



Fuel Poverty Strategy

2014/15 and beyond

Take part, take pride



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Foreword

We are very pleased to be publishing for the first time a strategy to tackle the problem of fuel poverty in our borough. Around 12% of the population nationally is deemed to be fuel poor, and it is estimated that in Sutton the proportion is only just below this. It has been shown that fuel poverty results from a combination of three factors: low incomes, poor home energy efficiency and high fuel costs. The borough has its fair share of poorer households, many of its homes are poorly insulated and we have seen some very large increases in gas and electricity prices in recent years.

The Government has recognised the scale of the problem and the effects that fuel poverty can have on people's lives in terms of their health and wellbeing, and is planning to publish a national strategy later this year. However, in Sutton we felt that we shouldn't wait for this but rather we should begin to act now and provide help to our residents where we can, particularly to older and other vulnerable households.

In putting together its strategy the Council has consulted and worked with a wide range of organisations and individuals, both statutory bodies such as the health service and a number of voluntary sector groups. We have received a lot of very useful feedback which has helped to inform our understanding of the problem locally and our action plan, which we hope will help to alleviate or at least mitigate the effects of fuel poverty amongst fuel poor households.

We now look forward to delivering on our aims and objectives through the plan of action set out in chapter 8. Many of the actions will be undertaken in partnership with other organisations which have a key role in helping us to tackle fuel poverty. Delivery of the strategy will be monitored closely over the coming months and years, and we will review and revise our approach as circumstances change.

We hope you find the document of interest.

Councillor Jayne McCoy
Chair, Housing, Economy and
Business Committee

Councillor Jill Whitehead
Chair, Environment and
Neighbourhood Committee

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1 This strategy seeks to understand the causes and effects of fuel poverty, to identify those who are fuel poor or most at risk of fuel poverty and to deliver effective interventions that will reduce and, if possible, prevent fuel poverty in the borough.
- 2 Fuel poverty is widely held to be determined by the interaction of three key elements or causal factors: (i) low income, (ii) high fuel prices and (iii) poor home energy efficiency. It is disproportionately experienced by vulnerable and older households and has a direct impact on health as well as on wellbeing and life opportunities more generally.
- 3 Under the Government's new 'Low Income High Cost' (LIHC) definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where they have required fuel costs that are above average and, were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. The new definition allows measurement of both the extent and depth of fuel poverty.

Policy context

- 4 The Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000 forms the current statutory basis for tackling fuel poverty at the national and local level. More recently the Energy Act 2011 introduced the Government's flagship Green Deal policy and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) as the principle mechanisms for funding home energy efficiency measures. The Energy Act 2013 includes a provision for a new national fuel poverty target to be set via secondary legislation and places a requirement on Government that a strategy be put in place to ensure that the target is met.
- 5 At the regional level the Mayor's London Plan contains a range of relevant policies, including increasing the efficiency of energy supplies and the use of renewable energy sources and promoting sustainable design and construction. The draft London housing strategy, *Homes for London* also contains policies in relation to energy efficiency - these cover improving the design of newly built homes and the energy performance of existing homes.
- 6 At the local level achieving the objectives of Sutton's One Planet Living Action Plan through the lowering of energy bills, creating energy supply security, new jobs, and new economic opportunities should have a direct beneficial impact in terms of tackling fuel poverty. As well as this, both the Council's Housing Strategy and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the borough contain measures that will indirectly benefit fuel poor households.
- 7 On an ongoing basis a number of organisations routinely work with the Council to provide advice, information and assistance on areas of energy efficiency and climate change and debt advice. These include both local voluntary sector organisations such as Bioregional as well as national bodies such as National Energy Action and the Energy Savings Trust.

Incidence of fuel poverty

- 8 In 2011 the number of fuel poor households in England, under the new LIHC definition, was estimated at around 2.6m, this representing approximately 11.7% of all households. In Sutton, using the LIHC indicator, 10% of households (7,654) are currently estimated to be in fuel poverty. However, the levels of fuel poverty vary across the borough, appearing to be relatively high in some of the least deprived wards, such as Cheam and Stonecot. At the same time the Mayor of London's *Better Environment, Better Health* guide for LB Sutton showed that while the Belmont ward has the 66th lowest risk score in London, St Helier ranks 463rd out of 625 wards.
- 9 In terms of the energy efficiency of the borough's housing although the Standard Assessment procedure (SAP) rating of the social stock is reasonably good, the owner-occupied sector (the large majority) has an estimated average SAP rating of only 58 out of 100. In 2012 the Energy Savings Trust calculated that 32% of the borough's homes lacked cavity wall insulation, 49% had uninsulated solid walls, while 59% lacked loft insulation.

Achievements

- 10 A number of schemes have been run in the past which have helped to alleviate fuel poverty in Sutton. These include the Warm Front scheme, which delivered measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation to 9% of the borough's homes, the GLA-sponsored Coldbusters scheme which assisted 270 private homes with insulation and heating systems and the Mayor's initial RE:NEW scheme which delivered advice, energy audits and small scale home improvement measures to 1,670 homes in the Worcester Park area.
- 11 A number of schemes are still ongoing, these including the Council's decent homes programme of major repairs and improvements to its own housing stock and similar investment being made by housing associations, Priority Repair Grants to private owners, these now covering heating repairs, and the Department of Health funded Warm Room Scheme, which is providing a range of assistance to vulnerable households at risk of hypothermia or premature death during winter months.
- 12 On the wider front the Council has appointed a partner Green Deal Provider - Climate Energy - with whom it is now working to market the Green Deal and ECO in order to increase take up of measures, especially by those able to benefit from ECO funding. More locally the Council is working on the delivery of a Decentralised Energy Network in Hackbridge that will eventually be able to supply 'cheap heat' to the area.

Consultation

- 13 This strategy has been developed in partnership with a number of key agencies that work closely with the Council - for example Age UK, the Citizens Advice Bureau, EcoLocal, housing associations, various other community and voluntary sector groups etc. The feedback and responses received via the formal consultation process carried out last year has shown that there is a lot of interest in and shared understanding of fuel poverty. Views collected have covered residents' own experience of fuel poverty,

methods for effectively collecting fuel poverty data and measures needed to tackle fuel poverty.

Resources

- 14 A number of sources of funding and other resources will contribute to the delivery of this Strategy. In terms of the Council's own funds the Priority Repairs Grant will be used to fund measures such as replacement boilers that will have a direct impact of fuel poverty for poorer private sector households. Additionally, the Authority's new Crisis Loans and Grants Scheme will be available to help the most vulnerable in times of acute need. Through the Council's Strategic Partners Programme the capacity of the voluntary sector will be harnessed to help identify fuel poor households and provide advice and assistance.
- 15 There are also a number of external sources of funding available locally that can be tapped into. These include funding from the Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group to Sutton Age UK to pilot a Caring Neighbourhood Scheme aimed at helping older people keep warm and well in winter, and GLA funding to tackle empty homes which will be used in part to improve the energy efficiency of buildings.
- 16 At the national level ECO will be the main source of funding for home energy efficiency measures that are likely to impact upon fuel poverty, and the Council will be working with Sutton Housing Partnership and Climate Energy to maximise take up within the borough. In terms of helping households with fuel costs a number of schemes are run by the DWP, these including the Cold Weather Payments and the Warm Homes Discount scheme.
- 17 With the transfer of Public Health to local authorities there is now the opportunity to tackle fuel poverty through the resources being made available through the Department of Health. Linking in to Sutton's new Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy there may be scope for securing additional funding to tackling fuel poverty which could help to achieve the successful implementation of this strategy.

Aims and objectives

- 18 Our fuel poverty strategy aims to both reduce the numbers of households living in fuel poverty and the extent or depth of fuel poverty in the borough. A number of drivers have shaped this strategy, these including national and regional policy, the scale of fuel poverty locally and the level of resources available to tackle it.
- 19 In support of our aims we have identified the following objectives:
 1. To identify individual households in fuel poverty or at risk of fuel poverty in order to be able to target interventions
 2. To raise awareness of fuel poverty and of the advice and assistance available to tackle it within key partner organisations and amongst borough residents
 3. To lever in funding and other resources to tackle fuel poverty
 4. To improve the energy efficiency of the borough's housing stock across all tenures, focusing in particular on the homes of fuel poor households

5. To maximise incomes, reduce energy bills and support households in or vulnerable to fuel poverty
6. To promote behaviour change amongst fuel poor households and households generally, encouraging more efficient use of heating systems etc

Delivery plan

- 20 Included within this strategy is a plan of action for year one (2014/15) set to address each of the six objectives. There are also a number of actions identified as needing to be carried out but for which resources are not available at present. We will be exploring how they might be delivered later in 2014/15 or during 2015/16 and beyond.

Monitoring and review

- 21 Monitoring the delivery of the strategy will be carried out by the Council's housing service and within existing officer and Member structures, with reports on progress produced on an annual basis. The strategy and delivery plan will be regularly reviewed, with changes to the strategy and/or delivery plan made as needed, aligned to the review stages in the Council's business/service planning process.

