

Middlesbrough Affordable Warmth Action Plan



MIDDLESBROUGH
Environment City


Middlesbrough
moving forward

Middlesbrough Affordable Warmth Action Plan

Foreword

Foreword by Councillor Charles Rooney **Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development**

It is a pleasure to be asked to introduce the Affordable Warmth Action Plan for Middlesbrough, a plan committed to improving quality of life for our residents through creating warm homes.

Fuel poverty, where a household has to spend over 10% of its income on keeping warm, is a significant issue that affects the very fabric of our community here in Middlesbrough. Fuel poverty has a negative influence on economic development and regeneration in the town, as well as affecting health and well-being. We also know that children in cold damp homes find studying more difficult, leading to lower levels of educational attainment and posing a risk to our future prosperity.

As this report shows, much has already been achieved to improve the housing stock in Middlesbrough. This has included extensive programmes of cavity wall and loft insulation, new boilers and central heating systems for vulnerable residents and, more recently, external insulation of properties in the town centre.

Looking forward, we are committed to using the new programmes of Green Deal and ECO to support our residents in making their homes warmer and more comfortable. We also value a partnership approach that combines improvements to properties with raised awareness of energy efficiency and improvements to health and well-being. Our ambition is to help residents save both energy and money through energy efficiency, whilst also supporting new business opportunities for our local communities, creating new jobs.



Foreword by Councillor Julia Rostron **Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health**

I am very pleased to be asked to contribute to Middlesbrough's Affordable Warmth Action Plan. Homes that are warm and free from damp are essential if we are to improve the health and well-being of our residents. The links between cold, damp homes and poor health are now well established. We know that people living in homes that are hard to heat and that suffer from damp are more likely to experience physical ill health. Of equal concern, however, are the effects of cold, damp homes on mental well-being and social isolation.

Public Health in Middlesbrough is now the responsibility of the Council and addressing the effects of cold, damp homes fits within the priorities of the Health and Well-being Strategy. We are fully committed to the Affordable Warmth agenda and the partnership approach that will be required to tackle the serious and complex issues, improving quality of life for our residents and communities.



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Background

Around 25% of Middlesbrough's homes are currently in fuel poverty, when a household needs to spend 10% or more of their income on keeping warm. There are many factors that affect the number of homes in fuel poverty, including cost of energy, how well the home is insulated and household income. Further increases in energy prices along with changes to welfare benefits are expected to result in more people facing fuel poverty in Middlesbrough.

Middlesbrough's Affordable Warmth Strategy (AWS) 2008 aimed to tackle fuel poverty and provide affordable warmth by improving energy efficiency in all of the housing stock. The AWS Steering Group, chaired by Middlesbrough Environment City, brought together a number of statutory, private and voluntary organisations to implement actions that would help those in fuel poverty through a partnership approach. The group has continued to meet since 2008 and there have been many successes, including:

- The national Warm Front programme provided grants of up to £3,500 for installation and repairs to heating systems, and other measures such as cavity wall insulation. The scheme generated over £500,000 in grants between April 2011 and March 2013 in Middlesbrough, with over 300 energy efficiency measures installed.
- The Winter Warmth Campaign led by Cleveland Fire Brigade and funded mainly by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) aimed to prevent accidental fire fatalities and injuries from hypothermia or other health issues resulting from fuel poverty. The campaign won the Fire Brigade's 'Most Innovative Approach to Community Safety' award in 2009.

- Middlesbrough Warmer Homes led by Middlesbrough Environment City and NHS Middlesbrough installed £1.3m of energy efficiency measures over nine months in 2012/13, working with two local installers. The scheme also provided training in home energy efficiency to 120 residents and front-line workers over two years.
- The Community Energy Saving Programme initiative, between Middlesbrough Council, Go Warm and NHS Middlesbrough, provided external insulation and other energy efficiency measures to some of the most difficult to treat properties in the most disadvantaged parts of Middlesbrough.
- Joint working between benefits advice and money advice partners, community organisations and energy efficiency partners has helped residents maximise incomes and ensure vulnerable people in our community received the help and support they need to alleviate fuel poverty.
- Over £150,000 has been invested in Middlesbrough over two years through the Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People Fund, supporting emergency measures to help those without heating, including the work of Cleveland Fire Brigade and the Staying Put Agency.

The Affordable Warmth Action Plan has been developed by Middlesbrough Environment City and Middlesbrough Council through consultation with partners in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It has been funded through NHS Middlesbrough, the Big Lottery Fund Communities Living Sustainably Programme and the Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People Fund.

