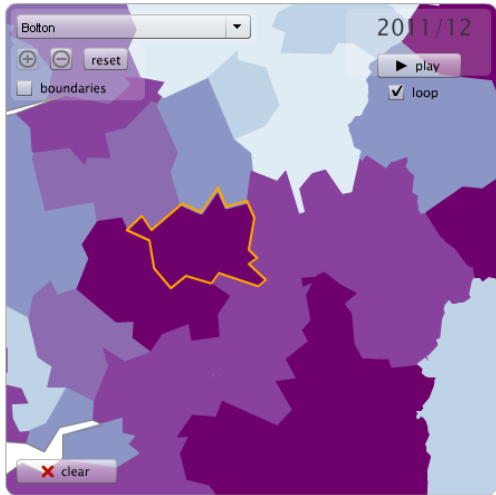
³¹ Office for National Statistics

Insulation

Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation, how Bolton compares to national figures:³²

CAVITY WALL AND LOFT INSULATION

Energy Statistics:
Cavity Wall Insulations
By 2009 Local Authority District

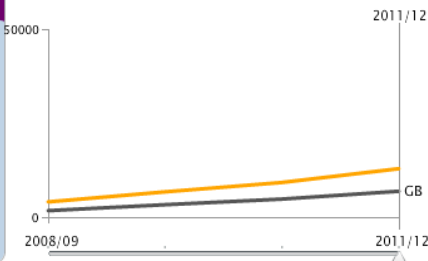
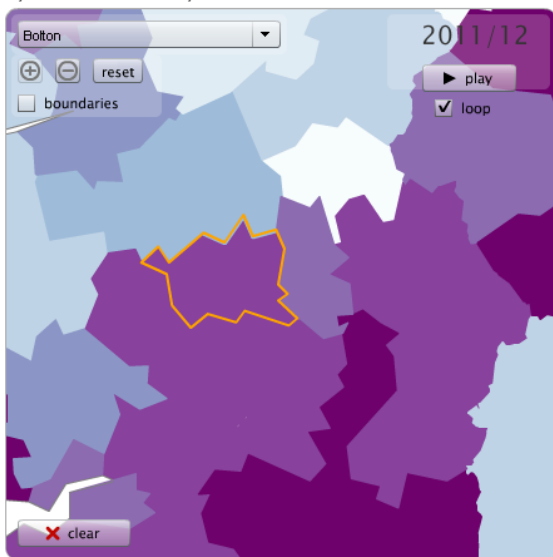


Source: Department for Climate Change
© Crown copyright and database rights 2012. Ordnance Survey 100019153.

Graphic by: ONS Data Visualisation Centre
Office for National Statistics, UK

CAVITY WALL AND LOFT INSULATION

Energy Statistics:
Loft Insulations
By 2009 Local Authority District



Source: Department for Climate Change
© Crown copyright and database rights 2012. Ordnance Survey 100019153.

Graphic by: ONS Data Visualisation Centre
Office for National Statistics, UK

³² http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/local_auth/interactive/insulation/index.html

Breakdown of recent figures, for 2011-12, April 2012 to Sept 2012, for Private sector properties through the “Get Me Toasty” Scheme:

2011-12**	No of measures (i.e. installations in private sector properties)	Total Annual Carbon Saving	Total Annual Financial Saving
Boilers -Better Behaving Boiler Scheme	153	186,660kg	£45,900
Cavity Wall	421 *	231,550kg	£63,585
Loft Virgin	230 *	165,600kg	£40,250
Top Ups	274 *	30,140kg	£6,850
Draught Proofing	31	3,410kg	£620
Warm Front Top Ups	9	10,980kg	£2,700

2012-13**	No of measures (i.e. installations in private sector properties)	Total Annual Carbon Saving	Total Annual Financial Savings
Boilers -Better Behaving Boiler Scheme (figs to and Inc. September 2012)	128	156,160kg	£38,400
Cavity Wall Toasty Scheme (figs to and Inc. July 2012)	213*	117,150kg	£28,755
Loft Virgin Toasty Scheme (figs to and Inc. July 2012)	195*	140,400kg	£34,125
Top Ups Toasty Scheme (figs to and Inc. July 2012)	152*	16,720kg	£3,800
Warm Front Top Ups	TBC	TBC	TBC

* These measures have been funded mainly through Carbon Emissions Reduction Target funds and approximately 20% from Bolton Council funding.

**Calculations based on conversion data provided by the Energy Saving Trust please see below:

Individual measure	Annual Carbon Dioxide Saving	Annual Financial Saving
Installation of an A rated boiler and removal of a G rated boiler. Old Boiler Rating: G (< 70%)	1,220kg	£300
Cavity wall insulation	Around 550kg	Up to £135
Loft insulation (0 to 270mm)	720kg	£175
Loft insulation (100 to 270mm)	110kg	£25
Draught Proofing (Filling gaps between floor and skirting board)	110kg	£20

AGMA and basic measures requirement:³³

From using the figures derived from the Energy Saving Trust's HEED database, Table 1 shows that there are over 530,000 remaining basic measures to be completed, and therefore approximately 400,000 measures needed to achieve the 75% target. These outstanding measures are mainly within the private sector stock.

