

Affordable Warmth Strategy

Making a difference to the energy efficiency of homes, affordability of energy and health and welfare of Kirklees residents.



Kirklees Affordable Warmth Strategy

Kirklees Affordable Warmth Strategy consists of four themed action plans on Awareness Raising, Finance, Health and Housing to tackle all aspects of fuel poverty.

The five key principles cementing the plan through partnership working are:

1. Secure high-level, consistent, and long-term commitment to the eradication of fuel poverty.
2. Establish what services and activity already exist.
3. Develop a simple, streamlined affordable warmth referral process.
4. Develop co-ordinated partnership working for organisations engaged in the process of securing affordable warmth for all.
5. Secure funding and resources to help organisations deliver our affordable warmth objectives.

We have developed specific programmes and initiatives to ensure we meet the following objectives:



Awareness Raising

- Improve the understanding of affordable warmth amongst all our named partner organisations working in Kirklees.
- Develop mechanisms to provide easy access to information, services and support for members of the public
- Provide residents with more information on energy bills, tariffs, and payment options.

Finance

- Raise awareness about the availability of advice on benefits and grants.
- Increase the take-up of benefits and grants.
- Promote financial literacy.
- Develop mechanisms for access to economic energy tariffs, payment options and hardship funds

Health

- Target assistance to vulnerable groups and individuals who may be in fuel poverty or at risk specifically:
 - Older people
 - People with disabilities
 - People with specific long term illnesses
 - Patients leaving hospital
 - Children and families with targeted, complex and acute needs
- Ensure health based fuel poverty advice is accessible to all.



and Housing

- Assist private sector landlords to incorporate energy efficiency measures into properties.
- Assist social housing landlords to implement best practice on energy efficiency.
- Target private sector properties likely to need energy efficiency measures.
- Improve householders understanding of heating systems to ensure their efficient use.
- Improve the energy efficiency standard of all housing (as far as practicable).
- Implement the use of renewable and sustainable technologies to tackle fuel poverty where best practice.

The Affordable Warmth Strategy was adopted by Kirklees Council in March 2007. Many of the tasks detailed in the plan are now underway including:

- Launch of the Kirklees Warm Zone – a 3 year project offering free insulation to every suitable home across Kirklees.
- A priority referral mechanism to target vulnerable households with very serious health issues.
- Gas servicing of heating appliances for vulnerable households.
- A toolkit to pinpoint the most fuel poor and households with the greatest needs as quickly as possible.
- Information and briefings for front line workers.

Why do we need an Affordable Warmth Strategy?

In Kirklees we estimate that between 35,000-45,000 households are in Fuel Poverty. We want to ensure every home in Kirklees can afford to heat their home.

What is Fuel Poverty?

Fuel Poverty means that people can not afford to pay their energy bills and heat their homes properly. The Government says that if anybody is spending more than 10% of their household income on energy bills then they are in fuel poverty.

Why does it happen?

There are many reasons why people find that they are unable to heat their homes properly or pay for the energy they need. Some include:

- The way many British homes have been built mean they are not well insulated and easily lose heat energy.
- Energy prices continue to rise.
- Many people are on low incomes and do not claim the financial support, allowances and benefits, which they are entitled to.

Why does it matter?

Every year in the UK many households get into fuel debt, they simply can not afford to pay their energy bills.

Cold damp properties lead to further disrepair, and may create further risks for the resident.

A number of serious health issues are made worse or put a householder at risk through cold, damp houses.

Who has responsibility for resolving these problems?

The Affordable Warmth Strategy brings together partners from statutory, voluntary and community organisations and the private sector to work towards eradicating fuel poverty.

Partner Organisations

Adult Services (Kirklees Council)
Age Concern
Anchor Trust Housing
Anchor Trust Safe and Warm
Castle and Minster Credit Union
Children and Young People's Services (Kirklees Council)
Citizen Advice Bureau – South Kirklees
Department of Works and Pensions
Economic Development Service (Kirklees Council)
Energy Saving Trust
Environment Unit (Kirklees Council)
Government Office for Yorkshire and Humberside
Harriet Tubman Development Agency
Kirklees Benefits Advice Service (Kirklees Council)
Kirklees Community Fire Service
Kirklees Energy Service
Kirklees Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations
Kirklees Members
Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing
Kirklees Partnership
Kirklees Primary Care Trust
Library Service (Kirklees Council)
National Energy Action
Neighbourhood Renewal Programme
Pennine Housing 2000
Policy and Governance (Kirklees Council)
Powergen
Sadeh Lok Housing Association
Scottish Power
Social Services Information Point (Kirklees Council)
Soldiers Sailors Air Force Association
South Huddersfield Primary Care Trust
Sure Start
Turnstead's Tenants and Residents Association
Up and Working
Voluntary Action Kirklees
Wakefield Primary Care Trust
Warm Zone Ltd
Watson Batty Architects
Women's Institute
Yorkshire and Humberside Assembly

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