1 Introduction

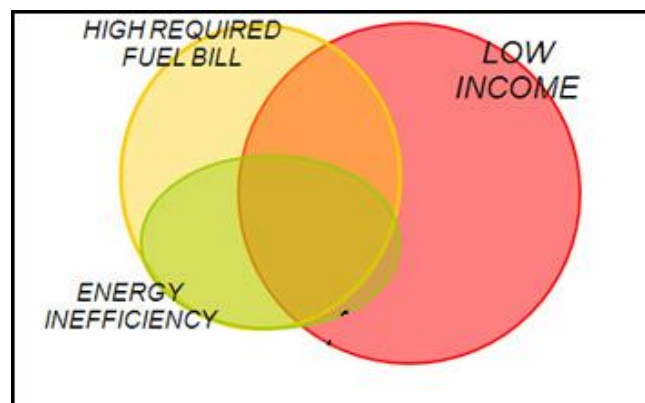
- 1.1 The London Borough of Sutton Fuel Poverty Strategy seeks to understand the causes and effects of fuel poverty and to identify households within the local population who are fuel poor or most at risk of fuel poverty. It aims to bring together our knowledge and resources in a systematic way to deliver effective action and interventions that will reduce and, if possible, prevent fuel poverty in the borough.

Defining Fuel Poverty

- 1.2 Up until recently a household has been considered to be in fuel poverty if it spends more than 10% of its net income on fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime (usually 21 degrees for the main living area, and 18 degrees for other occupied rooms). Although the emphasis was on heating the home, the definition also took into account spending on heating water, lights and appliance usage and cooking costs.
- 1.3 The Government commissioned an independent review of fuel poverty and its definition in 2012, which was carried out by Professor John Hills at the London School of Economics. His review recognised fuel poverty as an issue distinct from poverty per se but highlighted some fundamental flaws with the way it was measured. A key issue was that under the old definition, a household may spend more than 10% of its income on fuel costs but not necessarily be on a low income. The 10% definition also gave a misleading picture of trends as it understated the scale of fuel poverty when energy prices were low and overstated it when prices were high.
- 1.4 An alternative measure – the Low Income High Cost (LIHC) indicator put forward by Professor Hills – arguably offered a more accurate and relevant measure. Under his new definition a household is considered to be fuel poor where they have required fuel costs that are above average and, were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line¹.
- 1.5 Accepting the Hills Review recommendations, in July 2013 the Government announced a new definition of fuel poverty and published a framework for future action in tackling fuel poverty in England – *Fuel Poverty: a Framework for Future Action*² (see chapter 2) Under the Government's new definition a household is regarded as 'fuel poor' if:
- its total income is below the poverty line (after taking into account expenditure on fuel costs),
 - and
 - its energy costs are higher than typical
- 1.6 The new indicator also has the advantage of allowing the 'depth' of fuel poverty to be measured. This is the difference between a household's required fuel costs and what these costs would need to be for them not to be in fuel poverty. This is referred to as the fuel poverty 'gap', and gives an indication of the severity of the problem for different households. The gap for each household can then be combined to produce an aggregate fuel poverty gap, which gives an understanding of the scale of the problem at a local or national level.

Impacts and Causes of Fuel Poverty

- 1.7 Households that are unable to afford to heat their homes must choose between competing financial pressures and debts, with heating being one of those commodities that households often sacrifice. 'Heating or eating' is a phrase often used to point out the pressures that low income households face in deciding how to spend their limited money. Households that are unable to sufficiently heat their homes can experience:
- A poor quality of life (discomfort)
 - Damage to the property (damp, condensation, mould growth)
 - Increased risk of winter illness
 - Greater difficulty in recovery from winter illnesses
 - Increased risk of winter death in the case of older and vulnerable people
 - Children at greater risk of respiratory illness
 - Social exclusion
- 1.8 Although fuel poverty appears to go hand in hand with a number of other issues such as food poverty, it is generally seen as a distinct issue due to the unique set of factors underlying it. The fuel poverty status of a household is widely held to be dependent upon the interaction of three key elements: (i) income, (ii) fuel prices and (iii) energy efficiency/ consumption. How these interact is illustrated in the figure below.



Source: Annual report on fuel poverty statistics 2011, Department of the Energy and Climate Change and National Statistics

- 1.9 However, fuel poverty is a complex issue and can often be the result of a number of other contributory factors including:
- Inefficient and/or expensive heating systems
 - Being off the gas main
 - Lack of access or availability of affordable fuel and/or tariff options
 - Under occupation of home/size of home
 - Household behaviour
 - Debt
- 1.10 Fuel poverty is disproportionately experienced by specific groups, most notably:
- Older people including those on low incomes

- Lone parents, especially those with young children
 - Disabled people
 - The chronically sick
 - Unemployed people, especially those under 25 years old and who are long term unemployed
- 1.11 Cold housing and fuel poverty have a direct and immediate impact on health but also indirect impacts and wider effects on wellbeing and life opportunities. Evidence shows that cold housing has a dramatic impact on the population in terms of cardio-vascular and respiratory morbidity and on mortality in the case of older people. Fuel poverty often results in increased levels of colds and flu, and existing conditions such as arthritis and rheumatism are exacerbated. Additionally, cold related stays in hospital for an illness such as hypothermia costs the health service approximately £4k per client.
- 1.12 Although excess winter deaths in the UK have reduced over the three year period 2008 to 2011, this trend does not provide grounds for complacency since the actual number remains significant - an average of 27,465 excess winter deaths per year in England and 2,884 in London³. Cold damp housing and unaffordable energy costs are important factors in excess winter mortality, and many of these excess deaths can be attributed to living in fuel poverty.
- 1.13 The groups most at risk due to low temperatures are:
- People over the age of 75, especially those living on their own
 - Those suffering chronic and severe physical or mental illness (some medication make individuals more vulnerable to the cold)
 - Those unable to adapt behaviour to keep warm. This includes people with Alzheimer's disease, those with a disability, those who are bed-bound, or people who drink too much alcohol.
 - Babies and the very young.
 - Those living in older or otherwise energy inefficient properties.
- 1.14 Across Europe the mortality rates in certain countries, including the UK, are higher than Finland, Sweden and Denmark, despite those Scandinavian countries having significantly lower average winter temperatures. The link to higher excess winter mortality across Europe appears to relate to low thermal efficiency standards.
- 1.15 Fuel poverty also has an adverse impact on mental health, particularly stress related illnesses such as depression, migraine, gastric and duodenal ulcers. It also has a detrimental impact on children and young people's educational attainment, general well-being and opportunities.

2 Policy Context

2.1 This chapter initially looks at a number of key pieces of legislation and policy documents that have had a direct or indirect impact on the approach that is taken towards tackling fuel poverty at the national level. It then goes on to look briefly at regional policy and the local policy context in Sutton.

National Context

- 2.2 The Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000 forms the current statutory basis for tackling fuel poverty at the national and local level. It placed a duty on authorities to prepare and publish a strategy for ensuring that as far as reasonably practicable persons do not live in fuel poverty. Following on from this the Government published a fuel poverty strategy in 2001 – *Fuel Poverty in England*. It subsequently published a Plan for Action in 2004 setting out how it aimed to eradicate fuel poverty in vulnerable households.
- 2.3 In 2001 the Decent Homes Standard was introduced by the Government. It required that all social housing should meet the minimum fitness standards as defined by the Housing Act 1985, be in a reasonable state of repair, have reasonably modern facilities and services and provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort. The standard was subsequently extended to the private rented sector where homes contained a vulnerable household.
- 2.4 The Housing Act 2004 introduced the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS), a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. Although tackling fuel poverty is not the primary role of HHSRS it can be used indirectly in relation to fuel poverty since ‘Excess Cold’ is one of the 29 hazards assessed for under the system.
- 2.5 The Energy Act 2011 is a wide-ranging piece of legislation, best known as the vehicle for implementing the Government’s flagship Green Deal policy and creating a new Energy Company Obligation (ECO) to take over from the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) schemes that expired at the end of 2012. ECO works alongside the Green Deal, targeting appropriate measures at those households likely to need additional support, such as those on low incomes and/or in hard-to-treat housing. The Energy Act 2011 will also require by way of regulation that is due to be brought into force by no later than 1st April 2018 that a landlord will not be able to let a property that falls below a certain level of energy efficiency.
- 2.6 The Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Carbon Plan, published in December 2011, set out the Government’s plans for achieving the emission reduction targets detailed in the Climate Change Act 2008. The Carbon Plan includes the following targets with regards to housing:
- To reduce CO₂ emissions by 29% by 2017, 35% by 2022, and 50% by 2027 – for buildings this means achieving a reduction between 24% and 39% lower than 2009 levels by 2027;

