

**Home Energy  
Conservation Act  
Progress Report  
2015**

March 2015



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## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) emphasises the crucial role Local Authorities play in improving the energy efficiency of all residential accommodation in their respective areas. In July 2012 the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) published a requirement under HECA for all local authorities in England to report on the measures they propose to undertake to achieve this.
- 1.2 In this regard DECC require a HECA Progress Report to be submitted by 31 March 2015 and additional reports to be submitted in two yearly intervals at 31 March 2017 and 2019 up to and including 2027. This document sets out the work Northumberland County Council (NCC) is undertaking to improve the energy efficiency of residential properties.
- 1.3 The Progress Report also provides an update on the developments made against the objectives outlined in the 2013 Further Report and the Council's ongoing energy efficiency partnership work with registered providers, other local authorities and partner organisations such as British Gas.

## 2 National and regional drivers behind energy efficiency

### Legislative requirements

- 2.1 The requirement to improve the energy efficiency of residential properties stems from the legal requirements to reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sup>2</sup>) emissions set out in the Climate Change Act 2008 and the Government's Carbon Plan, published in 2011. The Carbon Plan sets the following targets in relation to housing:
  - To reduce greenhouse gas CO<sup>2</sup> emissions by 29% by 2017, 35% by 2022, and 50% by 2027 – for buildings this means a reducing 2009 levels by between 24% and 39% by 2027;
  - To insulate all cavities and lofts, where practical, by 2020;
  - By 2030, between 1 – 3.7m additional solid wall installations and between 1.9 - 7.2m other energy efficiency installations;
  - By 2030, 1.6m - 8.6m building level low carbon heat installations such as heat pumps (Government modelling suggests that 21 - 45% of heat supplies to buildings will need to be low carbon);
  - By 2050 emissions from UK buildings to be “close to zero”.
- 2.2 On a national level there are a number of key drivers and policy levers designed to facilitate energy efficiency improvements in residential properties.

## National initiatives

2.3 The key funding streams to improve the energy efficiency of residential properties on a national level include:

- The Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation as sources of finance;
- Ongoing support under the Feed in Tariffs scheme;
- Ongoing support through the Renewable Heat premium payment and the domestic Renewable Heat Incentive;
- The requirement for all homes to be built to zero carbon standard from 2016;
- The requirement for Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) on the sale, rent or construction of a building;
- The Energy Act contains a provision to introduce a minimum energy efficiency standard (likely to be EPC band E) for private rented housing from 2018;
- Smart Meters to be installed in every home by late 2019 (though it has recently been announced that this will be delayed).

2.4 The delivery of energy efficiency improvements to residential properties on a regional level are predominantly driven by these national funding streams.

## Regional initiatives

2.5 One of the cornerstones of Northumberland County Council's commitment to energy efficiency was its decision to become a signatory to the [European Covenant of Mayors](#) in January 2009. All Local Authorities in the North East of England have signed up to the EU Covenant of Mayors agreement, which makes the region the first in Europe to achieve this degree of political leadership and consensus.

2.6 This commitment required the Council to produce a [Sustainable Energy Action Plan](#) (SEAP) outlining in detail how it intends to deliver reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 20% by 2020<sup>[1]</sup>. The graph below outlines the annual rate of reduction required to meet this target.

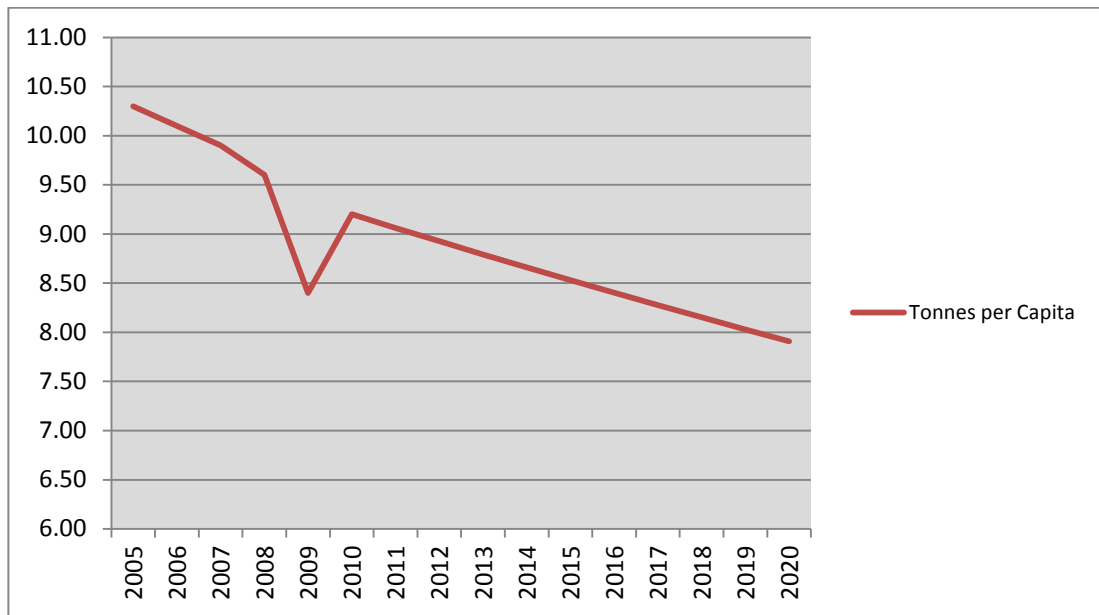
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<sup>[1]</sup> These reductions are based on 2005 as the baseline year.