Table 1: Number of basic measures to be completed across GM³⁴

	under-insulated lofts	virgin lofts	unfilled cavity walls	Total measures
Total number in GM	242,917	189,570	97,896	530,383
75% installation	182,187	142,177	73,422	397,787

In order to secure the utility commitment required (up to approx. £77m for GM), AGMA authorities were asked in winter 2010 to demonstrate financial commitment to the objective. Additional LA funds were requested to supplement Utility money/CERT to allow the resulting scheme to provide bigger subsidies to householders and therefore increase confidence that the measures can be realised in GM. Bolton Council supported this, based on our existing borough wide insulation scheme we calculated the costs we envisaged for Bolton and with agreement with AGMA we were able to keep a much lower financial amount and retain this amount until the works were completed and invoiced for.

The below table displays the number of measures to be achieved by GM local authorities including Bolton.³⁵

Local Authority	Basic Measures Target
Bolton **	38369
Bury	33491
Manchester**	56002
Oldham	31879
Rochdale	37085
Salford	39365
Stockport	49395
Tameside	29291
Trafford	33281
Wigan	49631
Total	397789

**These authorities are currently making the required level of contribution

³³ Report: AGMA, Wider Leadership Team, LCEA Housing Retrofit Programme, Delivery of Loft and Cavity Wall Insulation Targets, 8 November 2010.

³⁴ Energy Saving Trust 2010

³⁵ Energy Saving Trust 2010

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Referral System³⁶

Bolton Care and Repair Data:

2011/12

Total number of affordable warmth enquiries	383
Boilers completed	107
Advisory List of Contractors	23
Heating Grant	213
Hoot, Green Loans	19
Insulation	61
Home Repairs Assessment	5
Environmental Health	1
Fire Service	1
Handyperson	20
Warm Front	7
Joint Visiting Team	24
Energy Provider	1
Money skills	1
Temporary Heaters	24

April 2012 to December 2012

Total number of affordable warmth enquiries	186
Boilers completed	102
Advisory List of Contractors	5
Heating Grant	125
Hoot, Green Loans	3
Insulation	30
Home Repairs Assessment	0
Environmental Health	0
Fire Service	0
Handyperson	2
Warm Front	1
Joint Visiting Team	12
Energy Provider	0
Money skills	0
Temporary Heaters	29

N.B: The figures in the tables above potentially are considerably less than what the actual figures are. The reason for this is that the current database system (Femis) is limited in the forms and types of data that it can store. For

³⁶ Bolton Care and Repair Data, Surveyor Dawn Hulme.

example it is unable to link all the referrals that occur from a single enquiry; for example, there are no figures available for security measures above, this is because all these are recorded as a handyperson enquiry and not an affordable warmth enquiry - so if someone was to have a security measure done because they telephoned about needing a new boiler, the current database does not link those two enquiries.

Bolton Care and Repair deal with enquiries holistically, an enquiry may be received as 'boiler not working' but that one enquiry could result in any one of the following listed below, and would be recorded accordingly i.e. not necessarily as an affordable warmth enquiry.

Bolton Care and Repair

Bolton Care and Repair provide the following services for residents in Bolton:

Better Behaving Boiler Grant: Grant to assist boiler replacement and repairs for residents on relevant benefits or via a Health referral if Warm Front/ECO is not appropriate.

Handyperson Service: For smaller jobs around the home, e.g. joinery work, clearing out gutters, hanging curtain rails, putting together flat pack furniture, resealing round a bath, hanging/rehanging a door, fixing dripping tap, fitting a security light, fixing a faulty light switch, servicing/ small repair to a boiler/ heating system etc. or security measures

Home Repairs Assistance Grant: A grant for max of £5k to address essential works to the property i.e. rewire of the property, reroof, DPC, new external windows and doors.

Advisory List: A list of contractors that have signed a Code of Conduct and have relevant insurances, this is provided to customers who wish to self -fund works.

Older Peoples Help Desk: For small aids around the home i.e. grab rails, path rails, toilet frames, bath seats etc.

Additional services include: Social Worker assessment, for Careline a pendant based phone service for people who need immediate help i.e. if they have had a fall/ need assistance, and Telecare- for people with sensory or memory issues.

Disability Team: For an assessment by an Occupational Therapist for larger adaptations to the home, i.e. Stair lift, walk in/ wet room bathing facilities, extensions to the property etc.

Toasty: For Loft/ CW Insulation

ECO: National grants providing appropriate heating/energy measures to the property.

Joint Visiting Team: To assist people to apply for relevant benefits that they may be eligible for but not in receipt of.