- To insulate all cavity walls and lofts, where practical, by 2020;
 - By 2030, to install between 1m and 3.7m additional solid wall insulations and between 1.9m and 7.2m other energy efficiency measures;
 - By 2030, to install between 1.6m and 8.6m low carbon heat systems such as heat pumps (Government modelling suggests that to achieve the target 21% - 45% of heat supplies to buildings will need to be low carbon by 2030);
 - By 2050 emissions from UK buildings to be “close to zero”.
- 2.7 The Marmot Review⁴, commissioned by Friends of the Earth, looked at the existing evidence of the direct and indirect health impacts suffered by those living in fuel poverty and cold housing. Published in 2011, it makes a strong case for aligning the environmental and health benefits of reducing fuel poverty and improving the thermal efficiency of the existing housing stock and emphasises improving the energy efficiency of housing stock which brings multiple health and environmental gains.
- 2.8 The most recent piece of relevant legislation is the Energy Act 2013. The Act includes a provision for a new national fuel poverty target to be set via secondary legislation and a requirement that a strategy be put in place to ensure that the target is met. The strategy is to be published within six months of the regulations for the new target having been agreed.
- 2.9 Prior to the publication of the Energy Act was the DECC publication *Fuel Poverty: a Framework for Future Action* (July 2013). Although the framework document is indicative, it provides a bridge between the Hills Review on fuel poverty (discussed in chapter 1) and the future national fuel poverty strategy that is due to be published later in 2014.
- 2.10 Finally, the Department of Health (DH) Cold Weather Plans for England, published annually since 2011, raise both public and professional awareness of the effects of cold weather on health. The purpose of the plans is to enhance resilience in the event of severe cold weather. It is an important component of overall winter and emergency planning and wider health promotion activity and is closely linked to fuel poverty. DH has recently commissioned the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) to develop guidance by 2015 aimed at preventing extra winter deaths and ill health arising from cold homes.

Regional Context

- 2.11 The Mayor’s London Plan contains a comprehensive range of policies to tackle climate change in the capital, including minimising CO₂ emissions by using less energy, increasing the efficiency of energy supplies and the use of renewable energy sources and promoting sustainable design and construction. In 2011 the Mayor published his Climate Change Mitigation and Energy Strategy in which London has been set a series of targets. Although not specifically directed at tackling fuel poverty the strategy clearly has an important role to play in this area. The objectives of the strategy are:
- To reduce London’s CO₂ emissions to mitigate climate change
 - To maximise economic opportunities from the transition to a low carbon capita
 - To ensure a secure and reliable energy supply for London

- To meet, and where possible exceed, national climate change and energy objectives

2.12 The Mayor's draft London housing strategy - *Homes for London* - published in December 2013, also contains policies in relation to energy efficiency covering improving the design of newly built homes and a commitment to a targeted programme of retrofitting and upgrading the capital's existing housing stock.

Local Context

- 2.13 In response to the Government's Strategy for Fuel Poverty (2000), the Council produced an Affordable Warmth Statement and Action Plan (2003-2006), expressing its commitment to provide all residents with access to affordable warmth. This document is now somewhat historic in nature and is superseded by this new Fuel Poverty Strategy.
- 2.14 In 2009 Sutton became the first council to commit to becoming a One Planet Living borough. Sutton's One Planet Living Action Plan includes the following targets for borough wide CO₂ emission reductions: 20% by 2017, 40% by 2025 and 70% by 2050 (targets are subject to a public consultation). The Authority has aspirations to be a 'zero carbon' borough by 2050 and has set these ambitious targets to move the borough closer to this goal.
- 2.15 It is acknowledged that to reach zero carbon across existing buildings involves addressing energy efficiency, how much energy we use and where our energy comes from, as well as minimising energy consumption by changing behaviour. Achieving our One Planet Living objectives through the lowering of energy bills, creating energy supply security, new jobs, and new economic opportunities should have a direct beneficial impact in terms of tackling fuel poverty.
- 2.16 The Council has also adopted a number of planning policies to support CO₂ reduction and renewable energy as part of its Local Development Framework (LDF). These focus on minimising CO₂ emissions from all new development by reducing energy usage, supplying energy more efficiently including using renewable sources and promoting the highest standards of sustainable design.
- 2.17 One of the strategic aims of the Council's Housing Strategy is to "*Improve the condition and energy efficiency of the borough's housing stock*", while the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims to have "*more people remaining independent in their own homes for longer*". Both strategies contain measures that will indirectly benefit fuel poor households and help to tackle fuel poverty.
- 2.18 A number of organisations, both national and local, work with the borough to provide advice, information and assistance on areas of energy efficiency and climate change and debt advice. These include:
- The seven voluntary sector partners that participate in the Council's Strategic Partner Programme: Age UK, Citizens Advice Bureau, Sutton Centre for the Voluntary Sector, Volunteer Centre Sutton, the Carers Centre, SCILL and Bio-regional. All of these bodies work collaboratively with the Council to develop capability and capacity in the voluntary sector.

- South West London Housing Partnership – borough officers meet regularly to discuss issues affecting housing; including energy efficiency, fuel poverty and access to funding opportunities.
- Energy Savings Trust – offers impartial advice to communities and households on how to reduce carbon emissions, use water more sustainably and save money on energy bills.
- National Energy Action – a fuel poverty charity that works to eradicate fuel poverty and campaigns for greater investment in energy efficiency to help those who are poor or vulnerable to gain greater access to affordable heat, included research and analysis into the causes and extent of fuel poverty and development of policies and innovative ways to reduce fuel poverty.
- Fuel Poverty Advisory Group – provides advice on the effectiveness of policies aimed at reducing fuel poverty and encourage greater coordination across the organisations working to reduce fuel poverty.
- Ofgem – The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets works to protect the interest of consumers both present and future by promoting value for money, promoting security of supply and sustainability, supervision and development of markets and competition and regulation and the delivery of Government schemes.

3 Incidence of Fuel Poverty

Scale of Fuel Poverty Nationally

- 3.1 Based on the latest data available under the old '10 per cent' definition, in 2011 the DECC reported that 17% of households nationally were in fuel poverty. In England there were 3.2m fuel poor households (15%). Of those fuel poor households 73% were considered to be 'vulnerable' (i.e. were households that contained an older person, children or someone who is disabled or has a long term illness). Furthermore, the report also suggested that the fuel poverty gap had increased.
- 3.2 The Government estimated that due to energy price increases in the latter part of 2011, the number of households in fuel poverty had increased by 0.4m in 2012. As the 2013 fuel poverty statistics have not yet been released it is unclear what the current level of fuel poverty actually is.
- 3.3 In 2011 the number of fuel poor households in England under the new LIHC measure was estimated at around 2.6m. This represents approximately 11.7% of all households in England. The aggregate fuel poverty gap (the amount by which the assessed energy needs of all fuel-poor households exceed the threshold for reasonable costs) increased marginally from £1.1bn to £1.15bn at 2011 prices while the average household fuel poverty gap (the amount by which annual bills would need to be cut in order for fuel poverty households to be able to afford to heat their homes) rose by £26 to £448 when compared to 2010.
- 3.4 It is worthwhile mentioning that winter weather temperatures have a direct impact on fuel poverty and are considered to be a significant contributory factor to the level of fuel poverty for any given year.

Fuel Poverty in the London Borough of Sutton

- 3.5 Under the old definition and from the most recent DECC data (2011) 8.6% of households in the borough are estimated to be in fuel poverty, which equates to around 6,600 households. Using the new Low Income High Cost definition 10% of households (7,654) are calculated to be in fuel poverty. This difference due to the definition used is at odds with the national picture, which shows a reduction in fuel poverty, from 15% under the old to 11.7% under the new definition. This is likely to be due to the household composition of the local population.

Distribution of Fuel Poverty

- 3.6 As shown in the following table, the wards containing lower super output areas with the highest ranking deprivation levels are mainly in the north of the borough. However, fuel poverty is interspersed to varying degrees throughout the borough and unexpectedly appears to be relatively high in some of the least deprived wards, such as Cheam and Stonecot, under both definitions.