1

[http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://committees.northumberland.gov.uk/aksnorthumberland/images/att5853.doc&rct=i&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=CpisVPiqO6Tn7ga\\_1oDYAw&ved=0CBYQFJAA&sig2=0HpoN9n0zr\\_9m0vLTGlqeq&usq=AFQjCNFKvGkOPgkQX-hpEJteWTatV\\_1x4A](http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://committees.northumberland.gov.uk/aksnorthumberland/images/att5853.doc&rct=i&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=CpisVPiqO6Tn7ga_1oDYAw&ved=0CBYQFJAA&sig2=0HpoN9n0zr_9m0vLTGlqeq&usq=AFQjCNFKvGkOPgkQX-hpEJteWTatV_1x4A) page 1

**Figure 1: County wide per capita CO<sup>2</sup> emissions**



2.7 The SEAP is symbiotic on a number of other Council documents such as the [Sustainable Community Strategy](#), the [Climate Change Action Plan](#) and the Strategic Framework for Climate Change Planning in Northumberland. The SEAP is informed by these strategy documents and provides a compelling vision for reducing carbon emissions on a countywide basis including energy efficient measures in residential properties.

2.8 In addition, Northumberland Council is also a signatory of the [Nottingham Declaration](#), which seeks to progressively address the causes and impacts of climate change in accordance to local priorities by securing maximum benefit for communities. When the Council became a unitary authority in 2009 it reaffirmed its commitment through its Climate Change Action Plan which commits it to:

- Progressively reducing carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gas emissions;
- Assess the impact climate change will have on the estate and services and seek adaptations to future impacts and opportunities;
- Stabilise and progressively reduce the Council's environmental footprint<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> This data is internally collated by Northumberland County Council

<sup>3</sup>

[http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://committees.northumberland.gov.uk/aksnorthumberland/images/att359.doc&rct=i&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=fZjsVMjjOIWS7AbUvoGQCQ&ved=0CBkQFjAB&sig2=CmbRfrjOgn3BCn-pEya\\_PA&usq=AFQjCNGUaAPaY1z26Gkicmp14WE8OyppsOw](http://www.google.co.uk/url?url=http://committees.northumberland.gov.uk/aksnorthumberland/images/att359.doc&rct=i&frm=1&q=&esrc=s&sa=U&ei=fZjsVMjjOIWS7AbUvoGQCQ&ved=0CBkQFjAB&sig2=CmbRfrjOgn3BCn-pEya_PA&usq=AFQjCNGUaAPaY1z26Gkicmp14WE8OyppsOw) page 3

- 2.9 In order to fulfil this commitment Northumberland County Council has pledged to work in collaboration with partner organisations such as Homes for Northumberland to ensure properties meet the Decent Home Standard and introduce a range of energy efficiency measures that will reduce carbon emissions.
- 2.10 Northumberland County Council's commitment to improving the energy efficiency of residential properties is enshrined in its Housing Strategy.

### **Northumberland Housing Strategy 2013-2018**

2.11 The Northumberland Housing Strategy (2013-2018) is used by the Council to identify the present and future housing needs for the area and outline the strategic approach it will take to address these issues. The overarching aims of the Strategy are to ensure that the population of Northumberland has access to a home that is safe, warm and affordable and that sufficient support is available to those that are unable to meet their own housing needs. To achieve these aims, the Council has identified the following priorities, which contribute to improving the energy efficiency of the housing stock.

1. **Affordable and Quality Housing** – Northumberland has a higher than average rate of fuel poverty, which requires a concerted programme of investment in the area's existing housing stock to ensure it is up to standard. In addition to the focus on the existing stock, the document also contains a commitment to safeguarding the energy efficiency standards of new build properties. Provision to help owner-occupiers improve the energy efficiency of their properties is also available via the [Regional Financial Assistance Policy](#). This funding stream exists to help homeowners improve their properties through a repayable loan. In this instance the Council's drive to tackle fuel poverty by making sure homes are affordable to heat is focused on present and future housing stock across all tenures<sup>4</sup>. In order to expedite this, Northumberland County Council aims to deliver over 3,000 energy efficiency intervention measures a year through its partnership approach, by making effective use of available funding streams.
2. **Healthy People** – This approach aspires to give vulnerable people the housing related support they need. For people who require specific support related to a disability the Council have pledged to deliver 21,750 adaptations to households. The Council will seek to re-house disabled people where necessary, and support people to live independently wherever possible. The Council will also work to ensure that people are given access to advice and information on energy efficiency measures to increase their take up<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> [A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2013-18](#) page 12

<sup>5</sup> [Ibid](#) page 18

3. **Sustainable Economies and Communities** - Northumberland County Council is committed to ensuring that the County is a prosperous place for residents and businesses and that people are attracted to live here. The Council will work with local communities and partner organisations to achieve these aims. This will include supporting new housing developments that will provide decent homes for people to come to live in Northumberland. There is also a pledge that ARCH, the Council's arm's length development company, will build mixed tenure housing across private and social rented tenures that will provide attractive homes for new and existing residents of Northumberland<sup>6</sup>. This includes provision for properties that are energy efficient.

2.12 Northumberland County Council is in the process of preparing a Private Sector Housing Strategy that will set out the Council's approach for improving the quality of private sector housing. This will include energy efficiency measures.

2.13 The Council has conducted detailed analysis into the energy efficiency issues on a Countywide basis to provide a clear picture of the scale of the challenge.

### 3 Where are we now?

3.1 This section provides an overview of current trends in Northumberland in terms of energy use and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, fuel poverty and health indicators relating to excess winter deaths.