The actions within the Plan contribute to Middlesbrough's One Planet Living Programme.



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LEAD PARTNER: Middlesbrough Environment City

KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING
<p>One:</p> <p>Ensure a high profile for Affordable Warmth</p>	<p>1. Maintain an effective Affordable Warmth Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold bimonthly Steering Group meetings, focussing on sharing information, monitoring actions and addressing emerging issues in the Affordable Warmth agenda. 	Bimonthly meetings, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review membership at six-monthly intervals and co-opt additional members as necessary. 	6 monthly reviews, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the other Tees Valley authorities to share best practice and identify opportunities for joint working. 	Quarterly meetings, ongoing
	<p>2. Ensure ownership of Affordable Warmth by partner organisations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure adoption of the Affordable Warmth Action Plan at the highest level in organisations, including signing up to a declaration on fuel poverty. 	Reviewed annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate Affordable Warmth priorities in partners' work programmes. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase awareness of Affordable Warmth through promotional activities. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Local Strategic Partnership annually on progress. 	Reviewed annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain links between the Affordable Warmth Group and the Financial Inclusion Group. 	Ongoing
	<p>3. Encourage increased investment in Affordable Warmth in Middlesbrough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Green Deal and ECO in Middlesbrough, ensuring that residents understand the programme and are able to make the best informed choice for their circumstances. 	From April 2013, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek additional funding for Affordable Warmth initiatives in Middlesbrough across all Key Aims, including funding for co-ordination. 	Ongoing
	<p>4. Monitor and review the Affordable Warmth Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate information to current programmes to inform future priorities. 	Annually, in April
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the actions of the Affordable Warmth Action Plan at bimonthly Affordable Warmth meetings. 	Bimonthly meetings, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote successes of the Affordable Warmth Group and the Affordable Warmth Action Plan. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Action Plan aims every two years. 	April 2015

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LEAD PARTNER: Middlesbrough Council, Neighbourhood and Communities

KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING	
<p>Two:</p> <p>Promote energy efficiency in the housing stock across all tenures</p>	<p>1. Establish baseline data for the housing stock across all tenures</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with housing providers, installers, partners and others to identify data sources. 	March 2014	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a database to track improvements in energy efficiency of housing stock. 	March 2014	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree processes to gather and input information on improvements made to the housing stock. 	March 2014	
	<p>2. Continue to monitor fuel poverty across Middlesbrough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work across tenures to identify and monitor fuel poverty in Middlesbrough. 	Review annually	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access fuel poverty data sources on the DECC website. 	Review annually	
	<p>3. Significant energy efficiency improvements to the housing stock across all tenures</p>	<p>Green Deal and ECO</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with local providers of Green Deal and ECO to maximise uptake and improve the energy efficiency of all housing stock. 	From April 2013	
		<p>Renewable incentives, including Feed in Tariff and Renewable Heat Premium Payment</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise the success of existing schemes, such as Eco-Easterside, to demonstrate the benefits of renewables and increase uptake. 	Ongoing	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners, including Registered Social Landlords, to support the installation of more renewable energy measures. 	Ongoing	
		<p>Zero Carbon Homes</p>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support partners to work with developers to build zero carbon homes. 	From April 2013	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with social housing providers to aim for the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Code of Sustainable Homes Level 4 and above. 	From April 2013, review annually			
<p>Minimum standards in the private rented sector</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private landlords to encourage take-up of energy efficiency measures through Green Deal. 	From April 2013			

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KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING
<p>Two:</p> <p>Promote energy efficiency in the housing stock across all tenures</p> <p>continued</p>	<p>4. Promotion of energy efficiency measures, including Green Deal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners in public, private and voluntary sectors to promote energy efficiency in the home in line with Climate Local, Middlesbrough's Climate Change Community Action Plan and Middlesbrough's One Planet Living programme. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>5. Using area based and street by street initiatives to delivery energy efficiency improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative working with Middlesbrough Climate Change Partnership through Climate Local to ensure that opportunities related to energy efficiency are shared and cascaded within the community. 	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a series of events and activities to encourage energy efficiency linked to existing promotional campaigns, such as Energy Awareness Week. 	<p>Annual programme, from April 2013</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and develop delivery of energy efficiency improvements through area-based and/or street by street initiatives, as opportunities arise. 	<p>From April 2013, as programmes develop</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure appropriate information is available to allow residents to make an informed choice regarding energy efficiency improvements for their circumstances. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Middlesbrough's Community Hubs to deliver integrated advice and support for energy efficiency measures. 	<p>From April 2013, ongoing</p>	