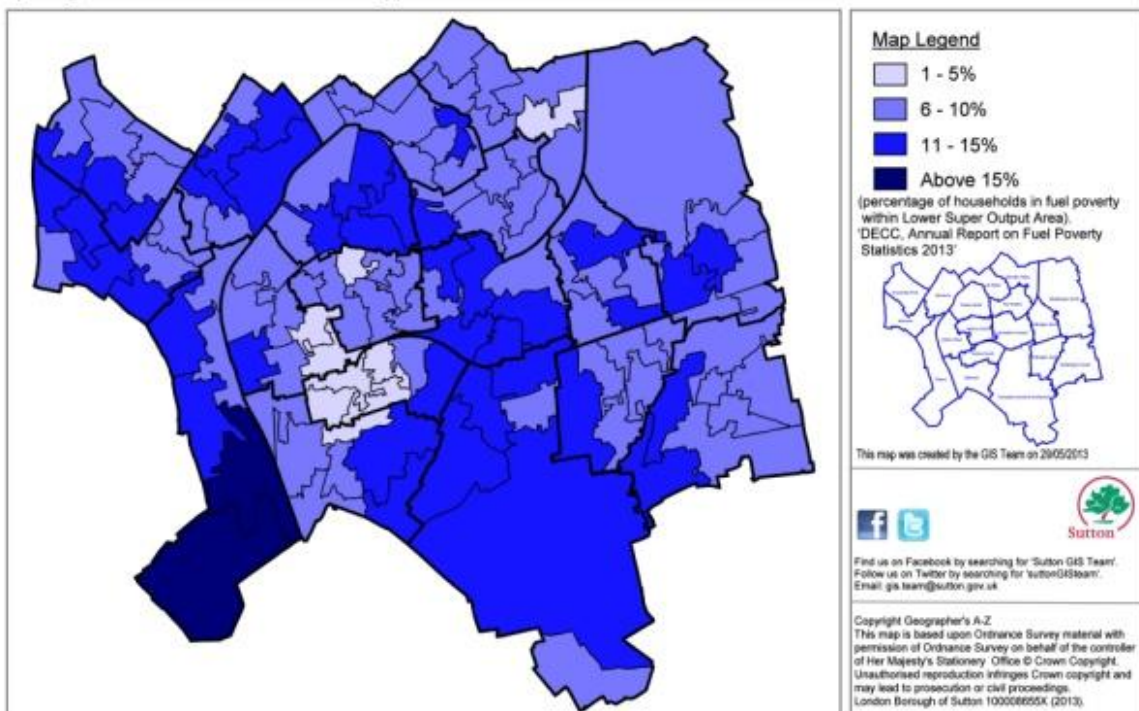
Ward	Fuel Poverty level using 10% income definition (2011) (%)*	Fuel Poverty level using LIHC definition (2011) (%)*	Deprivation level (IMD 2010)**
Beddington North	8.4	10.9	13.22
Beddington South	8.6	7.9	22.85
Belmont	3.5	8.1	12.59
Carshalton Central	10.2	13	10.74
Carshalton South and Clockhouse	10.9	13.6	11.68
Cheam	11.8	13.4	7.39
Nonsuch	10.3	13.4	7.90
St Helier	9.2	10	27.53
Stonecot	10.3	13.7	10.84
Sutton Central	7.6	7.9	21.22
Sutton North	9.7	10.7	15.52
Sutton South	5.2	5.1	13.57
Sutton West	6.8	8.1	10.53
The Wrythe	7.6	9.2	17.70
Wallington North	8.2	10	15.18
Wallington South	8.6	9	18.67
Wandle Valley	7.5	7.8	26.75
Worcester Park	9.1	11.4	9.98

* Department for Energy and Climate Change

** Index of Multiple Deprivation (with 1 being the least deprived)

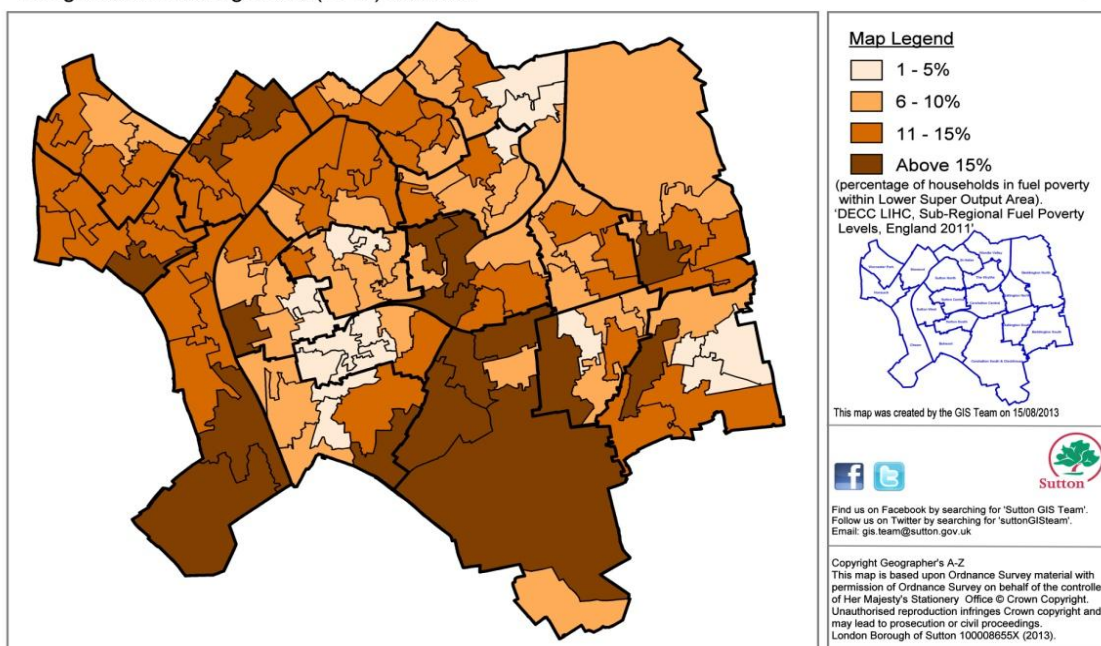
3.7 The two maps below show the distribution of fuel poverty in the borough at Lower Super Output Area using DECC data based, firstly, on the 10% of income definition and, secondly, on the LIHC definition. The colours show the proportion of fuel poor households in each ward. The range goes from lightest (lowest) to dark (highest).

London Borough of Sutton Fuel Poverty (Using 10% definition of Fuel Poverty)



London Borough of Sutton - Fuel Poverty

Using Low Income High Cost (LIHC) definition



Excess winter deaths

- 3.8 The Public Health Observatory 2013 data reported for Sutton an excess winter death index (the excess of deaths in winter compare with non winter months) during the period 2008-11 of 19.9%, which is slightly higher than both England and London (19.1%). The average excess winter death rate for the borough for the three year period was 88.5 persons per year.
- 3.9 The causes and age breakdown of excess winter deaths in the borough for the seven year period 2004 - 2011 are illustrated in the tables below.

Excess Winter Deaths in the London Borough of Sutton (2004-2011) by Cause		
Cause	Average Excess Winter Death per year	Excess Winter Death Index (%)
All circulatory diseases	32.2	20.4
Coronary heart disease	8.9	13.8
Stroke	9.4	22.4
All respiratory diseases	35.2	57.1
Influenza and pneumonia	22.1	80.7
Chronic lower respiratory	9.1	45.2
All causes	94	20.7

Atlas produced by the West Midlands Public Health Observatory on behalf of the Public Health Observatories in England (25 January 2013)

Excess Winter Deaths in the London Borough of Sutton (2004-2011) by Age	
Age	Average Excess Winter Death per year
Under 65	9.6
65-84	37.4
85+	47.7
All ages	94.7

Atlas produced by the West Midlands Public Health Observatory on behalf of the Public Health Observatories in England (25 January 2013)

Need for insulation measures

- 3.10 Using data from the Energy Savings Trust (2012) in the table below, we can identify the range of home insulation measures required in each ward as well as the proportion claiming benefits and head of households over the age of 65 and 75. This and similar available information will assist the targeting of energy efficiency opportunities and in some cases reduce the incidence of fuel poverty across the borough.

Energy Savings Trust Insulation measures required by ward (2012)							
Ward	Total properties	Uninsulated cavity wall	Uninsulated Solid wall	Need loft insulation	DWP Claimants (%)	Over 65 (%)	Over 75 (%)
Beddington North	3893	1148 (29%)	2116 (54%)	2,555 (66%)	9.3	13	6
Beddington South	3843	1443 (38%)	1307 (34%)	2,392 (62%)	16.7	12	6
Belmont	4130	1426 (35%)	1721 (42%)	2,124 (51%)	8.3	15	8
Carshalton Central	3849	1024 (27%)	2337 (61%)	2,411 (63%)	8.6	15	7
Carshalton South and Clockhouse	3428	898 (26%)	2064 (60%)	2,275 (66%)	8.5	13	6
Cheam	3854	1022 (27%)	2122 (55%)	2,416 (63%)	5.7	19	10
Nonsuch	3846	995 (26%)	2421 (63%)	2,507 (65%)	6.5	16	8
St Helier	4483	1035 (23%)	2216 (49%)	2,923 (65%)	17.3	14	7
Stonecot	3791	978 (26%)	2527 (67%)	2,668 (70%)	7.6	13	6
Sutton Central	4646	1632 (35%)	2099 (45%)	2,234 (48%)	14.0	13	7
Sutton North	3912	1174 (30%)	2191 (56%)	2,447 (63%)	9.7	17	8

