



Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)

Summary Report 2019

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Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) requires local authorities in England to report on energy conservation measures to improve the energy efficiency of residential accommodation within their area. This includes measures to improve properties in the owner-occupier, private rented sector, and social rented sector.

The most recent report was submitted in May 2019 and this report provides a summary of that submission.

The report explains:

- What our main schemes are to promote carbon reduction or energy efficiency, who is involved and the impact at a societal and economic level.
- How we engage consumers and businesses to promote awareness of energy efficiency.

Service Partners

Local partnerships help us to get the best value from our resources for residents of Mendip. Our key partner is the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) who deliver the home energy advice service across Mendip on behalf of the Council.

We work through the CSE with:

- Western Power Distribution providing energy advice to people on the priority service register
- Somerset Independence Plus (SIP), our Home Improvement Agency, to target organisations to increase referrals and signpost to services
- GP surgeries and town councils through targeted outreach work
- Health Connectors (Health Connections Mendip) who signpost to available services

We also work in partnership with the Heart of the South West Growth Hub who provide guidance on a wide range of issues including energy efficiency. We support local events and initiatives such as advice for small businesses in exploring energy efficiency opportunities and changes to national policy and regulation.

Mendip Council offers grants and loans to owner occupiers to make their homes safer, healthier and warmer which includes assistance towards new boilers, insulation and windows. Loans are provided through our partners Wessex Resolutions CIC, and can in addition be used for renewable energy solutions and installations such as solar panels. For privately rented accommodation, landlords can access loans towards improvement works and we will enforce improvements for significant Excess Cold hazards.

We link in with Somerset Independence Plus (our local home improvement agency) whose case workers undertake home visits, link with people who receive Disabled Facilities Grants and respond to referrals from multiple service providers including health Connectors.

Mendip Home Energy Advice Service

The CSE Home Energy Advice Service for Mendip offers impartial free advice and information to our residents through a Freephone advice line. To alleviate the impact of fuel poverty, our delivery partner, the CSE, link with service providers including Western Power Distribution to target vulnerable people on the priority service register. The CSE provide information and undertake home visits to assist potentially vulnerable people. The service also promotes the Elderly and Disabled Peoples project and provides information on smart meters.

To raise awareness of energy efficiency measures and available services the CSE undertake promotional activities for Mendip through the Safe and Warm Somerset project, for example:

- Dedicated website
- Leaflets
- Self-addressed envelope referrals leaflet
- Posters and advertising through GP surgery screens waiting areas

Mendip Home Energy Advice Service Outcomes

The most common outcomes were:

- Energy saving measures made following advice
- Contribution from the ECO scheme for insulation and heating upgrade
- £121 average saving per customer
- Maximising benefit entitlement created the highest savings

Financial savings by type 2018/19

| Category | Count | Saving |
|--|-------|-------------------|
| Installation of energy saving measure | 15 | £4725.70 |
| ECO contribution | 13 | £6392.97 |
| Behaviour Change | 10 | £955 |
| Warm Home Discount | 8 | £1120 |
| Water company discount or saving measure | 8 | £771 |
| Tariff switch | 7 | £1896 |
| Benefit entitlement | 3 | £7079.20 |
| Total | | £22,939.87 |

Our Strategic Approach

Energy Efficiency, carbon reduction and fuel poverty are important issues in Mendip.

ECO Flex Statement of intent

The Council has an Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent to support the delivery of national fuel poverty targets to improve the Energy Performance Certificate ratings of private households in fuel poverty, including owner occupiers, private landlords and private tenants.

Climate emergency declaration

In February 2019 the Council declared a climate emergency renewing and extending its commitment to a number of measures and aims:

1. Declare a 'Climate Emergency';
2. To make best endeavours, using its powers and resources, including both financial and officer time, to enable the district of Mendip to be carbon neutral by 2030;
3. Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;
4. Work with other councils and governments to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C;
5. Continue to work with partners across the district and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;
6. Commit £100K to fund action in the scoping and delivery of the District Council's Climate Emergency 2030 commitment.

A structure is also being put in place with our partners to develop and resource a Climate Change Strategy for Somerset.

Strategy and policy

Energy Efficiency and Carbon reduction are reflected in strategy and policy at a county and district level.

- Somerset Housing Strategy 2019-2023

Priority 5 Creating sustainable homes and places in Somerset:

- The consideration of new housing developments will place sustainability at the heart of decision making;
- More homes will be provided that are healthy and affordable to run, integrating low carbon design and resilience to the predicted impacts of climate change.

We will develop an action plan to deliver the objectives in Mendip. Our plan will include actions to promote energy efficiency and sustainability in social housing new build design and encourage Registered Providers to increase standards in energy efficiency and carbon reduction, reducing fuel poverty in affordable housing.

➤ Mendip Local Plan

We have a policy statement in our Local Plan on sustainable design in new developments which must demonstrate that they:

- Incorporate all practical measures to achieve energy efficiency through siting, layout and design;
- Maximise opportunities for:
 - The use of sustainable construction techniques
 - The use of sustainable drainage systems
 - Renewable energy generation on site