

# HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND AFFORDABLE WARMTH STRATEGY 2009

## INTRODUCTION

This is the first review of Solihull's Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth Strategy. This comes at a time of significant upward movement in fuel prices and the consequent likelihood of an increase in fuel poverty. We have reviewed our policies and methodology to maximise our support to the most vulnerable residents in Solihull.

The purpose of the strategy is to guide the Council and partner agencies in committing resources to two linked objectives:

1. to improve the energy efficiency of domestic dwellings in Solihull
2. to work towards the reduction of fuel poverty throughout the Borough.

In working toward these objectives the Council will rely on the support and contribution of many organisations in the private and voluntary sectors.

This Strategy statement is structured as follows:

1. an outline of the strategic framework, drawing on sources from the global to the local level
2. a summary of the current situation on home energy efficiency and fuel poverty in Solihull at the end of 2008.
3. an outline of the resources which are available to the Council and partner agencies to improve the situation and the range of possible actions
4. an assessment of the customer base
5. an appraisal of available and preferred options for action
6. an action plan with measurable targets

The Strategy will be revised and updated regularly to take account of changes in the policy context and the fuel market

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Council and partner agencies will pursue the twin objectives of improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty within a strategic framework that is developing at many levels, from global to local.

### National perspective

The onset of climate change through global warming has brought about pressure for a coherent policy response at the international level.

The increased international focus on the need to reduce carbon emissions has led the UK Government to introduce a series of legislation, policy papers, guidance and initiatives aimed at encouraging the reduction in carbon emissions.

As the residential sector is an important source of carbon emissions these include measures for the house building industry, local authorities and others, all aimed at improving energy efficiency in new and existing homes.

A commitment to reducing carbon emissions was contained in the 2003 energy white paper '**Our energy future – creating a low carbon economy**'.

This defined a long-term strategic vision to put the country on a path to cut carbon emissions 60 per cent by 2050 with 'real progress' by 2020. Adequate and affordable heating in all homes were amongst the objectives contained in the paper.

In November 2007, the **Climate Change Bill** was introduced into Parliament. The Bill aims to demonstrate the leadership required to engage others in an international framework for activity, to minimise the cost of transition and ensure domestic and international targets can be met.

For the housing sector this involves:

- raising standards of construction through the Building Regulations
- further encouraging sustainability in new developments through the Code for Sustainable Homes
- the inclusion of heating – related hazards (such as lack of heating and mould growth) in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) which replaced the Fitness Standard in April 2006.
- the introduction of Energy Performance Certificates for new homes and those which are sold or let from August 2008
- the introduction of the Low Carbon Buildings Programme, which aims to encourage uptake of both energy efficiency and micro-generation technologies in buildings.

The present level of Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC) funding from utility companies has been doubled to £2.8 billion for the period 2008-2011. The new **Carbon Emissions Reduction Target** (CERT) will be the third phase of EEC. For the first time this will include technology such as solar panels and will save over one million tonnes of carbon a year. New measures including the introduction of Smart Meters and real time display in households are due to begin in 2009. Details of how CERT funding is being utilised in Solihull can be found on page 18.

It is clear that, as domestic dwellings currently account for almost half of the UK's carbon emissions, that the improvement of the thermal efficiency of homes will be a continuing policy at the national level, with the ultimate goal of carbon neutrality in newly built properties.

The Fuel Poverty Advisory Group sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) estimated that in 2007 there were about 2.9m households in fuel poverty in England, including 2.3m vulnerable households. These are the highest levels for almost ten years.

Since the national target was set fuel prices have increased significantly and at the current time are more than offsetting any gains through reducing energy costs which have been achieved through initiatives such as the Warm Front scheme.

Government produced an **Energy Measures** report in September 2007 which confirmed the view that local authorities are uniquely placed to act on climate change mitigation and to alleviate fuel poverty. They can take action on their own housing stock but can also motivate the wider community to take action, based on their understanding of local priorities, risks and opportunities.

The report contains information on measures that local authorities can use including:

- Improving energy efficiency
- Increasing the levels of microgeneration or low carbon technologies

- Reducing greenhouse emissions
- Reducing the number of people living in fuel poverty.