Energy Savings Trust Insulation measures required by ward (2012)							
Ward	Total properties	Uninsulated cavity wall	Uninsulated Solid wall	Need loft insulation	DWP Claimants (%)	Over 65 (%)	Over 75 (%)
Sutton South	4323	2191 (51%)	1163 (27%)	1,634 (38%)	9.3	20	13
Sutton West	4205	1627 (39%)	1856 (44%)	2,197 (52%)	7.0	15	8
The Wrythe	4188	1306 (31%)	2156 (51%)	2,534 (61%)	11.2	13	5
Wallington North	4090	1318 (32%)	2192 (54%)	2,375 (58%)	11.3	12	6
Wallington South	4079	1509 (37%)	1858 (46%)	1,969 (48%)	11.9	18	11
Wandle Valley	4581	1401 (31%)	1848 (40%)	2,757 (60%)	17.1	11	5
Worcester Park	4418	1259 (28%)	2635 (60%)	2,911 (66%)	8.2	13	6
Total	73,559	23,386 (32%)	36,830 (49%)	43,329 (59%)	10.6	14	7.4

Energy Savings Trust (estimates) 2012

Energy rating of the borough's housing stock

- 3.11 The table below shows the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) ratings of the borough's homes. The rating is a measure of energy efficiency. The rating is expressed on a scale of 1-100 where a dwelling with a rating of one has poor energy efficiency (high costs) and a dwelling with a rating of 100 represents a completely energy efficient dwelling (zero net energy costs each year). In line with the national picture of energy efficiency by tenure, the data shows that the tenures with the poorest energy efficient are private rented (65) and owner occupied (58).

Tenure	Average SAP rating (out of 100)
Owner occupied*	58
Private rented housing*	65**
Council rented housing***	69
Housing association housing**	77

*Landmark data (2013)

** Covers all rented homes with Energy Performance Certificates

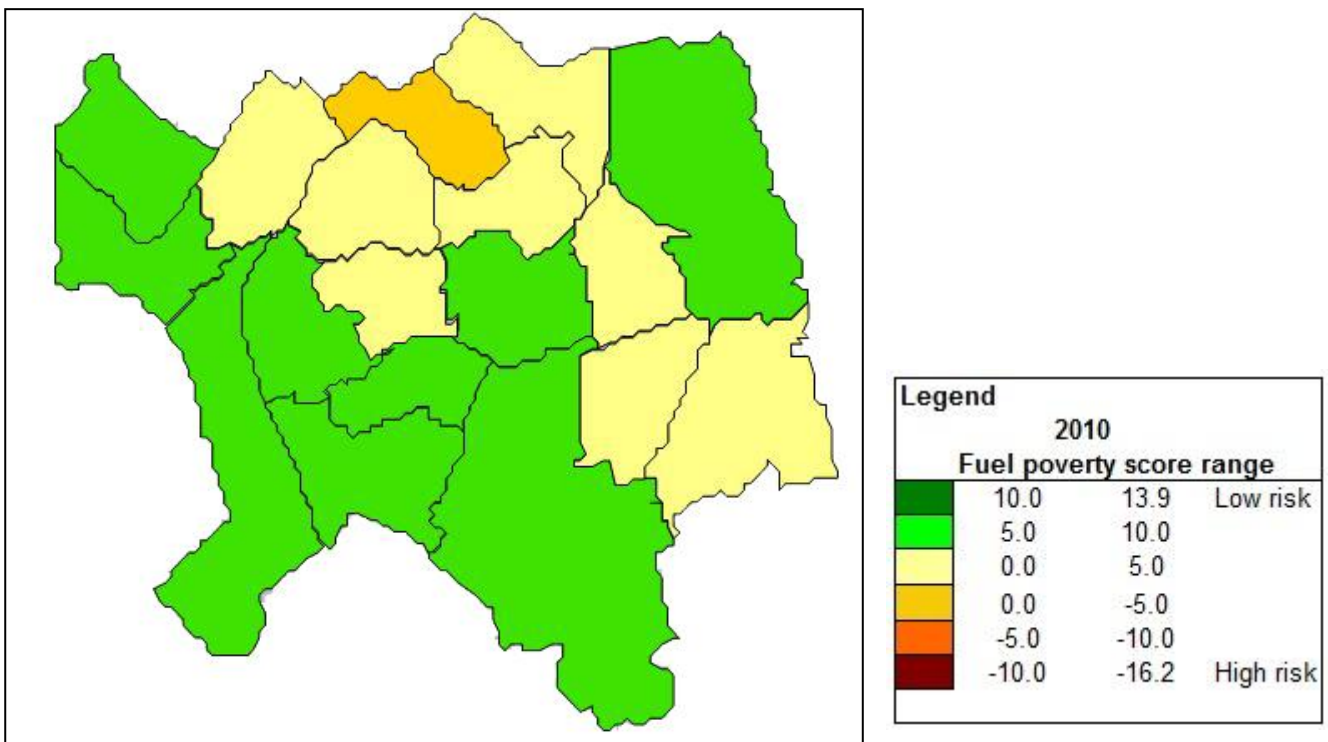
***Collected by social landlords (2012)

3.12 The table below shows that the types of property with the lowest SAP ratings are houses and bungalows.

Property type	Average SAP rating (out of 100)
House	55
Bungalow	52
Flat	65
Maisonette	62

Landmark data (2013)

3.13 With the aim of improving the health of Londoners and the capital's environment, in November 2013 the Mayor of London published a guide for each individual borough entitled: *Better Environment, Better Health*. One section of the guide focuses specifically on fuel poverty and provides a 'Fuel Poverty Risk Score' at ward level. For Sutton this shows that while Belmont ward has the 66th lowest risk score in London, St Helier ranks 463rd out of 625 wards. A risk map of the borough taken from the GLA publication is set out below.



4 Achievements

- 4.1 This section sets out achievements of the various schemes and projects that the Council successfully obtained funding for and/or have been delivered by other agencies in recent years. Although the main purpose of these schemes has been to increase the energy efficiency of residential stock in the borough they have indirectly contributed to a reduction in fuel poverty. The section goes on to look at current or ongoing schemes.

Previous Schemes

Warm Front

- 4.2 Under Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) funding, Sutton's homes received 2,265 cavity wall insulations and 5,621 loft insulations. This meant that between 31 April 2008 and 31 December 2012 approximately 9% for the borough's homes received measures under the scheme.

Coldbusters

- 4.3 The money for the Coldbusters scheme came from a GLA targeted funding stream, awarded to authorities on a sub-regional basis and divided amongst each borough. In Sutton, over the period 2008-2013, there was a total spend of approximately £1.1m. 270 qualifying owner occupiers and private rented sector households benefited from energy efficiency measures including free loft and cavity wall insulation, new boilers, repairs to and replacement of central heating systems.

Hackbridge Low Carbon Zone project

- 4.4 The Hackbridge Low Carbon Zone project was launched in March 2010 and finished in March 2012. The aim of the project was to cut CO₂ emissions within the zone (an area of 650 homes and six community buildings) by 20%, from a baseline of 1,875 tonnes p.a. The reduction was achieved through energy audits, small energy-saving devices, behaviour change and larger retrofit measures for domestic and non-domestic properties. Partners in the scheme included EcoLocal, who carried out door-to-door promotion of the scheme. The project was funded by the GLA, and Hackbridge was one of 10 such zones across the capital.
- 4.5 By the end of the project, 300 domestic energy audits had been completed and over 2,700 small energy saving measures were installed, with 114 homes receiving free insulation, and 51 boilers replaced. Eleven homes received discounted gas central heating and 67 white goods appliances were replaced. In addition, community buildings in the area received a range of measures including replacement lighting (with motion sensors to cut down on use when not required), cavity wall insulation, smart meters, de-stratification fans and solar panels. The project successfully met the 20% reduction target.

Pay As You Save

- 4.6 The Pay As You Save (PAYS) pilot project was one of only five schemes chosen to receive funding in the UK, running from March to June 2011. The Sutton pilot received £1m of funding from DECC and was administered by the Energy Saving Trust. Sutton

PAYS offered homeowners a grant and an interest-free loan, split 40:60, to cover the upfront cost of energy-efficiency measures. The installations were managed by B&Q while Sutton Council managed the administration of the loans, financial and customer service issues.

- 4.7 A total of 67 households across the borough signed up to the scheme, and an estimated 158 tonnes of CO₂ have been saved as a result. Measures such as cavity and solid wall insulation and solar PV were installed. Sutton's scheme was oversubscribed, with over 200 applicants registering. Findings from the pilot were used to shape the Government's new Green Deal framework.

Loft Save

- 4.8 Loft Save was a three month pilot project carried out in 2011 to test consumer demand for an all-inclusive package of loft clearance and insulation funded by DECC and B&Q. Merton and Kingston councils ran similar projects with slightly different offers; all three projects were marketed in the same way in order to gauge which offer was the most attractive to residents. Sutton's Loft Save involved B&Q operatives emptying the loft, insulating it and taking unwanted items to Cancer Research.
- 4.9 Of the three, the Sutton offer proved to be the most popular, and as a result a second phase of the Loft Save pilot was run in the borough in 2012, to provide better statistical data to DECC to inform future government policy and projects. Currently Sutton is still awaiting a project evaluation from B&Q and DECC.