#### Energy use and CO<sup>2</sup> emissions

##### Percentage decrease in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions

3.2 CO<sup>2</sup> emissions have experienced a marked decline across Northumberland. The County has seen a higher than average decrease in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions of 25.7% between 2005 and 2012<sup>7</sup>. This is significantly higher than the North East average at 18.6%, and the average for England at 12.1%<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid page 20

<sup>7</sup> The measures used for figures in this section include emission with the scope of influence of local authorities This is based on energy consumption from the business and public sector and residential housing within the boundaries of the local area

<sup>8</sup> [2005 to 2012 UK local and regional CO<sup>2</sup> emissions: subset dataset \(emissions within the scope of influence of local authorities\)](#)



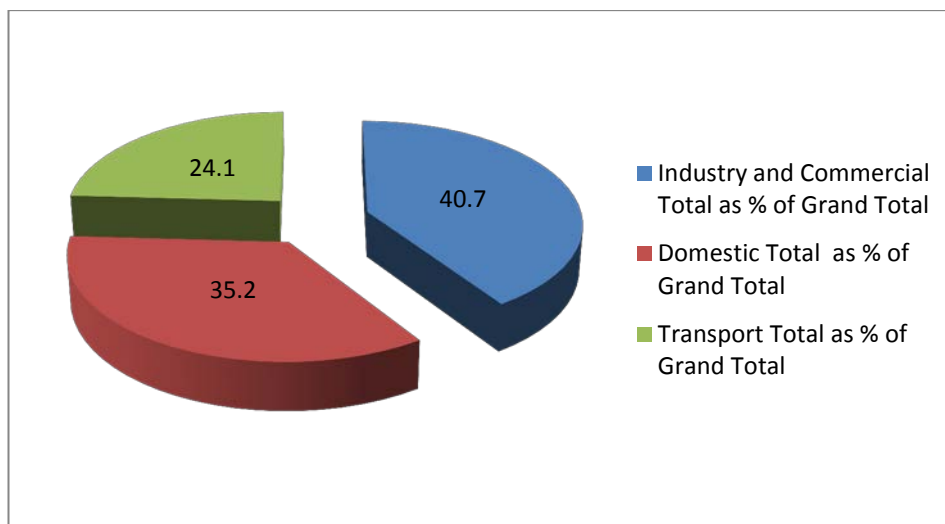
3.3 The underlying trends behind the total decrease in CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in Northumberland reveal some interesting findings. The percentage decrease in domestic carbon emissions of 9.7% is less than in other sectors. The 40.2% fall in industrial and commercial emissions has acted as the key driver behind the overall rate of decrease<sup>9</sup>.

### CO<sup>2</sup> emissions composition

3.4 Industrial and commercial production emits the greatest proportion of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in Northumberland, making up 40.7% of the total in 2012. This is slightly higher than the average for England at 39.9% and slightly lower than the North East average at 43%.

3.5 In Northumberland domestic housing is the source of 35.2% of CO<sup>2</sup> emissions with transport emitting 24.1% (See Figure 2).

**Figure 2: CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in Northumberland by sector in 2012**



### Domestic carbon emissions

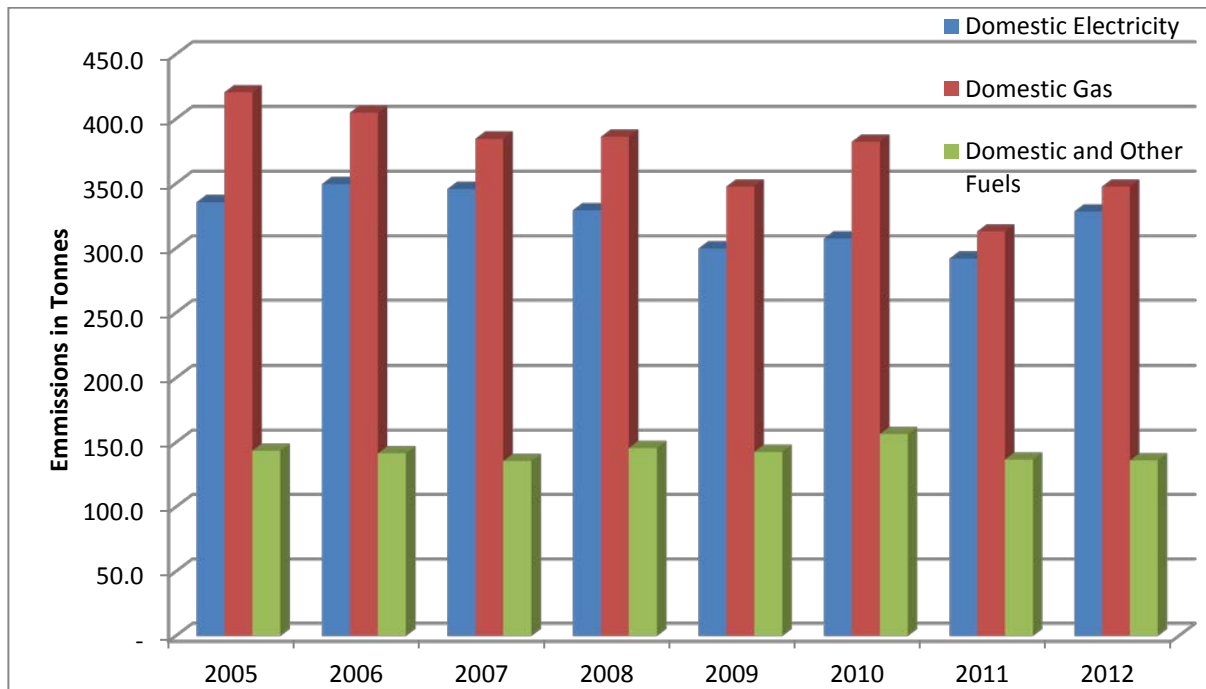
3.6 The overall fall in domestic CO<sup>2</sup> emissions is predominantly driven by the fall in domestic gas emissions. Between 2005 and 2015, emissions associated with domestic electricity fell by 2%, domestic gas fell by 17% with domestic other fuels falling by 5%.

3.7 These findings mirror national trends with the fall in domestic gas emissions acting as the key driver behind the overall reduction in domestic CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. However, the rate of decrease is slightly higher on average in the North East at 17.8% and slightly lower in England at 15.6%<sup>10</sup>. (See Figure 3)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

**Figure 3: Domestic emissions in Northumberland 2005-2012**



### Fuel Poverty

3.8 The Government has recently taken the decision to change the definition of fuel poverty. This change has significant implications for how fuel poverty is measured and its areas of greatest prevalence regionally and nationally.

