

Home Energy Conservation Act 2023 Report

Review of spending period 01/04/2021 - 31/03/2023

Introductory Questions

1. Name of Local Authority

South Cambridgeshire District Council

2. Type of Local Authority

District Council

3. Name, job title and email address of official submitting report

Ellie Haines, Climate and Environment Development Officer, ellie.haines@scamb.gov.uk

Headline and Overview

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

Yes

No

5. If yes, please provide a link.

Although there is not a standalone strategy, carbon reduction and energy efficiency measures for domestic properties are referenced in the Council's Zero Carbon Strategy: [<https://www.scambbs.gov.uk/media/15058/scdc-zero-carbon-strategy-web.pdf>], and reference is made to improving energy efficiency and implementing carbon reduction measures in the Council's Asset Management Strategy: [<https://www.scambbs.gov.uk/media/19858/scdc-asset-management-strategy-2021-2026.pdf>].

6. If no, are you planning to develop one, and in what timeframe?

- Yes, within 1 year
- Yes, within 2 years
- Yes, within 3 years +
- No development plans

7. In the last 2 years, what has been the cost (or estimated cost) of your energy efficiency and/or carbon reduction initiatives, schemes and services? Please consider the total cost of running and administering the scheme(s). Please input 0 if no schemes or initiatives has been implemented.

In the financial year 2022/23, £339,000 was spent on initiatives to improve energy efficiency and implement carbon reduction, and in the financial year 2023/24, £364,000 will be spent. This includes the work of the Climate and Environment team, whose responsibility it is to implement carbon reduction across the Council and covers employee costs, grant funding schemes and the running of several other initiatives. In addition, grant funding was received under government domestic energy efficiency schemes, including LAD1b and Sustainable Warmth. The administrative expenditure for these projects, including staffing and administrative costs, were £13,638.40 for LAD1b, £11,726.89 for LAD3, and £38,136.83 for HUG1.

8. Which, if any, of the following outcomes have been achieved through your energy efficiency and/or carbon initiatives, schemes and services? Please select all that apply.

- Energy savings

- Carbon savings
- Job creation
- Increased business competitiveness
- Alleviation of fuel poverty
- Improved health outcomes
- None of the above
- Other

Consumer Advice and Information

9. Do you provide or promote any advisory services to consumers on how to save energy?

- Yes
- No

10. If yes, please select all that apply

- Local Authority website
- Local advisory service
- 'Find ways to save energy in your home' (formerly Simple Energy Advice) [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website
- 'Find ways to save energy in your home' [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) phonenumber
- Leaflets
- Social media
- Local Energy Hubs

- We also publish and promote guidance on making historic homes more energy efficient, and work with charities such as Cambridge Carbon Footprint to share information on how to save energy.

Local Retrofit Supply Chain

11. Have you conducted any assessment or analysis to understand the existing capacity in your local supply chain to support the decarbonisation of buildings by 2050?

Yes

No

12. If you answered yes, please summarise any specific bottlenecks (or provide a link if this information has been published).

As part of the work of the Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership, the procurement of a retrofit framework involved market analysis which included market testing and discussions with stakeholders in order to understand some of the challenges facing the industry. Bottlenecks have included: retrofit coordinator capacity; installer capacity to support self-funded work by residents and wider net zero aspirations; the required increase in lead management and sub-contractor arrangements when transitioning from single measure approach to a multiple measure approach; the short lead in time given for the industry to adapt to changes in Government energy efficiency grant schemes; the short lead in time given for the introduction of the updated PAS standards; and the need for a longer-term turnover of work to enable greater training and apprenticeship opportunities to grow the industry.

13. Which, if any, of the following actions are you taking to upskill and/or grow your local retrofit installer supply chain?

Supporting training provision at local training providers

Supporting FE colleges to improve facilities or train trainers or otherwise enable better delivery of retrofit

Providing installer networking opportunities or other business support for growing companies.

Careers advice or similar involving local businesses doing schools outreach to encourage young people into the sector.

None of the above

Other

14. Do you provide advice for your residents and small businesses about how to pick an installer business or how to avoid being mis-sold inappropriate improvements?

Yes

No

15. Has there been any Trading Standards activity against energy efficiency or home retrofit businesses in your area due to mis-selling or otherwise poorly advising consumers about retrofit measures?

Yes – there has been action taken on a regular basis

Yes – but rarely

No – resourcing constraints have curtailed potential activity

No – we are not aware of any issues

16. If you received funding under Local Authority Delivery, Home Upgrade Grant or Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, did availability of PAS 2030:2019 or MCS certified and TrustMark registered supply chain affect your ability to deliver?

Yes

No

17. If you answered yes, please can you tell us which parts of the supply chain were particularly affected (please select all that apply)?