Local authorities must have regard to the report when exercising their functions, and accordingly this strategy is consistent with the message that 'Energy Measures' contains.

### **Regional Perspective**

The **West Midlands Regional Energy Strategy**, launched in December 2004, aims to improve regional support and delivery of national programmes for tackling climate change through improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy.

Amongst the regional targets are:

- the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions within the domestic sector of 19% by 2010 and a further 29% reduction by 2020.
- heat from renewable sources providing 0.3% of consumption by 2010 and 1% of consumption by 2020.
- adoption of new technologies including biomass, wind turbines, landfill gas fuelled generators and ground-source heat pumps.

The **Regional Sustainable Development Framework – A Sustainable Future for the West Midlands** provides a framework to help ensure that policies and plans contribute towards a sustainable future for the Region. The RSDF sets out a vision and a set of sustainable development objectives that include climate change and energy conservation. It also sets out a process by which these principles and objectives can be incorporated into the development, review and implementation of strategies and plans.

Solihull is a member of the **Sustainable Housing Partnership** which brings together 20 Midlands local authorities, registered social landlords, West Midlands Regional Assembly, Government Office and Advantage West Midlands. Quarterly meetings are held to discuss regional energy issues new initiatives and best practice.

### **Local Perspective**

The Council and its partner agencies in the Solihull Partnership have set out broad shared objectives which guide the development of policy in Solihull:

**Solihull's Sustainable Community Strategy** 'One Borough: An Equal Chance For All', is a vision for the kind of Borough we want in ten years time, and a map for how we get there. The Strategy has been produced by the Solihull Partnership, and formally agreed by the organisations that make up that Partnership.

The purpose of the Solihull Partnership and the Strategy is to make the improvements needed to create the kind of Solihull: *where everyone has an equal chance to be healthier, happier, safer, and more prosperous.*

In order to achieve this four change priorities have been identified:

- Building healthier communities
- Building safer communities
- Building stronger communities
- Building more prosperous communities

Energy efficiency and affordable warmth issues can be addressed within, 'Building healthier communities' and 'Building prosperous communities'.

Solihull's Local Area Agreement (LAA) contains a statement on sustainability in Solihull, giving a commitment to work toward national objectives. This includes both of the objectives of the Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth Strategy. It outlines current and future activity including:

- the development of a Climate Change Strategy and action plan for Solihull
- progress being made through the North Solihull regeneration programme
- a commitment to requiring the use of renewable energy sources in some new developments (following the Merton rule) and a commitment to exceed the requirements of the Building Regulations on heating and insulation.

The LAA also addresses the health inequalities within the Borough and particular common health problems. Much of this is relevant to this strategy given the strong links between the quality of the home, particularly the ability to keep it warm, and the characteristics of the occupier, particularly older people and low-income families with children.

To contribute to the headline target of reducing health inequalities and premature mortality, the LAA specifies the contribution of the Council's Decent Homes programme (particularly central heating system improvements) and a 10% annual increase in referrals of people in fuel poverty to the Energy Advice Centre.

The LAA is clear that whilst environmental targets are included as a statement of intent, the Solihull Partnership wishes to further develop its strategy for environmental sustainability in the Borough.

There is a growing recognition of the need for the Council and its partners to be proactive in reducing energy consumption. In signing the **Nottingham Declaration** in February 2007, the Council has pledged to actively tackle climate change in Solihull by working with partners to tackle its causes and effects.

The potential contribution of the housing sector to these objectives is considerable and is drawn together in the Council's **Housing Strategy** which, amongst its objectives, is committed to maintaining and improving the Borough's housing stock in all tenures and supporting vulnerable people.

The Decent Homes standard is no longer relevant to private sector housing. Local authorities now have the freedom to set policies based upon local need. A new policy is being developed that will utilise the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System in order to provide assistance for vulnerable clients.

In addition to meeting the Decent Homes Standard in the Council's housing stock; Solihull Community Housing is committed to further improving the environmental performance of homes in its management and has developed a long term Climate Change Plan. This will complement the Council's Climate Change Strategy and will be consistent with this strategy.