3.9 Under the previous system, a household was defined as fuel poor if it spends 10% of its disposable income to heat its home to an adequate standard.<sup>11</sup> The new Low Income High Costs (LIHC) definition classifies a household as fuel poor if:

- i. people have required fuel costs that are above average (this is defined as national median level); and,
- ii. if they were to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line. This is defined as being 60% less than the national median income.

3.10 The two definitions paint a significantly different picture of the levels of fuel poverty on a regional and sub-regional level<sup>12</sup>.

3.11 Under the previous definition, Northumberland has the highest level of fuel poverty out of the twelve North East local authorities at 21.1%. Under this measurement, the level of fuel poverty in Northumberland is almost 6% higher than North Tyneside, which has the lowest level of fuel poverty in the North East. The North East average is 17.8%<sup>13</sup>.

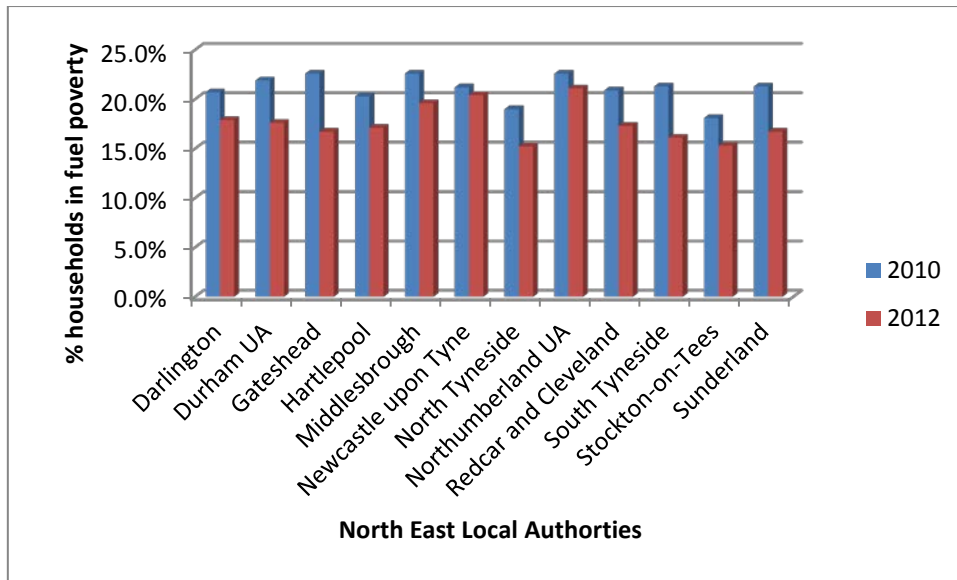
<sup>11</sup> An adequate standard of warmth is usually defined as 21°C for the main living area, and 18°C for other occupied rooms.

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/226985/fuel\\_poverty\\_report\\_2013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226985/fuel_poverty_report_2013.pdf) page 3

<sup>13</sup> [Fuel Poverty: Sub regional Data under 10% indicator](#)

3.12 This measurement also shows a decrease in fuel poverty across all the local authorities in the North East between 2010 and 2012. The rate of decrease is particularly marked in areas such as Gateshead where it declined by 5.9%. South Tyneside and Sunderland also saw significant decrease of 5.3% and 4.6% respectively. Northumberland has the second lowest rate of decrease at 1.5% followed by Newcastle with a decrease of 0.8%.

**Figure 4: 10% definition of fuel poverty between 2010-2012**

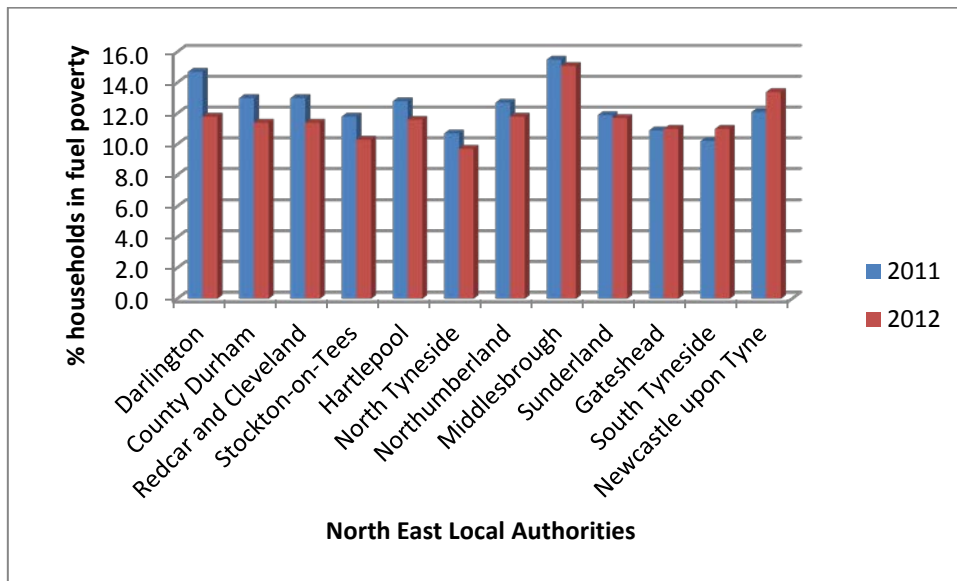


3.13 In contrast, Northumberland has the third highest level of fuel poverty in the North East at 11.6%, under the new LIHC definition. Middlesbrough has by far the highest level of fuel poverty out of the twelve North East local authorities at 15.1%, followed by Newcastle at 13.4%. Under this measurement, Northumberland's fuel poverty levels are still higher than the North East average at 11.6%. In this instance Northumberland's fuel poverty levels are only 2.1% higher than North Tyneside, which has the lowest levels of fuel poverty<sup>14</sup>.

