

Gosport Borough Council (GBC)

Home Energy Conservation Act Report 2017

Gosport Borough Council is continuing to improve the energy efficiency of homes in Gosport. This is happening by improving its own housing stock; providing support and utilising Government funding in the private sector; and providing advice to residents through council services and partnering with other non-profit organisations.

In December 2016, GBC agreed a partnership arrangement with Portsmouth City Council's energy services team in order to deliver their existing services throughout the borough. These services include the delivery of energy efficiency projects, micro-generation and delivery of fuel poverty mitigations schemes, across all tenures.

This report will outline the ongoing work and planned projects over the next two years, with links to further reports and information resources.

Gosport energy efficiency ambitions and priorities for 2017-18

7.3% of Gosport's residences are in fuel poverty. This percentage is higher in the economically deprived wards but effects wards across the whole borough. Fuel poverty is the main driver which directs GBC's efforts to improve energy efficiency in residences, but also includes non-fuel poor households wherever we can (legislation and funding criteria dependant).

The services listed ensures any resident of Gosport will be in a position to access impartial advice in respect of current national or local energy efficiency schemes available. The main first port of call is the [Energy Efficiency](#) pages of the Gosport Borough Council website.

Fuel Poverty Overview

GBC's partnership with PCC will involve building upon the links by GBC staff to work closely with Council departments (Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care, Public Health, Property and Housing and Private Sector Housing) and external partners (Age UK, Citizens' Advice and First Wessex housing association). This partnership aims to deliver support to low income and vulnerable households in a holistic and efficient manner.

The energy services team coordinates a fuel poverty working group which provides "resources to support frontline staff in reducing fuel poverty and excess winter deaths". The lessons learnt and ways of working will be expanded to take into account relevant Gosport departments and agencies.

Work to date

Green Deal Communities Funding - 2015-2017

Over the last two years the majority of work has been external wall insulation funded through the Green Deal Communities fund. This funding has now come to an end but the lessons learnt will feed into delivery of ECO, LEAP and Hitting the Cold Spots* - discussed below.

Winter Warmth event

An annual event held in Gosport Town Hall where residents are given information and advice about various winter health issues including insulation, energy efficiency and any grants or financial assistance available to fund such measures. These events attract around 500 visitors each year. Many of these visitors subsequently seek specific help from Gosport BC to access this funding.

Work going forward

Energy Companies Obligation (ECO) funding

GBC intend to promote and assist in the delivery of the Energy Company Obligation during the ECO II phase in both the private and social housing stock.

GBC plans to utilise ECO II in Gosport's housing stock for loft, cavity wall and possibly solid wall insulation. As per our previous insulation works with ECO we will engage communities (housing tenants and leaseholders) to maximise the ECO II funding and efficiencies of scale, thus getting more benefit for more people.

LEAP Local Energy Advice Programme

The energy services team is coordinating the pilot LEAP roll out across Gosport's relevant organisations to promote fuel poverty mitigation and improved domestic energy efficiency across the borough. The pilot will end in July and its continuation depends on Ofgem's review, which is in progress. LEAP is a new free service, providing important advice, support and energy saving measures to fuel poor and vulnerable households. The programme is delivered in partnership with a number of organisations and is funded by energy suppliers as part of the Warm Home Discount Industry Initiatives fund. It is delivered in a close partnership with Local Authorities and Housing Associations, with the Gosport service beginning in January 2017.

The council and its network of local agencies provide referrals of vulnerable local residents who are in (or at risk of falling into) fuel poverty. A highly-trained LEAP Helper then carries out a home visit and carries out a thorough assessment of the home and delivers help immediately:

- Installs a range of simple measures (radiator panels, LED light bulbs, draught proofing for doors, windows and letterboxes, cylinder jackets, pipe lagging)
- Provides energy efficiency advice and training on the use of heating controllers
- Organises the installation of a new heating controller where it is inadequate or broken
- Identifies larger energy efficiency measures that would improve the property where ECO funding is available (arranged after the visit)
- Looks at the potential for savings from switching energy supplier and helps the resident to switch if required
- Identifies other hazards and vulnerabilities in the home and makes the referral on to the appropriate department or agency.

Hitting the Cold Spots

GBC also uses Hampshire County Council's "Hitting the Cold Spots" programme, which funds and carries out major interventions such as replacement boilers and heating repairs for residents in a financially disadvantaged situation.

This will continue alongside LEAP in 2017 and 2018.

[Switch Gosport](#)

Gosport Borough Council has launched its own energy switching site to promote residents getting onto the lowest tariffs. This provides the most accurate energy cost comparison service in the market. Although this does not directly provide energy conservation it is being used as a first port of call to engage Gosport residents with considering and understanding their energy bills. This can lead to energy conservation measures being considered.

Fuel poverty training workshops

The energy services team delivers training to its front line staff through three workshops each winter with around 20 staff members at each session. This training gives staff the basic knowledge to identify fuel vulnerable residents and the help they can provide or direct them too. This will be rolled out to Gosport Borough Council employees to ensure the new opportunities in Gosport for funding are communicated to the most vulnerable residents.

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