A **Health Inequalities Action Plan** has been developed by the Solihull Partnership as a way of addressing the significant health inequalities that exist in Solihull and reducing excess winter deaths. The Action Plan highlights the need to train staff in the identification of 'fuel poor' households as well as the ability to signpost clients to partners in order to ensure that appropriate assistance is made available.

Over the next 14 years the **North Solihull Regeneration** area (defined by the wards of Chelmsley Wood, Smiths Wood and Kingshurst & Fordbridge) will see the construction of 8000 new homes, half of which will replace existing properties. This is clearly an outstanding opportunity to improve the energy efficiency of the housing stock in the area and offer residents new homes which are cheaper to heat, thereby reducing risk of fuel poverty.

A Design Code has been introduced for the regeneration area. This requires all new residential development as a result of regeneration activity to attain at least level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. This will be revised on a regular basis with the expectation that developers will better level 3 over time. There will also be continued investment in existing homes through Decent Homes programmes and through this strategy.

## **CURRENT SITUATION**

### **Energy in Solihull – Key Facts and Figures**

- There are approximately 87,000 domestic dwellings in the Borough of Solihull
- The number of fuel poor households in Solihull was estimated to be 9,091 at
- 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008
- Excess winter mortality in Solihull was estimated to be 150 people during 2005/06

### **Housing and Households in Solihull**

Solihull has a population of 203,900 in 87,000 households. This is projected to increase to 206,000 people in 89,000 households by 2021. The proportion of the population which consists of older people is increasing and this is driving an increase in lone-person households, which currently account for 26% of the total.

Solihull has a particularly constrained housing market with house prices substantially above the average for the West Midlands metropolitan area and an acute shortage of affordable housing.

78% of homes in Solihull are owner-occupied, 12% are rented from the Council with the remainder being owned by Housing association or private landlords.

The Borough's housing stock is generally of more recent construction and in better condition than other West Midlands Metropolitan districts. However, 15% of Solihull's council owned homes do not meet the Decent Homes standard and approximately 25% of its private properties are in substantial disrepair.

The characteristics of the housing stock and demographic trends have a number of implications for energy efficiency and affordable warmth, including:

- older people are less likely to be able to afford to heat their homes to acceptable standards. As the number and proportion of older-person households increases there is likely to be a consequent increase in related health problems
- the incidence of deprivation, particularly in North Solihull, which contains three wards that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England. Households on low incomes spend a disproportionate amount of their income on heating.
- the age distribution of the housing stock with over two thirds being built since 1945 means that a higher proportion of homes have central heating than the West Midlands average, although many homes have systems which are below modern efficiency standards
- the incidence of high –value homes makes it more likely that homeowners have invested in the repair and improvement of their properties, though this must be

seen in the context of an ageing population which is likely to reduce the financial capacity of occupiers to invest in their homes in the future.

- the low incidence of older, privately rented homes including Houses in Multiple Occupation means that the usual problems associated with this type of housing are not a significant problem in Solihull.

### **Energy Efficiency of the Housing Stock**

The energy efficiency of a property can be described in terms of an 'energy cost rating' which provides a measure of the annual unit energy cost of space and water heating for the dwelling under a standard regime, assuming specific heating patterns and room temperatures.

The energy cost rating used in this strategy is the Government – specified Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). The SAP calculation assumes a standard occupancy pattern, derived from the measured floor area so that the size of the dwelling does not strongly affect the result, which is expressed on a 0-100 scale. The higher the number the better the energy efficiency of the property.

The SAP takes into account a range of factors that contribute to energy efficiency, which include:

- Thermal insulation of the building fabric
- Efficiency and control of the heating system
- The fuel used for space and water heating
- Ventilation and solar gain characteristics of the dwelling

The physical characteristics of a dwelling have a major effect on its energy consumption. The number of exposed external walls and the construction materials and methods will affect the overall heat loss and therefore the efficiency, thus different types and ages of dwellings will have different energy characteristics. Age and building type are helpful in establishing the potential energy efficiency of a dwelling but levels of insulation and heating provision also need to be examined to give a full picture.