3.14 This measurement also shows that fuel poverty decreased in nine out of the twelve North East local authorities between 2011 and 2012. Of the three local authorities that showed an increase in fuel poverty, Newcastle had the highest increase at 1.3% followed by South Tyneside at 0.8%. Gateshead also had a nominal increase of 0.1%. For the majority of local authorities, which showed a decrease in fuel poverty, Darlington exhibited the greatest level at 2.9%. This is followed by County Durham and Redcar and Cleveland with the joint second highest rate of decrease at 1.6%. Northumberland has the third lowest rate of decrease at 0.9%.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

**Figure 5: LIHC definition of fuel poverty 2011-2012**



3.15 It is clear from these figures that the prevalence of fuel poverty in Northumberland varies significantly in relation to the definition deployed but is clear that under either definition fuel poverty remains an issue in Northumberland.

## Health

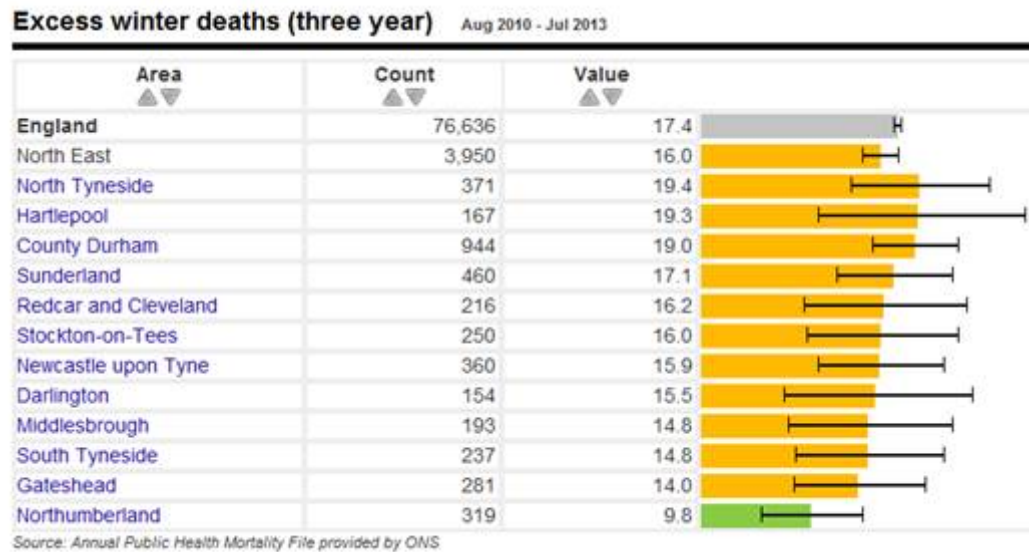
3.16 The number of excess winter deaths in Northumberland reveals a mixed picture. Excess winter deaths are often related to underlying social issues such as fuel poverty. Data provided by the Public Health England indicates that between August 2010 and July 2013 there were approximately 313 excess winter deaths in Northumberland, which is the fifth highest number in the North East.

3.17 However, the value<sup>15</sup> of excess winter deaths for Northumberland is lowest out of twelve North East local authorities at 9.8. This is significantly lower than the North East value of 16.0 and the value for England at 17.4. The value for Northumberland is 9.6 lower than North Tyneside which has the highest value of winter deaths<sup>16</sup>. (See Figure 6)

<sup>15</sup> Value calculates the number of excess winter deaths as a proportion of an area's population

<sup>16</sup> <http://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#gid/1938132696/pat/6/ati/101/page/3/par/E12000001/are/E06000057>

**Figure 6: Excess winter deaths**



3.18 This analysis of the energy efficiency issues in Northumberland has informed and influenced the Council's strategic approach to tackling fuel poverty and carbon emission reduction.

#### **4 Where do we want to get to?**

##### **Fuel poverty and energy efficiency indicators**

4.1 In response to the acknowledged levels of fuel poverty and poorly insulated homes, particularly in certain parts of Northumberland, the Council has agreed three indicators that will measure progress towards reducing fuel poverty and improving the existing housing stock which are:

- To improve at least 3,000 properties per year following energy efficiency measures being installed<sup>17</sup>;
- To improve the energy efficiency of at least 120 properties in the former Berwick Local Authority area<sup>18</sup>; and
- To achieve a SAP rating of 57.5 following improvement works to the properties in the former Berwick local authority area<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> [A Housing Strategy for Northumberland 2013-18](#) page 16

<sup>18</sup> <http://committees.northumberland.gov.uk/aksnorthumberland/images/att15012.pdf> page 4

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

- 4.2 In addition to the above the Council will also report against the assumed levels of CO<sup>2</sup> savings on an annual and lifetime basis following energy efficiency works.
- 4.3 There are over 6,000 properties that have been assessed across Northumberland that have a SAP rating of less than 38 and of these there are 1,116 properties that at the time of the assessment were occupied by a vulnerable person as per the former National Indicator NI187 definition. As part of its ongoing monitoring work the Council will track the number of properties with a SAP level of less than 38 and direct its activities where possible towards those properties.
- 4.4 The variation in levels of properties with a SAP rating of less than 35<sup>10</sup> is shown across Northumberland in Appendix 1.
- 4.5 Similarly, there are a variety of initiatives that Northumberland County Council are taking advantage of on a regional level to improve the energy efficiency of their properties based on these national funding streams. These include;
- Ready to Switch - A collective energy switching scheme with other North East local authorities which uses the power of collective bargaining to reduce people's energy bills (See section 4.6 - 4.9);
  - Warm Up North - A strategic partnership between Northumberland Council, British Gas and other North East local authorities which harnesses funding streams such as Energy Company Obligation and the Green Deal to improve energy efficiency (See section 4.10 - 4.12);
  - The Renewable Energy Heat Incentive - This is led by the Council's Arm's length Management Organisation, Homes for Northumberland (HfN), and makes use of funding from Renewable Heat Payment Premium to deliver energy saving property adaptations (See section 4.13 – 4.15).