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LEAD PARTNER: Middlesbrough Council, Welfare Rights

KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING
Three: Improve Affordable Warmth through income maximisation and money advice	1. Raise awareness of the role of income maximisation and debt advice in Affordable Warmth and tackling fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the income maximisation and debt advice services among other services, particularly those visiting residents in their homes. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide debt and benefit advice to the public. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of Welfare Reform and its potential effect on household income. 	April 2013
	2. Implement a co-ordinated approach between energy efficiency, income maximisation and debt advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joined up working to offer both income maximisation and debt advice services to tackle fuel poverty. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target local areas of high poverty to ensure that residents receive appropriate advice and support to maximise their opportunities to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. 	Ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Community Hubs to promote awareness and deliver integrated advice and support to maximise incomes, encourage energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty. 	From April 2013, ongoing
	3. Work with money advice practitioners to identify people requiring Affordable Warmth support or in fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure debt advice practitioners are able to promote Affordable Warmth initiatives and identify fuel poverty amongst their clients, through a targeted programme of awareness-raising and accredited training. 	From April 2013, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure debt practitioners signpost clients to those delivering the Affordable Warmth initiatives and provide feedback. 	From April 2013, ongoing
	4. Establish and maintain a cross-referral network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all partners involved in tackling fuel poverty and addressing affordable warmth are aware of each others' services to maximise support to clients and signpost them to appropriate agencies. 	July 2013
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Affordable Warmth Group, ensure that the network remains current. 	Review annually
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the use of Nellbookers as a tool in maximising cross-referrals to support vulnerable clients. 	Ongoing

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LEAD PARTNER: Middlesbrough Council, Public Health

KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING
Four: Improve health and well-being through Affordable Warmth	1. Ensure Affordable Warmth continues to be included in health and social care policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor, analyse and review baseline data on Excess Winter Deaths and seasonal variations in hospital admissions for respiratory (ICD10: I00-199) and circulatory diseases (ICD10@ I00-199). 	Review annually, ongoing
		2. Raise awareness and promote Affordable Warmth to front line workers, including Health and Social Care professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure Affordable Warmth training is included in the Public Health capacity building framework to contribute to Making Every Contact Count (MECC), including information on energy efficiency, household income and fuel costs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of Affordable Warmth amongst front-line workers including Health and Social Care practitioners and others visiting people in their own homes. 		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute standardised and consistent promotional material across agencies. 		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of affordable warmth issues amongst private and voluntary sector service providers. 		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness amongst vulnerable groups of the adverse health effects of fuel poverty and appropriate actions to take. 		Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a simple referral mechanism for front line workers and ensure feedback. 		April 2013
	3. Establish and maintain a cross referral network		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all partners involved in tackling fuel poverty and addressing Affordable Warmth are aware of each others' services to maximise support to clients and signpost them to appropriate agencies.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the Affordable Warmth Group, ensure that the network remains current. 	Review annually, ongoing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the use of Nellbookers as a tool in maximising cross-referrals to support vulnerable clients. 	Review annually, ongoing
	4. Ensure Affordable Warmth is in the caseload profile of health and social care practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that identifying those in fuel poverty forms part of the assessment process. 	April 2014
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure discharge procedures in hospital include assessments of Affordable Warmth needs for all patients regardless of whether there is social work involvement. 	April 2014

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KEY AIM	OBJECTIVE	EXAMPLE ACTIONS	TIMING
<p>Four:</p> <p>Improve health and well-being through Affordable Warmth</p> <p>continued</p>	<p>5. Raise awareness of the wider determinants of Excess Winter Deaths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with relevant partner agencies to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- maximise annual flu and pneumococcal vaccinations for at risk groups;- implement a brief health intervention plan to include advice and support on key health issues;- carry out assessment and support programmes to reduce/prevent falls and provide assistive technology, e.g. alarm pendants for the elderly;- help to develop a personal crisis contingency plan;- increase referrals from health professionals through a clear referral pathway and service promotion; and- encourage an annual medicine review through GP or health practitioner for at risk groups on prescribed medication.	<p>Ongoing</p>