Using the data from the Solihull's Private Sector House Condition Survey (July 2004) and data from Solihull Community Housing (March 2008), it can be estimated that the overall SAP rating for all homes in Solihull is 57. This divides into ratings of 66 for social sector (SCH and housing association) homes and 56 for the private sector.

Homes in Solihull fall into 3 categories of SAP:

- The least energy efficient with a SAP of 0-39 = 5% of dwellings
- The average energy efficiency rating with a SAP of 40-70 = 75% of dwellings
- A good energy efficiency rating of 71 and above = 20% of dwellings

The aim of this strategy will be to increase the overall SAP of the Borough's housing stock (with a target of 58 by 2010).

Within this there will be a particular focus on raising the performance of homes with a SAP of 39 or less as it is these homes that are hardest to heat and most likely to create the conditions for fuel poverty. In the main these are 3 and 4 bedroom homes of traditional construction built before 1960, and particularly those built before the 1950's.

Guidance on the now rescinded Decent Homes Standard from Communities and Local Government suggests that a SAP of 35 or lower can be taken as a proxy for a

Category 1 Cold Hazard as defined by the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).

Since the commencement of the HHSRS in April 2006, 23 such cold hazards have been identified and these households have received assistance via Solihull's Home Improvement agency.

The Energy Action Grants Agency (EAGA) has undertaken work as part of Warm Front to install, repair or renew 388 heating systems in Solihull during 2007-08, an increase of 117 from 2006/07. Loft and or cavity wall insulation has also been installed in 364 homes. Prior to completion of these essential works each dwelling may have been considered as having a category 1 cold hazard under HHSRS.

The 2005/06 Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) for Solihull Community Housing stock was calculated at an average level of 58. A SAP of 66 has been achieved for 2007/08. This significant average increase in SAP across SCH dwellings has not only been achieved by the installation of energy efficiency measures as part of the Decent Homes programme, but is also due to increased energy data collection.

SCH will continue to collect energy efficiency data as part of the Decent Homes Programme that will highlight dwellings with a SAP of below 35 to ensure appropriate energy efficiency measures are installed in these dwellings as a priority.

### **Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)**

Energy Performance Certificates were initially introduced as part of the Home Information Pack (HIPs), when a private property was marketed for sale. Since October 2008 social landlords are required to provide an EPC to all new tenants and for sales undertaken through Right-to-Buy.

EPCs indicate the energy performance of the dwelling dependant on the energy use in heating, hot water and lighting. The information is given on a bar chart similar to that found on domestic appliances giving their energy efficiency rating from A to G.

The EPC also indicates the CO<sub>2</sub> (Carbon Dioxide) emissions and fuel costs for the property and also sets out recommendations for improving the energy efficiency of the dwelling.

Once produced, the EPC is kept on a national register, administered by Landmark Solutions, on behalf of the government. The EPC has a life of 10 years unless major alterations are carried out to the property which affects its energy use etc.

Solihull Community Housing will use the data gleaned from the production of the EPC's to target dwellings with a low SAP rating and undertake energy efficiency works as necessary.

### **Fuel Poverty**

This strategy adopts the Government's measure of fuel poverty, which is defined in relation to a household's income and heating costs, i.e. "a household that has to spend in excess of 10% of its net income in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime" is defined as fuel – poor. The measure of whether a heating regime is satisfactory is the same as the thermal comfort criterion within the Decent Homes standard, 21°C in the living room and 18°C in the other occupied rooms.

The March 2008 estimate of the number of 'fuel poor' households in Solihull was 9,091 which accounts for nearly 10.5% of households. See table below.

Fuel poverty is caused by a combination of 'property' factors (including expensive heating systems and poor insulation) and 'people' factors (such as age and income). Compared with all households those in fuel poverty are more likely to be headed by a

person of pensionable age and / or a person with a physical disability, long-term limiting illness and low-income families with children.

Very often those least well off live in the poorest and oldest housing, and under-occupation is also a factor, especially for older owner-occupiers. In addition, those heating systems that are the cheapest to buy and install are also often the most expensive to run.