### **Ready to Switch**

- 4.6 One of the Council's key initiatives to tackle fuel poverty on a regional level is the Ready to Switch scheme. The scheme was one of the UK's first collective switching initiatives organised by a local authority to save households money on their gas and electricity bills.
- 4.7 Ready to Switch uses collective switching, which combines the buying power of residents across the community to negotiate cheaper prices with energy companies.
- 4.8 In 2013 Ready to Switch was the UK's largest collective energy switching auction led by local authorities, in which 160,000 households from across the country came together to get a better deal on their energy bills.
- 4.9 The scheme is intended to reduce energy bills for all Northumberland residents, particularly targeting those who are considered vulnerable or those who are in fuel poverty.

## **Warm Up North**

- 4.10 The Council is one of the key delivery partners in the Warm Up North scheme. This is a region wide initiative to deliver energy efficiency measures to homes across the North East. The scheme works in partnership with British Gas as the main private sector delivery partner. The scheme is focused on installing key energy efficiency measures to combat fuel poverty such replacing energy inefficient boilers and installing loft and cavity wall insulation.
- 4.11 Warm Up North provides an important opportunity for the Council and its partner organisations in Northumberland to deliver real benefits for its residents in a number of areas.
- 4.12 The scheme has the following key objectives:
- To maximise uptake of the Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) amongst Northumberland residents to reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and energy consumption;
  - To ensure that the Green Deal is used to exploit employment opportunities in Northumberland, and improve employability and skills.

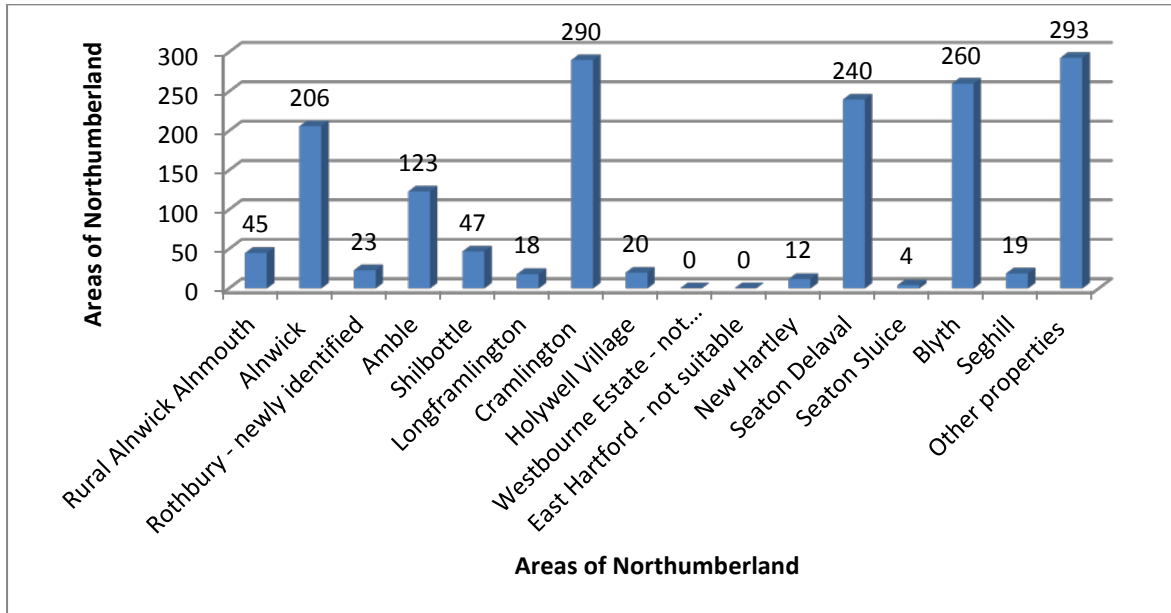
## **Homes for Northumberland**

- 4.13 HfN is responsible for managing council homes on behalf of Northumberland County Council. It manages over 8,500 council homes in the former districts of Alnwick and Blyth Valley along with new build properties in Allendale. HfN successfully completed its Decent homes programme in 2007, and all of its properties now meeting the Decent Home Standard<sup>20</sup>.
- 4.14 HfN works in close partnership with the Council on range of energy efficiency measures. One such area is the installation of solar photovoltaic panels to improve the energy efficiency of its properties. Ambitious targets have been set for the next phase of the rollout, to install panels on 1,600 HfN properties over the next three years.
- 4.15 The key areas of focus include Cramlington, Blyth and Seaton Delaval which is where the majority of HfN's stock is concentrated in the south east of the County. However, a concerted effort has been made to expand their availability in the north of the county in Alnwick and Amble.

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<sup>20</sup> Data obtained from Homes for Northumberland

**Figure 7: HfN Solar Photo Voltaic Panel Installations**



## 5 How will we get there?

- 5.1 The trends outlined above highlight the scale of the challenge of retrofitting Northumberland's homes to help the County meet its strategic objectives. The action plan and progress report below sets out details how the Council will begin to address the challenges through improving data, accessing funding and working with partners to provide value for money and facilitate the delivery of energy efficiency projects.
- 5.2 Previous delivery arrangements have largely been via the Warm Zone partnership utilising funding streams which have now ceased to be available.
- 5.3 The procurement of British Gas to deliver Energy Company Obligation (ECO) through the Warm Up North partnership and ongoing funding from the Green Deal presents continuing opportunities. This Progress Report will be updated to reflect subsequent developments.