- Installers of insulation
- Installers of windows/doors
- Installers of heat pumps
- Retrofit assessors
- Retrofit coordinators
- All of the above
- Other

18. If you answered yes to question 16 please can you tell us, what actions did you take to overcome those barriers (please select all that apply)?

- Marketing to drive supply chain interest
- Use of frameworks or a local DPS to reach more businesses
- Supporting training and upskilling more generally
- Using a main contractor and requiring them to source suitably certified supply chain (either through contracting or training up their own staff)
- Delivering in-house e.g. by upskilling existing social housing maintenance teams, directly employing retrofit coordinators etc
- Other

Social Housing Decarbonisation

19. Did you apply to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.1?

- Yes, and successful in securing funding
- Yes, and not successful in securing funding

No

Don't know

20. Which, if any, of the following motivated you to apply for SHDF Wave 2.1?
Please select all that apply.

Financial support for retrofit

Technical support for retrofit

Tenant needs

Expectations of future energy performance regulations

Other

21. Which, if any, of the following barriers prevented you from applying to SHDF Wave 2.1?

Application window too short

Too much information needed at application

Don't own enough stock

Not enough capability

Too Costly

Retrofit work is not a priority

Not enough information

Don't know

Other

22. Have you carried out/planned to carry out any retrofit work in absence of SHDF funding?

Yes

No

Don't know

23. If yes, how is this funded/how would this be funded?

Internal funding

Funding from other Government schemes

Don't know

Other

24. If no, what is/are the main reason(s) for not planning to carry out any retrofit work? Please select all that apply.

Lack of funding

Lack of internal resource

Lack of capacity

Lack of technical support

Retrofit work is not a priority

Don't know

Other

25. How many of your social housing partners are you aware applied for the SHDF?

NA

Domestic Private Rented Sector (PRS) Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) Regulations

26. Do you enforce the PRS MEES Regulations in domestic tenancies

Yes

No

27. Do you use the PRS MEES Exemption Register?

Yes

No

28. Are you aware of the PRS MEES draft toolkit for supporting local authorities?

Yes, and I've used it

Yes, but I haven't used it

No

29. In the past 2 years, how many domestic private rented properties have you engaged with in respect to enforcement of the PRS MEES Regulations?

Please enter the amount /estimated amount.

No domestic private rented properties have been engaged directly. Officers check the Energy Performance Certificates for every housing inspection carried out with a view to determining compliance with the PRS MEES Regulations. If the EPC is F or G this will be followed up.

30. In the past 2 years, how many domestic private rented properties have you found to be non-compliant?

Please enter the amount /estimated amount.

0

31. In the last 2 years, how many non-compliant properties have been improved to EPC Band E after you have engaged with them?

Please enter the amount /estimated amount.

0

32. How many compliance notices have you issued in the past 2 years for non-compliance of the PRS MEES Regulations?

Please enter the amount /estimated amount.

0

Green Home Finance

33. What programmes, if any, do you have to promote domestic energy efficiency improvements for those who are able to pay? Please provide links to any relevant online materials.

We primarily promote domestic energy efficiency improvements for those who are able-to-pay through the Action on Energy initiative [<https://www.actiononenergycambs.org/>]. This involves sharing routes for support for able-to-pay residents such as a retrofit guide [<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/11676/retrofitting-your-home-report.pdf>] on making energy efficiency improvements to different housing archetypes, and links to organisations which provide advice and case studies on retrofit, such as the Cambridge Carbon Footprint Open Eco Homes programme [<https://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/open-eco-homes/>]. In addition,

through the procurement of a framework of installers to deliver grant funded retrofit work, this also identified installers who are able to support able-to-pay work.

34. Do you take any steps to raise awareness of the availability of private financing options (such as green mortgages) to fund retrofit works?

- Yes
- No, but we have plans to do this in the future
- No

35. If yes, please include links to any relevant online materials.

NA

36. Do you refer homeowners interested in energy efficiency to retail lenders offering green finance products?

- Yes
- No, but we have plans to do this in the future
- No

Fuel Poverty

37. Does your Local Authority have a Fuel Poverty Strategy?

- Yes
- No

38. How do you identify fuel poor households? Please select all that apply and provide additional information if possible.

- Used local data sets on energy efficiency/housing
- Used local data sets on household income
- Campaigns to encourage potential households to reach out

Although we don't have a standalone Fuel Poverty Strategy, tackling fuel poverty is a key part of a number of different strategies within the Council, including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, and the Asset Management Strategy. We engage with local health networks. In addition to this, we make the most of internal networks, collaborating with other officers to maximise the use of available information. We also engage with external organisations, including the Home Improvement Agency, the Citizen's Advice Bureau and the Local Energy Advice Partnership.



39. What actions are you taking to reduce fuel poverty in your area? Please select all that apply and provide additional information if possible.