The situation is potentially made worse for those who pay for fuel by prepayment meters, for which the tariffs are significantly higher than for customers who pay by direct debit. It is likely that pre-payment meter customers pay £255 more per year than direct debit customers.

Fuel poverty often leads to poor health and each winter there are over 40,000 additional deaths nationally, compared to the average mortality rate for the rest of the year.

It is now acknowledged that cold homes are the major domestic health hazard. It is also a key factor in social exclusion, for example in the case of children, poor health and living in cold, damp homes reduces their ability to receive a full education, which can have implications for the rest of their lives.

The number of fuel poor households at any one time depends largely on fuel prices compared to incomes.

Those on low and / or fixed incomes are most susceptible to upward price movements. The Department of Trade and Industry predicts that for every 1% increase in domestic energy costs, an additional 40,000 households will fall into fuel poverty.

A Fuel Poverty Risk Assessment methodology has been established to measure year on year changes in the numbers of people currently estimated to be at risk of fuel poverty.

This method takes into account the main factors that influence the numbers of households in fuel poverty: the installation of energy efficiency measures to fuel poor households, energy price changes and household income. The number of households that have received energy efficiency measures and those whose increased incomes would have taken them above the fuel poverty threshold are subtracted from the previous years baseline figure. It is then necessary to calculate the number of households that fall into fuel poverty as a direct result of increased fuel prices. This figure is then added to the total to give a net increase or decrease in fuel poverty household numbers.

The latest progress report for the period April 2007 - March 2008 used data for energy efficiency improvements carried out in Solihull, average fuel price rises and average increases in income over the same period. This shows that 1,374 households were taken out of fuel poverty during this period, but fuel price increases put 135 households into fuel poverty, so by the end of the period there were 1,239 fewer fuel-poor households in Solihull.

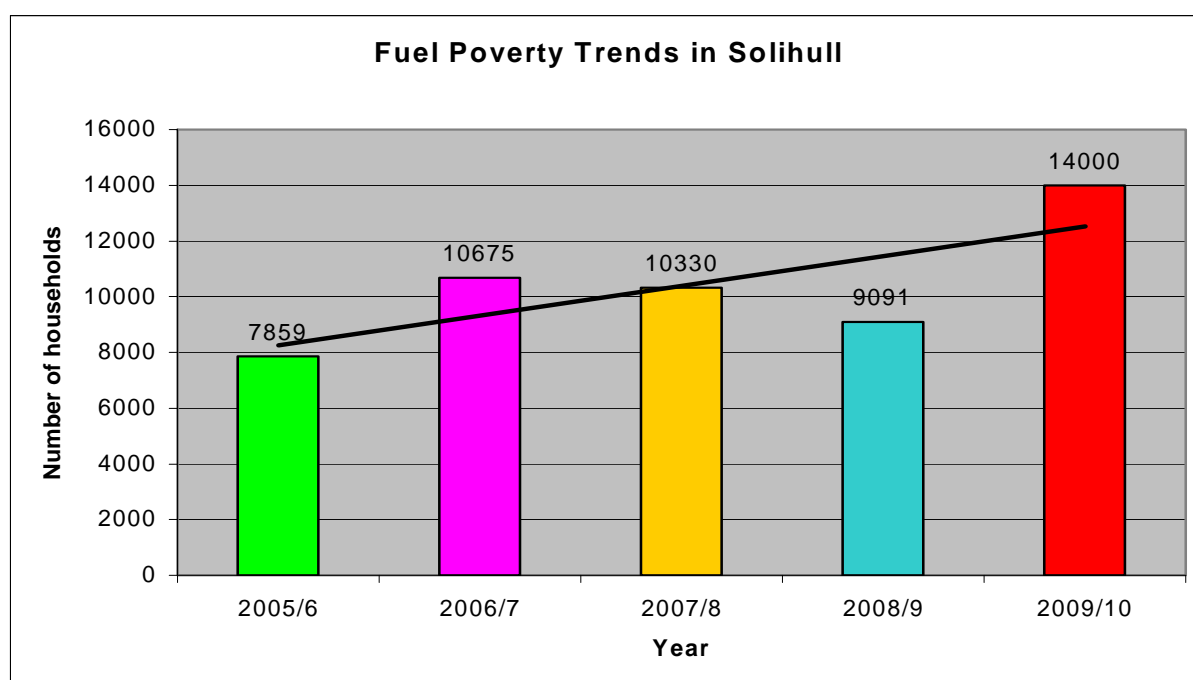
**Table 1: Fuel Poverty Estimations in Solihull**