## Action Plan and Progress Report

<b>i) LOCAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES</b>			
Challenges	<p>The Council recognises that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are over 6,000 properties that have been assessed across Northumberland that have a SAP rating of less than 38;</li> <li>• Northumberland has a fuel poverty rate of 11.6% under the LIHC definition;</li> <li>• Domestic carbon emissions make up 35% of total CO<sup>2</sup> emissions in Northumberland;</li> <li>• Between August 2010 and July 2013 there were approximately 313 excess winter deaths in Northumberland.</li> </ul>		
Ambitions and priorities	<p>The Council is committed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 20% by 2020;</li> <li>• Ensuring that all homes are built to Zero Carbon Standard from 2016;</li> <li>• Delivering over 3,000 energy efficiency intervention measures a year as part of its partnerships based approach;</li> <li>• Improving the energy efficiency of 120 properties in the former Berwick Local Authority area;</li> <li>• Tracking the number of properties with a SAP level of less than 38.</li> </ul>		
<b>ii) MEASURES THE COUNCIL ARE UNDERTAKING TO RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS OF OUR RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES</b>			
Action	Description	Responsible	Timescale
<b>Warm Up North (Green Deal and ECO)</b>	<p>Northumberland County Council will deliver the Green Deal and ECO in Northumberland with partners through the Warm up North scheme.</p> <p>Its key objectives are to introduce energy efficiency measures in the form of replacing energy inefficient boilers and installing loft and cavity wall insulation.</p> <p>Between 2013-15 the scheme has achieved the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 129 measures installed;</li> <li>• Total referrals 538;</li> <li>• A conversion rate of referrals to installs of 22%.</li> </ul>	<p>NCC</p> <p>British Gas</p>	2013-2018

<b>Feed in Tariffs</b>	<p>Homes for Northumberland (HfN) are involved in the installation of Solar Photo Voltaic panels<sup>21</sup> in Northumberland.</p> <p>The following objectives have been achieved so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 168 panels have been installed since August 2014;</li> </ul> <p>The following targets have been set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The installation of 8 panel systems on 1,600 properties over the next three years<sup>22</sup>.</li> </ul>	<p>NCC</p> <p>Homes For Northumberland</p>	<p>2018</p>
<b>Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)</b>	<p>Homes for Northumberland have installed a number of measures as part of the renewable energy heat incentive.</p> <p>Their achievements include the installation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solar Thermal Heating<sup>23</sup> in 80 house and 59 sheltered units;</li> <li>• 68 Air Source Heat Pumps<sup>24</sup>;</li> </ul>	<p>NCC</p> <p>Homes For Northumberland</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<b>Zero Carbon Homes</b>	<p>Sustainable design in the construction of new homes is a key theme to emerge in the Northumberland Core Strategy.</p> <p>As part of this developers will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement agreed 'allowable solutions' to achieve zero carbon buildings from 2016;</li> <li>• Incorporate passive design measures to improve the efficiency of heating, cooling, ventilation and lighting;</li> <li>• Incorporate small-scale renewables into the design of new developments<sup>25</sup>.</li> </ul>	<p>NCC and Housing Developers</p>	<p>2016</p>

<sup>21</sup> A method of generating electricity by converting solar radiation into direct current electricity using solar panels

<sup>22</sup> Data from Homes for Northumberland

<sup>23</sup> Solar thermal is a technology which harnesses solar energy from the sun and turns it into thermal heat energy

<sup>24</sup> Air source heat pumps absorb heat from the outside air. This heat can then be used to heat the home.

<sup>25</sup> [Northumberland Local Plan Core Strategy - Full Draft Plan - December 2014.pdf](#) page 220

<b>Energy Performance Certificates (EPC)</b>	<p>Bernicia Homes monitor the energy efficiency of their dwellings by carrying out an EPC assessment on its whole stock every month. Their assessment work has found the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The stock in Northumberland area produced 5,830 ratings out of a total stock of 6,367;</li> <li>• The average SAP rating was 71.56 and average CO<sup>2</sup> emissions 2.28 tonnes;</li> <li>• Bernicia's Affordable Warmth Strategy set targets to achieve an average SAP rating of 70 by 2018, which have already been met<sup>26</sup>.</li> </ul>	Bernicia	2018
<b>Minimum standards in the private sector</b>	<p>The current legal requirement is that any property to be marketed for sale or rental is required to have an EPC.</p> <p>From 2018 all private sector landlords will be required to have a rating level of E or above for a rental property.</p>	NCC Private Sector Landlords	2018
<b>Smart Meters</b>	<p>Data Communications Company (DCC), which is in charge of the Smart Meters<sup>27</sup> system, is proposing to delay the roll out start date until as late as October 2016. It is estimated that the changes will add up to £90m in further costs.</p>	DCC and energy providers	2014 – 2020

<sup>26</sup> Data from Bernicia Homes

<sup>27</sup> A smart meter works by communicating directly with the energy supplier, therefore the company will always have an accurate meter reading. Meaning no more estimated bills.