Zero Carbon Hackbridge study

- 4.10 Bio-Regional set up a Zero Carbon Hackbridge study funded by the Sainsbury's Family Trust (at £50k). The study carried out three pieces of work:
- A detailed study of what is/is not possible around retrofitting households in Hackbridge with energy saving measures (the results will be used to do more fundraising so the best value schemes identified in the study can be implemented).
 - A scoping exercise looking into the financing of district heating in Hackbridge.
 - A financial model for retrofitting social housing in Sutton, to see if different funding streams can be pulled together to create a replicable model.

The results of the study will be used to enhance fund raising bids for future energy efficiency projects.

RE:NEW

- 4.11 RE:NEW was an area based energy efficiency programme funded by the Mayor of London which provided residents with:
- a home visit from an energy expert
 - simple energy saving devices installed in their homes
 - practical advice on how to save energy.
 - advice on improved insulation
 - advice on eligibility for grants and discounts for replacement heating systems

- 4.12 From November 2011 residents in Worcester Park and part of the Nonsuch ward were offered the above assistance under RE:NEW locally. The scheme was delivered on behalf of the Council by Climate Energy. By end of March 2012, 1,670 homes had received free energy audits and small measures, and an estimated 280 tonnes of CO₂ were saved. Phase 2 of RE:NEW was subsequently delivered across the borough and included over 100 boiler upgrades and over 30 home provided with insulation measures.

Ongoing Schemes

Works to the Council's housing stock

- 4.13 Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP) is delivering a programme using £62m of decent homes backlog funding provided by Government, which will see all Council properties brought up to the decent homes standard over the next few years. Included within the programme are works that will improve the energy efficiency rating of the stock. Currently the an average SAP rating is 69 out of 100, which is significantly higher than the private sector stock in the borough. In 2012/13 SHP delivered 176 cavity wall insulations, 186 loft insulations, 529 condensing boilers and 377 new heating systems.

Works to housing association stock

- 4.14 The Council's database indicated that on 1st April 2012 approximately 90% of the estimated 5,400 housing association rented homes in the borough met the decent homes standard, confirming what is generally known, namely that much of the association stock is relatively new and in reasonably good condition. There have, however, been examples of individual dwellings in poor condition coming to the attention of the Council's environmental health service over the years. The average SAP rating of the borough's housing association stock is estimated at 77 (out of 100) as at 1st April 2012.
- 4.15 Housing associations who recently responded to a local survey carried out by the Council reported that the following actions had been or were being planned to combat fuel poverty in their housing stock:
- Setting a minimum SAP rating target for their housing stock
 - a resident green ambassadors scheme to enable local resident volunteers to provide energy efficiency advice to neighbours
 - a major programme of insulation, including compliance with Decent Homes standard
 - an analysis of the numbers and types of households experiencing fuel poverty
 - an investment plan utilising Energy Company Obligation funding

Priority Repair Grants

- 4.16 The Council's Priority Repair Grants scheme, offered to home owners, was expanded from April 2013, following the end of the Coldbusters scheme, to include heating repairs and replacement boilers for people on benefits and low incomes. Subject to funding, this scheme is set to continue.

Warmer Homes Healthy People (Warm Room scheme)

- 4.17 The Warmer Homes Healthy People scheme (referred to as the 'Warm Room' scheme in Sutton) is funded by the Department of Health to proactively stop vulnerable people becoming unwell due to cold living conditions in the winter. The scheme provides a range of energy efficiency measures to households. People are referred to the scheme by a variety of methods including community nurses and hospital In Reach teams, leaflets in supermarkets, libraries and other locations, other council services highlighting clients' needs and word of mouth. Warm Room assessments are carried out by EcoLocal. A number of measures are available which include emergency heating, blankets, draught proofing measures etc.
- 4.18 Full benefit checks are carried out in conjunction with CAB, and where fuel poverty is an issue a credit can be applied to electricity accounts to enable the emergency heating to be used. The scheme has also acted as a referral bank for other schemes such as Coldbusters, RE:NEW and the Green Deal. Funding of £72,000 was provided by DH from November 2012 to March 2013. No further funding is available from the DH for this scheme going forward but other locally funded schemes are being explored to carry out this work.

Retrofit for the Future

- 4.19 Our Retrofit for the Future project, led by Sutton Housing Partnership together with Bioregional, tested how low carbon technology can make existing properties more energy efficient. It was funded by the Technology Strategy Board (at £150k) and provided three near identical homes on the St. Helier estate with three different types of eco-makeover. The results will shape best practice and inform future housing policy. Monitoring is being carried out over a two year period.

De-centralised energy network

- 4.20 Sutton is currently working on the delivery of a Decentralised Energy Network in Hackbridge that will supply 'cheap heat' to the area through capturing the heat currently lost to the atmosphere by the burning of the gases arising from the landfill operation at Beddington. This facility could be enhanced through the proposed new Energy from Waste facility.
- 4.21 Opportunity Sutton, the Council's new vehicle for delivering its economic development strategy, will act as a parent company to an Energy Services Company (ESCO) which will own and operate a decentralised energy network, initially in the Hackbridge area. The ESCO will focus on the delivery of low carbon heat at affordable tariffs for businesses and residents. Over time profits from the sale of heat will be used to provide benefit to residents in fuel poverty, both in the immediate area and the borough as a whole. Profits can also be used to expand the network beyond the first phase to new and existing premises.

Big London Energy Switch

- 4.22 The Big London Energy Switch, a collective energy switching scheme was funded by the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The project aimed to increase public awareness of the potential for reducing energy bills through collective switching, with a particular focus on engagement with vulnerable consumers and those in fuel poverty.

4.23 The initial project set out to run one collective energy switch and included promotion via letters to taxi-card holders, flyers to residents in receipt of housing benefits as well as via poster campaigns in Libraries, Leisure Centres and Council offices. In total 506 Sutton residents registered for the auction on 9th April 2013. The results showed that 71% of residents who registered across London were able to save an average of £122 p.a.

Energy Company Obligation and Green Deal

4.24 In late 2012/early 2013 the Government launched its new Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Green Deal schemes. These will be a key to implementing retrofit measures within the borough. The Council has chosen a partner Green Deal Provider - Climate Energy - with which it will work to market Green Deal and ECO within the borough in order to increase take up of measures, especially by those able to benefit from ECO funding. The Council will continue to work with the community to drive forward behavioural change, and ensure residents understand how they can benefit from improved energy efficiency.

Support for local partners

4.25 In addition to work that is primarily being led by the Council, we continue to aid and support significant initiatives that are delivered by local partners to improve the energy efficiency of the borough's residential housing stock. This included assisting Bioregional in their Local Energy Assessment Fund bid in 2012, which enabled them to pilot a community referral fee approach for home energy assessments, promotion of Eco Local's Energy Road Show to other organisations and community groups and promotion of energy training events provided by The U.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 To ensure a wide involvement in the development of this strategy we have sought to engage with an extensive range of people and organisations. In particular, we have endeavoured to involve those groups that are typically most affected by the costs associated with heating their homes, especially those on lower incomes, in receipt of benefits or past the age of retirement.
- 5.2 This draft strategy has also been developed in partnership with a number of key agencies that work closely with the Council, for example Age UK, the Citizens Advice Bureau, EcoLocal, housing associations, various other community and voluntary sector groups etc. All partners are committed to improving, minimising and preventing fuel poverty experienced by Sutton residents. We have involved representatives from different community groups so that there is a greater first hand understanding of what fuel poverty means in practice and to explore what the Council and its partners can do together to tackle the issue.
- 5.3 The feedback and responses received via the consultation showed that there is a lot of shared understanding and experience about those that are in fuel poverty (albeit based mainly on anecdotal information). It provided suggestions for effectively collecting fuel poverty data across the borough and the approach that should be taken to tackle fuel poverty. Below is a summary of the views collected that have and will continue to inform the actions contained within the delivery plan.
- (i) Residents experiencing fuel poverty:
 - Older people, both owner occupiers and those living in the private rented and social rented sectors
 - Families with children
 - Single people on low income/welfare benefits or those on low income and now entitled to benefits.
 - Households living in the least energy efficient homes
 - (ii) Methods for effectively collecting fuel poverty data across the borough:
 - Create a central point of coordination for fuel poverty related data
 - Produce a common checklist of questions that can be used by agencies
 - Conduct a survey of a sample of residents
 - Comparing energy use by energy companies
 - (iii) Measures needed to tackle fuel poverty:
 - Create a central hub for recording and sharing information about work being carried out borough-wide that will contribute towards a reduction in or prevention of fuel poverty
 - Assess the capacity of organisations to provide advice and assistance to tackle fuel poverty prior to raising awareness
 - Provide a central point of contact for fuel poverty advice and intervention

- Identify and record more accurately those residents who are in fuel poverty and share this information
- Involve a wide range of agencies in identifying clients in fuel poverty e.g. GPs
- Carry out targeted campaigns to identify who is fuel poor and to identify the help needed for householders
- Provide training for all relevant agencies to identify households in fuel poverty and sign post to appropriate sources of help e.g. Warm Rooms Scheme, ECO funding etc
- Extend behavioural change education to residents living in the private sector
- Create a source of expertise to provide fuel poverty information to partners and households
- Educate householders about behaviour change via trained resident ambassadors, road shows etc
- Provide energy efficiency measures for households ineligible for ECO funding
- Improve coordination of hospital discharge and improvements to the homes of clients in or at risk of fuel poverty
- Make appropriate links with other related areas of work e.g. food poverty, debt advice and income maximisation.
- Lobby Government to take action to control the cost of fuel to the end user.