Environmental Health: For problems with the property or neighboring properties, with the potential of utilising their enforcement powers.

Greater Manchester Fire Service: Fire safety advice and smoke alarms.

Bolton Wise: For help with maintaining their gardening and advice on heating tariffs.

Hoot: Credit Union for sensible lending or Green Loans.

Housing Advice: For advice on moving house.

Money Skills: Fuel debt/ best tariff advice, and energy efficiency workshops.

Energy Providers: For any relevant assistance they may be able to provide.

Consumer Direct: For relevant issues.

Home Energy Conservation Act

HECA Background

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 places a requirement on local authorities to issue reports to national government on the status of their plans to implement energy efficiency measures in the residential housing sector. The request is made in the context of the roll-out of new national efficiency measures such as the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligations (ECO's), where local authorities are encouraged to take a formative role to deliver local investment and jobs, lower fuel bills and reduce emissions.

The reports must set out the local authorities' energy efficiency ambitions and priorities, measures that take advantage of the national financial assistance being made available, measures to implement improvements based on a street-by-street roll out, and a time frame for delivery with identified local and national partners. Joint-reports, issued between a group of borough, district and local authorities in a certain area, would also be acceptable. The requirement of a public, brief report on progress can be seen as an opportunity to effectively communicate the efforts of the local authority, and/or to identify gaps where financially viable opportunities exist to improve local authority performance on energy efficiency into the future.

The requirements

The Climate Change Act 2008 sets legal requirements for the UK to reduce climate change causing emissions. The government recently published the national Carbon Plan (Dec 2011), the governments implementation strategy to meet these reduction targets. In addition, the UK fuel poverty strategy (2001) set the target of eradicating fuel poverty in England by 2016. A third piece of legislation, the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, remains in place and requirements on local authorities still exist within this act. The main requirement laid out by the government is the preparation of a progress report, produced by March 2013, and at 2 year intervals thereafter until 2027. The report must be available electronically, for local people, with a link sent to the DECC Secretary of State showing this is the case, by 31 March 2013.

National government support on offer

From the outset, the government state their support of a decentralised approach:

“the government is committed to LA’s setting their own priorities, ambitions and any related targets as they are best placed to assess their local needs”

But they remind them that, under the terms of the HECA, *“authorities are required by section 4(3) of the Act to have regard to this guidance”*.

They list a number of national drivers for action in the residential sector to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions:

The Green Deal and Energy Company Obligations (ECO’s)

The government states that it will support local authorities by providing incentives to maximise area-based roll out of the Green Deal, promote local authority plans to deal providers and energy suppliers, and develop good practice guidance along with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG).

Feed-in tariffs

Renewable heat incentive (summer 2013)

Energy performance certificates (EPC’s)

Minimum band E efficiency rating for private sector rented accommodation by 2018 (Energy act)

Smart meters in every home by 2019

Zero carbon standard required in every new-build by 2016

Requirements of the progress reports

The reports should detail energy conservation measures that will significantly improve energy efficiency and that are “practicable and cost-effective”. In particular, three areas should be covered:

1. Energy efficiency ambitions and priorities

Ambitions could take the form of targets embedded within a carbon reduction plan or similar. Information on how fuel poverty is to be tackled should be included, especially how Bolton will target fuel poor households, and take advantage of the affordable warmth and carbon saving communities components of ECO’s. We should also consider the role of energy efficiency in meeting wider strategic priorities. For example, what could be the role of local health and wellbeing boards, local health partners, or existing powers under the housing health and safety rating system, in supporting these ambitions and priorities?

2. Measures that take advantage of the financial assistance on offer

The government recently announced that seven cities (Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham and Sheffield) have been awarded money to kick-start the Green Deal in their areas, as a result of their strong proposals to cut carbon emissions. Local authorities are asked to consider how revenue from the green deal can boost local investment and growth. The report should detail:

The role the local authority will play in the Green Deal (e.g. Provider/Partner/Promoter)

The number of households it could potentially help and how these will be targeted

How these plans will help to tackle fuel poverty

3. Measures that implement improvements on a street-by-street basis

The government states that detailed, well developed area-based plans will be attractive to commercial Green Deal providers. This will require partnership with social housing associations and community organizations. There may also be potential for synergies between the ECO carbon saving communities obligations: which mandates energy suppliers to deliver energy efficiency measures in the most deprived areas of Britain (using index of multiple deprivation), and the Green Deal, which could be used in tandem to create area-based improvements. It is stated that reports should detail a timeframe for delivery and an identification of the national and local partners that will help with delivery.

Resources available to Local Authorities

A number of resources are detailed that could be useful to local authorities in preparing their reports and implementing energy efficiency improvements.

Data sources at the local level available through DECC/ONS:

Fuel poverty statistics

Data on energy consumption, CO₂ emissions, cavity wall, loft insulation and domestic solar PV installations

CO₂ statistics by Local Authority/Region