Fuel Poverty estimations	Owner occupiers	Private rented	Housing association	Local authority	All tenures
Numbers in fuel poverty April 2007	8,181	430	296	1,423	10,330
Percentage in fuel poverty April 2007	11.73%	12.75%	12.68%	12.65%	11.91%
Reduction in fuel poverty due to measures	729	64	9	185	987
Increase in fuel poverty due to fuel prices	108	6	3	18	135
Reduction in fuel poverty due to income	311	16	9	51	387
Percentage in fuel poverty March 2008	10.68%	10.87%	12.32%	11.01%	10.45%
New baseline for 2008-09	7,249	356	281	1,205	9,091

**The Effects of Fuel Price Increases on Fuel Poverty  
Energy Price Increase and Implications**

The National Housing Federation estimate that Gas and Electricity fuel price increases recently announced by utility companies will increase the number of fuel poor households to 5.7 million by the end of 2009. This assumption is supported by the UK's leading fuel poverty charity National Energy Action (NEA) who estimates that around 4.5 million households in the UK were fuel poor in August 2008 and that this number is expected to increase by 35% to nearly 6 million in 2009. Average fuel bills are expected to increase from £1,320 (August 2008) to £1,406 by 2010. The fuel poverty baseline for Solihull estimates that 9,091 households were fuel poor in March 2008. It is likely that this number will increase to around 14,000 by 2009.

**Table 2: Fuel Poverty Trends in Solihull**



The above graph shows the estimated number of fuel poor homes in Solihull and highlights the dramatic effect the recent fuel price increases are likely to have both now and in the future. There is a need to provide support for residents who will receive inflated fuel bills this winter.

In the event that fuel prices continue to rise, the task of eradicating fuel poverty, in line with Government targets would not be achievable.

A new £1bn package of measures was announced late in 2008 that will provide:

- Free cavity wall and loft insulation for everyone over 70 years and poor households
- 50% off the cost of insulation for all households
- A freeze on this year's fuel bills for half a million poor customers
- Not as much reduction in the Warm Front budget for 2009/10 as was previously announced
- Cold weather payments to go up from £8.50 a week to £25.00 a week for pensioners, disabled people and unemployed families with children under five years – *if temperatures drop below zero for seven consecutive days*

Under these new proposals, the utility companies will increase their contribution to the government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) scheme by 30 % over the next three years. Utility companies will now contribute around £3 billion to the CERT scheme by April 2011.

It is worthy of note that the free insulation measures have been available to the over 70's since April 2008, and for other pensioners, disabled people and families with young children in receipt of an income related benefit for a number of years. Also, the 50% discount on insulation measures is not a new initiative as this has been available for five years.

## **STRATEGIC APPROACH**

### **The Basis of Intervention**

The Council recognises that most householders in Solihull will continue to be able to purchase sufficient energy for their homes from the market to enable them to enjoy an adequate level of heating.

However the existence of fuel poverty in Solihull shows that the market cannot meet the energy requirements of all Solihull households on acceptable financial terms.

Given that fuel poverty contributes to health and other wellbeing problems the Council and partner agencies have an interest in intervening to address these issues.

The Council also recognises that many householders invest in the energy efficiency of their homes through upgrading heating and insulation. However, it is clear that many households require financial assistance or encouragement to do so.

Again the Council and partners have an interest in maximising this investment as it reduces the risk of fuel poverty and contributes to the environmental objectives of the Council and the Solihull Partnership.

A broad range of actions is available to the Council and its partners in promoting energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty. The fundamental aspect of the Council's approach to promoting energy efficiency is that interventions should be focused on:

- (a) influencing the actions of developers before new homes are built

- (b) working with social and private landlords to improve the thermal performance of homes in their management
- (c) making consumers aware of how they can improve the energy efficiency of their homes through buying products and services from the market
- (d) reducing or removing the cost of market solutions to those who cannot afford them.