- Delivery of government wide schemes such as the Home Upgrade Grant or Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- Actions to increase financial support to low income or vulnerable

In order to reduce fuel poverty, we are undertaking several actions to share information on improving energy efficiency in housing and minimising energy costs. This involves attending external in-person events such as library drop-ins and local home energy events. We also communicate with residents through channels including social media, newsletters and the council-wide magazine. We work with officers from across the Council, such as the Cost-of-Living Officer and the Income Maximisation officer, to share such information. We work with external organisations to share information, such as Green Energy Switch through the Local Energy Advice Partnership, Connected for Warmth, the Warm Hubs, and AgeUK.



40. Does fuel poverty interlink with your local authority's overall Carbon Reduction Strategy?

- Yes
- No

41. If yes, please can you explain how it does this?

The Zero Carbon Strategy makes direct reference to the importance of providing support to households who are vulnerable and low income. In this way, we ensure that we are able to support those who are struggling to afford heating. In our own housing stock, we are replacing inefficient heating systems with more efficient ones, such as air source heat pumps.

42. If no, is this something you might consider doing or are there barriers to doing this?

NA

Local Authority Delivery

43. If your local authority did not apply for funding from the Local Authority Delivery scheme, please indicate which barrier(s) prevented you from applying.

- lack of capacity
- lack of capability
- lack of awareness
- Other

44. Does your local authority have access to good quality housing data for on-gas properties?

- Yes
- No

45. If no, please specify what is lacking.

Although the Council has access to a certain amount of data available from datasets which are available free of charge, these data sets do not provide detail on property-level data on existing measures and energy supply. Information required to target properties is currently drawn together from a number of different sources which are often not up to date. Furthermore, these data sets are often not consistent with each other showing conflicting characteristics at a high level.

Home Upgrade Grant

46. If your local authority did not apply for funding from the Home Upgrade Grant, please indicate which barrier(s) prevented you from applying.

- lack of capacity
- lack of capability
- lack of awareness
- Other

47. Does your local authority have access to good quality housing data for off-gas properties?

- Yes
- No

48. If no, please specify what is lacking

Although we have good access to data sets provided by external organisations free of charge, this data lacks consistency with national-level scheme-wide data (e.g. IMD decile data). We must draw information from many sources with differing levels of granularity, some of which are not up to date. Up to date data sets at property level are needed to ensure that specific households are fully aware of the support available.

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

49. Did your local authority have a published Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility under ECO3, during 2022?

Yes

No

50. Please answer the following questions to help us to understand LA Flex delivery in more detail during the course of 2022:

How many declarations were issued for low-income vulnerable households during ECO3?

4

51. How many declarations were issued for Fuel Poor households under ECO3?

1

52. How many declarations were issued for in-fill under ECO3?

0

53. What was the highest income cap published in your Sol?

£30,000 net of taxes for a couple.

54. If you have used an income over £30k gross, what reason did you give?

NA

55. Did you charge for declarations to be signed?

Yes

No

56. If so, please state how much and how you decided on this figure.

NA

57. ECO4 commenced in July 2022, has your local authority published a Statement of Intent (Sol) for ECO flexibility eligibility under ECO4?

Yes

No

58. If 'No' are there any specific barriers preventing you, from publishing and participating in the scheme?

NA

59. Do you directly engage with energy suppliers either for ECO Flex or other domestic energy efficiency schemes?

Yes

No

60. If yes, please provide the name of the scheme and indicate whether this is an LA, Supplier, DESNZ or other organisational run scheme (please specify)

NA

61. Which route(s) do you envisage submitting referrals through under ECO4 Flex?
Select all that apply

All four routes available

Route 1

Route 2

Route 3

Route 4

Smart Metering

62. The following questions refer to smart metering advice. Please provide any additional details where possible.

Do you provide smart metering advice when implementing energy efficiency improvements (including through grant schemes such as the Energy Company Obligation and the Home Upgrade Grant) in residential accommodation?

Yes

No

63. If no, please explain why not, and what plans will be put in place to implement this.

NA

64. Do you encourage landlords to promote smart meter uptake, e.g., landlord licencing schemes.

Yes

No

65. If no, please explain why not, and what plans will be put in place to implement this

This is not routinely undertaken; however, it may be something officers mention in the course of their work if this topic is discussed.

66. Do you arrange for smart meters to be installed by energy suppliers in vacant social housing premises?

Yes

No

67. If no, please explain why not, and what plans will be put in place to implement this.

In the Council's social housing, a void management service is used for utilities. This service manages the meters and accounts as needed. The meter fitters will not work at an empty property and resource challenges affect the ability to attend them as they may delay void turnaround.

We were part of a trial to implement smart meters at void properties, which would be our preferred route. Unfortunately, this trial has been postponed.



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