5.4 Additionally, a cross-party Member Fuel Poverty Task and Finish Group were instrumental in overseeing the development of this strategy and delivery plan to ensure that the priorities and views of residents borough-wide were represented.

6 Resources

- 6.1 A summary of some key sources of funding that will or could contribute to the reduction of fuel poverty during 2014/15 and possibly longer is set out below. These funds include both the Authority's own resources and those from external sources.

Local authority funding

- 6.2 The Council's Priority Repairs Grant scheme, offered to home owners, currently covers heating repairs, replacement boilers and other issues of serious disrepair for people on benefits and low incomes. With a budget of £11k this scheme is being delivered in 2013/14 and, subject to funding, will continue to do so in 2014/15.
- 6.3 The Council operates a three year Strategic Partners Programme with the voluntary sector to building capacity and infrastructure support within the voluntary sector. In year 3 of this funded programme (2014/15) partners will be encouraged to work in collaboration with the Council to identify fuel poor residents and provide assistance and advice where possible to reduce the incidence of fuel poverty across the borough.

External sources of funding

- 6.4 Since the transfer of funding for Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans from the DWP to local authorities on 1st April 2013, Sutton Council has developed a scheme that will provide support to the most vulnerable residents in times of need. The Council's Crisis Loans and Grants scheme include assisting eligible claimants to charge utility account keys.
- 6.5 Funds have been made available to organisations within the voluntary sector to deliver schemes that will alleviate fuel poverty - e.g. the Energy Best Deal scheme run by Citizens Advice in England are funding organisations such as Sutton CAB and Sutton Housing Partnership to deliver presentations to residents about how they can reduce their energy costs. The Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group is funding Sutton Age UK to pilot the Caring Neighbourhood scheme, which will focus on raising awareness of how to keep warm and well in winter for residents aged 75+ with a long term condition thus preventing avoidable hospital admissions.
- 6.6 The Council has received funding from the GLA, via the SW London Sub-region, to bring empty properties back into use. Conditions of the grant are that the repaired property should be let to vulnerable households nominated by the local authority for a period of five years and also that the property be brought up to a Decent Homes Plus standard. This standard requires the installation of significant energy efficiency measures. For the period 2012/13 - 2014/15, £350k has been made available for the delivery of this programme.
- 6.7 Nationally ECO funding was expected to be in the region of £1.3bn per year, although this funding will not be divided into regions. The Council will provide residents who are eligible to apply for ECO grants with advice and assistance to obtain funding for the installation of energy efficiency measures into their homes, which will reduce the likelihood of fuel poverty.

- 6.8 Benefits available nationally from the Department of Work and Pensions, for eligible applicants, are intended to contribute towards extra heating costs during periods of very cold weather. These benefits include Cold Weather Payments, Winter Fuel Payments and the Warm Homes Discount.
- 6.9 As described in chapter 1, fuel poverty has a direct impact upon health, with the associated costs that inevitably fall directly or indirectly upon the health service. With the transfer of the Public Health function to local authorities in 2013 there is now the opportunity to work in a more joined up way to tackle fuel poverty through the resources being available from the Department of Health, with the potential, ultimately, to make savings to the public purse in the longer term. Linking in to Sutton's new Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy the scope for securing additional funding to tackling fuel poverty (see chapter 8) will be important to the successful implementation of this strategy.

7 Aims and Objectives

- 7.1 The overall aims of this strategy are to reduce the numbers of households living in fuel poverty and the overall extent or depth of fuel poverty in the borough.
- 7.2 In support of these aims we have identified six objectives, set out below, which if delivered, collectively will support us in achieving our aim.
1. To identify individual households in fuel poverty or at risk of fuel poverty in order to be able to target interventions
 2. To raise awareness of fuel poverty and of the advice and assistance available to tackle it within key partner organisations and amongst borough residents
 3. To lever in funding and other resources to tackle fuel poverty
 4. To improve the energy efficiency of the borough's housing stock across all tenures, focusing in particular on the homes of fuel poor households
 5. To maximise incomes, reduce energy bills and support households in or vulnerable to fuel poverty
 6. To promote behaviour change amongst fuel poor households and households generally, encouraging more efficient use of heating systems etc

Strategic Drivers

- 7.3 There are a number of drivers that have shaped our fuel poverty strategy. These are outlined below to illustrate how they have contributed to the development of our strategic aim and objectives.

National and regional policy drivers

- 7.4 Despite the intention of the previous Government to eradicate fuel poverty by 2016 the numbers of households in fuel poverty have continued to rise. This has influenced a proposed change in the definition of fuel poverty and a new (and more realistic) approach to setting fuel poverty targets: namely one focused on mitigating and reducing the extent of fuel poverty rather than eradicating it completely.
- 7.5 At a regional level the Mayor's draft London Housing Strategy contains policies that will improve the energy performance of existing homes in the capital. Policies are also being introduced to reduce the cost of energy via the Mayor's Decentralised Energy Programme for London.

The scale of fuel poverty locally

- 7.6 Chapter 4 sets out the extent of fuel poverty in the borough. Some of the key findings emerging from this and drivers for the direction of our strategy are:
- the distribution of fuel poverty across the borough, which is not necessarily concentrated in the most deprived wards
 - excess winter deaths being concentrated amongst the 65+ age group
 - a significant need for home insulation, including more difficult to treat solid wall properties

- the energy efficiency of stock by tenure being lower for the private rented sector and home owners

Resources available

- 7.7 Set against the wider policy context and the identified levels of fuel poverty locally are the resources available to address fuel poverty in the borough.
- 7.8 As chapter 6 illustrates, recent Government policies have resulted in a reduction in funded energy efficiency programmes and the introduction of the new Energy Company Obligation and Green Deal. The Council has identified procurement of a preferred partner as the most suitable approach to maximise benefits from these new programmes, which have the potential to assist in the reduction in fuel poverty in the borough. Climate Energy has been commissioned to act as the Council's preferred partner for ECO and Green Deal until March 2015. The Council will also continue to utilise local resources from within its own budgets and via its voluntary sector partners.
- 7.9 These factors together with the feedback from our initial consultation and an assessment of the activities that we will continue to deliver have been the main drivers for the identification of our six objectives.

Delivering our Aims and Objectives

- 7.10 To achieve our aims and objectives we have identified a number of actions, which are set out in chapter 8. These include work that the Council and its strategic partners are already undertaking across a number of domains.
- 7.11 The actions to be delivered in 2014/15 will be linked to the Council's business planning processes and where possible the equivalent of these within our partner organisations.

8 Delivery Plan

- 8.1 Set out in the table below are the actions to be carried out during year one of the strategy (2014/15), these set against the six objectives that have been outlined in chapter 7. Following an annual review of the action plan, further actions will be added and where no longer relevant they will be removed.
- 8.3 There are further areas of activity, under some of the key objectives outlined in chapter 7 that are not included in the first year's action plan but that we intend to explore and will seek to deliver later on during 2014/15 or in 2015/16 as funding or other circumstances allow. These include:

Objective 1 - The coordination of existing fuel poverty information, the collection of fuel poverty data and the purchase of a heat loss tool to better help identify and target fuel poor households.

Objective 2 - Work with strategic partners to ensure that they have knowledge of available information and schemes that will assist in reducing fuel poverty as well as promoting collaborative energy switching schemes.

Objective 3 - Work with the Sutton Clinical Commissioning Group and other strategic partners to plan and deliver interventions that will prevent avoidable hospital admissions and reduce excess winter deaths.

Objective 5 - Delivery of the Warm Room scheme to enable older and vulnerable residents to remain healthy and warm in their homes as well as maximising income through the promotion of hot water saving devices.