<p><b>Ready to Switch</b></p>	<p>Ready to Switch harnesses the combined buying power of residents across Northumberland to negotiate cheaper prices with energy companies using a process called collective switching.</p> <p>Thus far the scheme has achieved the following since November 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• over 10,000 households have registered;</li> <li>• over 1,000 have switched energy supplier;</li> <li>• The average savings have been approximately £120 for every switching customer per auction;</li> <li>• Northumberland residents have collectively saved over £120,000 on their energy bills.</li> </ul> <p>NCC officers will continue with the job of getting more households signed up to the scheme to maximise the bulk savings possible.</p>	<p>NCC</p>	<p>Quarterly auctions</p>
<p><b>Local Carbon Frameworks</b></p>	<p>In January 2010 Northumberland was selected as one of only nine pilot areas in England for a new Government sponsored pilot project called 'Local Carbon Frameworks'</p> <p>The aim of the projects is to explore the role that local government can play in enabling communities to take action on carbon reduction.</p> <p>A crucial part of this is extending existing funding provided by Northumberland County Council for 'hard to treat' properties. This involves trialing innovative technical approaches on eleven 'hard to heat' properties in Northumberland.</p>	<p>DECC and DCLG</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

**iii) MEASURES THE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO COST EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION BY USING AREA BASED/STREET BY STREET ANALYSIS.**

The Council will:

- Continue to work with its partner organisations such as HfN to introduce solar thermal heating systems and Air Source Heating Pumps as part of the Renewable Energy Heat Incentive;
- Be involved with ongoing work with HfN to install 1,600 Solar Photo Voltaic panels as part of the Feed in Tariffs scheme;
- Progress the work of the Warm Up North partnership and make use of funding streams such as ECO and the Green Deal to deliver energy efficiency savings for residential properties across the county.

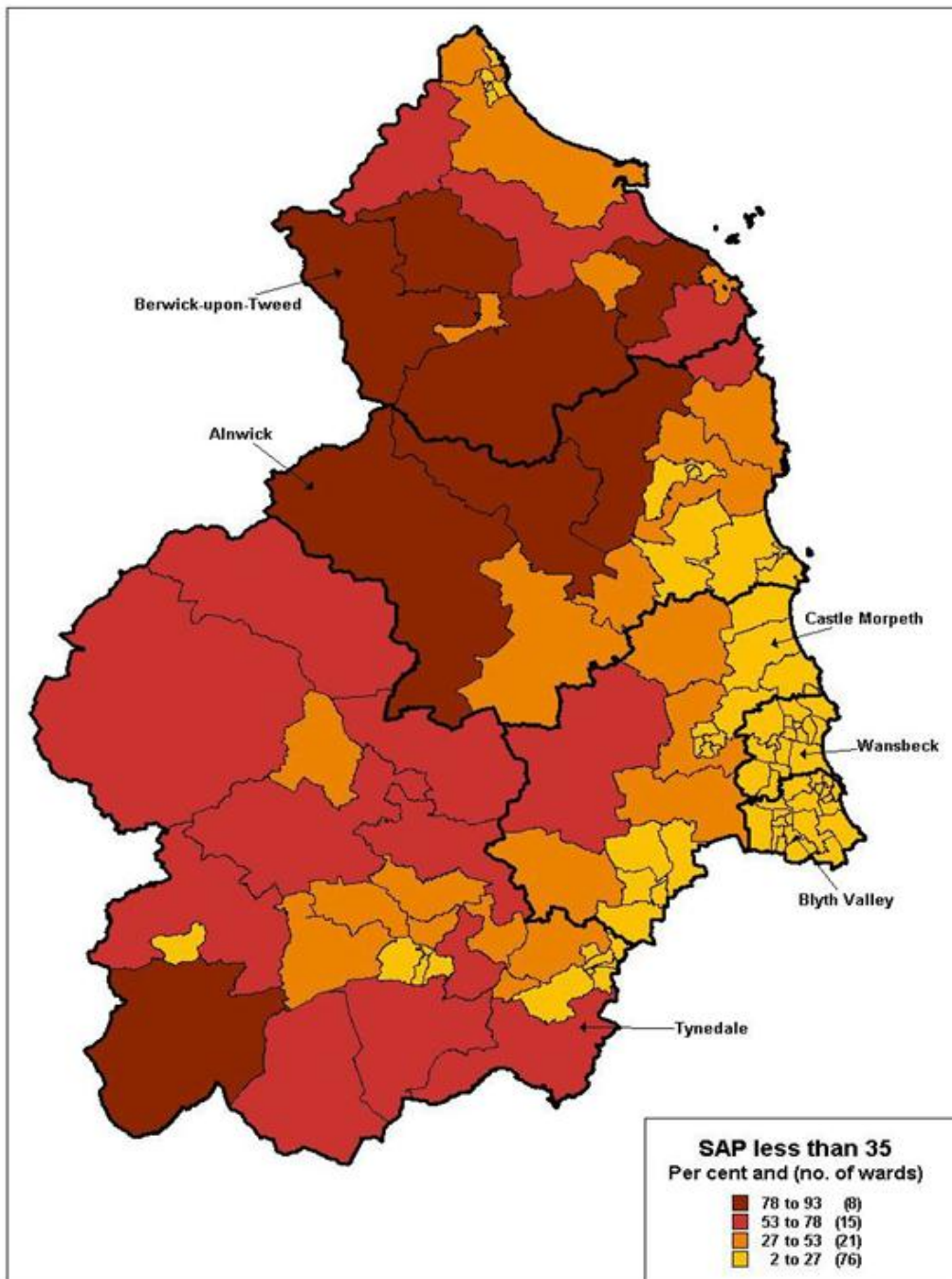
**iv) TIME FRAME FOR DELIVERY AND NATIONAL AND LOCAL PARTNERS**

- Northumberland County Council are actively involved in the Warm Up North partnership on an ongoing basis.
- This involves working in collaboration with the other local authorities listed below and makes effective use of ECO and the Green Deal to fund energy efficiency measures.
- The Warm up North partnership is scheduled to run between 2013 and 2018 with the possibility of further extension.

**Warm Up North Partners**

- British Gas
- Northumberland County Council
- Darlington Borough Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Durham County Council
- Sunderland City Council
- Gateshead Council
- South Tyneside Council
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Redcar and Cleveland

## Appendix 1: Northumberland properties with a SAP rating of less than 35



Name of Local Authority	Northumberland County Council
Name of contact within the Local Authority	Strategic Planning and Housing Team
Address	Northumberland County Council County Hall Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2EF
Telephone	0845 600 6400
E mail	PlanningStrategy@northumberland.gov.uk