Action	Output or Target (where set)	Resources	Timescale
Objective 1: To identify individual households in fuel poverty in order to be able to target interventions			
1.1 Identify fuel poor households through the targeted marketing carried out as part of the ECO assessment process	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
1.2 Use all available domestic energy consumption data to target energy efficiency projects	Creation of GIS maps	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
Objective 2: To raise awareness of fuel poverty and of the advice and assistance available to tackle it within key partner organisations and amongst borough residents			
2.1 Train new community environmental advice ambassadors, with links to the community wellbeing programme*	(i) Funding applications pursued (ii) Ambassadors trained (iii) Advice delivered to the community	Within existing DECC funding	2014/15 2015/16 2015/16
2.2 Set up a community referral scheme to encourage vulnerable residents to take up ECO grants	Number of Affordable Warmth ECO grants in borough and CO ₂ emissions saved	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
2.3 Promote opportunities for domestic retrofit grants to residents, including ECO via Council officers and other communication channels*	Nos. of energy efficiency measures installed via ECO and Green Deal	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
Objective 3: To lever in funding and other resources to tackle fuel poverty			
3.1 Create a carbon offset fund to deliver domestic energy efficiency through the Community Energy Fund (CEF)*	(i) Business case developed (ii) Carbon offset fund set up (iii) CEF delivered	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 2014/15 2015/16
3.2 Identify and apply for funding domestic retrofit projects, as additional funding becomes available*	Number of funding bids applied for	Within existing staff resources and subject to the availability of match funding by the Council	2014/15 and beyond

Action	Output or Target (where set)	Resources	Timescale
3.3 Work with energy companies to identify funding for Smart Meters and Smart Grids*	Number of Smart Meters installed Number of Smart Grids established	Within existing staff resources	As the opportunity arises
3.4 Explore opportunities for DECC funding to reduce fuel poverty and carbon emissions, both locally and across boroughs		Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
3.5 Investigate opportunities to deliver bulk PV/renewable heat schemes for Council housing*	Funding for schemes identified	Within existing staff resource linked to housing development programme and availability of funding	As the opportunity arises
Objective 4: To improve the energy efficiency of the borough's housing stock across all tenures, focusing in particular on the homes of fuel poor households			
4.1 Work with housing associations that own stock in the borough to encourage the development of schemes for ECO funding where appropriate *	Number of ECO grants and CO ₂ emissions saved	Within existing staff resources	2014/15
4.2 Work with Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP) to identify and deliver maintenance and refurbishment measures to reduce CO ₂ emissions in the Council's stock*	Improved SAP rating achieved and proportion of D to G-rated homes reduced	To be determined following modelling of housing stock, discussion with SHP and engagement with contractors regarding ECO funding	2014/15 and beyond
4.3 Link non-connected Council homes to gas mains	Number of homes connected	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
4.4 Carry out energy efficiency improvements to the Council's Traveller site	Bottled gas replaced with connection to the gas mains	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
4.5 Enforce the new minimum energy standards for landlords when they come into force*	Awaiting new standards	Within existing staff resource	Expected by April 2018

Action	Output or Target (where set)	Resources	Timescale
4.6 Continue to apply planning policy DM6 of the Council's Decentralised Energy protocol, which requires all new residential developments to contribute towards or connect to planned low or zero carbon district heating networks within identified Decentralised Energy Opportunity Areas and apply through development control*	Apply in 100% of appropriate cases	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
Objective 5: To maximise incomes, reduce energy bills and support households in or vulnerable to fuel poverty			
5.1 Carry out enforcement action in private sector homes, where complaints are received, to remove category 1 hazards of excess cold	Number of enforcements carried out	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
5.2 Provide information and advice to maximise household income e.g. benefit take up campaigns etc.	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
5.3 Identify households in fuel debt and provide appropriate advice and signposting	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
5.4 Incorporate welfare benefits and home energy checks with routine home visits	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
Objective 6: To promote behaviour change amongst fuel poor households and those vulnerable to fuel poverty, encouraging more efficient use of heating systems etc			
6.1 Work with private sector residents to promote energy efficiency behaviour change	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond
6.2 Work with Council tenants to promote energy efficiency behaviour change	Work in progress	Within existing staff resources	2014/15 and beyond

*Action contained within the 2013 HECA Further Report

9 Monitoring and Review

- 9.1 In order to effectively deliver the strategy, we will ensure that the actions needed to achieve the aims and objectives are set within annual service unit business plans and work plans from 2014/15 onwards. In a number of instances it is likely that another organisation - e.g. a voluntary sector partner - will be the appropriate body to carry out specific actions or contribute towards their delivery. In such cases, the Council, through regular liaison, will seek to ensure that partner organisations concerned incorporate relevant actions within their own business or service planning processes.
- 9.2 The Council's Housing Service will lead on the monitoring and review of this strategy and its associated action plan, working within the established officer and Member level structures. The body that will oversee and monitor delivery is the Housing Strategy Group. Monitoring at Member level will be carried out through the Housing, Economy and Business Committee.
- 9.3 Given the pace of change within the arena of energy efficiency, the wider social and economic context as well as the national Fuel Poverty Strategy expected later this year our strategy and delivery plan will be regularly reviewed. Changes to the strategy and or delivery plan will be made as needed, aligned to the review stages in the business/service planning process. In any event, all fuel poverty actions will be reviewed and revised service plans produced at each year end.

Glossary

Scheme	Description
Bioregional	An entrepreneurial charity which initiates and delivers practical solutions to help people and communities to live within a fair share of the earth's resources (referred to as 'one planet living').
Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT)	Placed an obligation on major energy suppliers to meet targets by encouraging households to take up energy efficiency measures – free or discounted loft and cavity wall insulation.
Cold Weather Payment	A payment made automatically to eligible persons by the Department of Work and Pensions for each seven day period of very cold weather between 1 November to 31 March. Intended to help towards extra heating cost during very cold weather.
Community Energy Savings Programme (CESP)	A 'whole house approach' to energy efficiency measures
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
Decentralised Energy Network	Employing generation technologies such as solar PV and combine heat and power, to produce electricity close to energy and users
EcoLocal	<p>EcoLocal develops and delivers a broad range of environmental sustainability services designed to help people move toward more pro-environmental behaviours. Their services cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local food, health, transport, energy, waste minimisation, - community engagement, consultation and research, - training and facilitation and event management.
Energy Company Obligation	<p>A new programme designed to reduce Britain's energy consumption by funding home improvements worth around £1.3 billion every year. The funding comes from big energy suppliers. It is delivered to customers either directly from the supplier or by organisations working together, which have made special arrangements, such as Green Deal Providers.</p> <p>Many householders in older properties and those on benefits or low incomes may qualify for extra financial assistance.</p>
ESCo	An energy service company. A professional organisation, scheme or trust which is formed to plan or administer energy producing projects or design effective solutions.

Scheme	Description
Excess Winter Death Index	The excess of deaths in winter (December to March) compared with non-winter months from the preceding August to November and the following April to July expressed as a percentage.
Feed-In Tariff	Feed-In Tariffs were introduced on 1 April 2010 and replaced UK government grants as the main financial incentive to encourage uptake of renewable electricity-generating technologies.
GIS	Geographical Information System
Greater London Authority (GLA)	Since April 2012 is responsible (via the Mayor) for housing investment in London.
Green Deal	A framework to enable private firms to offer consumers energy efficiency improvements to their homes, community spaces and businesses at no upfront cost, and recoup payments through a charge in instalments on the energy bill.
One Planet Living	A global initiative based on 10 principles of sustainability developed by Bioregional and WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature).
Renewable Heat Incentive	The Renewable Heat Incentive is a new Government-backed measure being introduced in 2011 to make it worth your while to produce renewable heat (energy that comes from resources which are continually replenished e.g. sunlight, wind, rain etc.)
Smart Meters	Utility meters that record consumers energy, water or gas usage
Smart Grids	A modernised electrical grid that uses information and communications technology to gather and act on information, such as behaviours of suppliers and consumers in an automated way to improve the efficiency, reliability, economics and sustainability of the production and distribution of electricity.
Sutton Housing Partnership (SHP)	The Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) responsible for managing the Council's housing stock.
Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP)	The rating is a measure of energy efficiency. The rating is expressed on a scale of 1-100 where a dwelling with a rating of one has poor energy efficiency (high costs) and a dwelling with a rating of 100 represents a completely energy efficient dwelling (zero net energy costs each year). Any property with a SAP rating lower than 35 does not meet the minimum standard under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System

Scheme	Description
The U	A local organisation offering learning sessions delivered by volunteers
Warm Front Scheme	Government funded scheme to improve heating and/or insulation to homes of eligible households
Warm Homes Discount Scheme	Requires energy suppliers to provide support for low income and vulnerable customers with their energy costs. (The scheme is worth over £1.1b and will help 2m low income vulnerable customers a year.)
Winter Fuel Payment	A tax-free benefit paid to qualifying persons by the Department of Work and Pensions to help pay heating bills.

References

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²*Fuel Poverty: A Framework for Future Action* (July 2013), Department of Energy and Climate Change

³Atlas produced by the West Midlands Public Health Observatory on behalf of the Public Health Observatories in England (25 January 2013)

⁴*The Health Impacts of Cold Homes and Fuel Poverty*, Marmot Review Team, May 2011