In the appraisal of options the following strategic principles have been adopted:

- we will utilise external funding streams as the main source of funding wherever possible, using public money to top-up external funding or for activities which cannot be externally funded.
- we will seek to ensure that residents are aware of the financial and environmental benefits that can be realised through energy efficiency investments and the way in which heating and other appliances are used.
- we will support initiatives that provide insulation and heating measures that are; appropriate to the needs of residents, readily available, can be installed with minimum disruption to the householder and which offer year on year financial and environmental benefits to residents.
- we will promote energy efficiency measures that are cost effective in terms of both installation and running costs, providing maximum gain for the lowest cost
- we will ensure that vulnerable households are able to access appropriate advice and assistance and receive financial support for the installation of energy efficiency measures.

### **Customer Base**

The Council is aware that in promoting energy efficiency, as in other matters, one approach will not meet all requirements. There are considerable differences in the circumstances and requirements of residents across the Borough, such as age, financial capacity and the characteristics of their home. These variations require different responses.

The prime division is between residents who are (a) 'able to pay' for improvements to their homes and for energy-saving measures, (b) those who are unable or unwilling to do so without some assistance or inducement and (c) those who are completely unable to invest.

Within each of these basic groups there are differences in householders' interest in energy efficiency. The Energy Savings Trust have been able to identify segments of the customer base that are more likely to be interested in protecting the environment and therefore have a high interest in energy saving products and renewable technologies. These tend to be amongst the more affluent groups living in larger homes and consequently have the potential to save the most energy given the right financial incentives.

Conversely, families with high expenditure on everyday living and those poorer families and elderly couples on fixed incomes are less likely to be able to invest in this way, even if they see the advantages of doing so financially or environmentally. For these consumers the focus is on financial incentives, the maximisation of income and the subsidised provision of energy saving materials and appliances.

The Strategy focuses particularly on those that need assistance, particularly those on low incomes who are in or at risk of fuel poverty. However, it is also concerned with

how to encourage the more affluent consumer to invest further in energy saving measures. This will become particularly important in the coming years as the cost of renewable technologies fall within the reasonable reach of better-off consumers

Research undertaken by the Energy Saving Trust suggests that the number of people who are aware of the issues relating to energy efficiency and ultimately Climate Change is increasing. However, there are still a considerable number of people who have taken no action and therefore the scope for further improvement is considerable, although the difficult economic conditions faced by most households will reduce the ability or propensity of many to invest if there is no quick payback.

## **TYPES OF INTERVENTION**

The available options divide broadly into those which:

- influence the actions of developers of new homes
- assist home owners to improve their homes or change their behaviour as consumers
- assist landlords to improve the homes which they manage and the services which they provide to tenants and leaseholders.

### **1. Pre Development Interventions**

The Council has a strong interest in influencing the product of the development industry. Whilst basic standards for energy efficiency are required by the Building Regulations, there is increasing scope for bettering this.

The activities include:

- Enforcing the statutory requirements of the Building Regulations, part L of which lay down minimum standards to be achieved in development.
- Setting down further requirements in planning obligations, such as the adoption of the Merton requirement for use of renewable energy sources in certain developments.
- Negotiation with developers to encourage higher environmental standards rather than meeting minimum requirements
- The regeneration of North Solihull, which will involve the construction of up to 8,000 new homes, provides an exceptional opportunity to raise the level of environmental design. A Design Code has been adopted for all new housing developments in the regeneration area. This requires all new homes to be at least at level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (which broadly equates to Eco Homes Good standard) and a statement on the use of renewable sources to accompany all planning applications for new housing developments. For large developments Combined Heat and Power and Biomass will be explored as well as district heating systems.

The Home Energy Conservation Officer (HECO) liaises with the various directorates of the Council which have roles in maximising the authority's leverage on these matters.

Again, the recent downturn in the housing market, particularly in new build, is reducing the scope for these activities. Additionally developers are likely to be less willing to take on additional development costs which they would normally seek to pass on to purchasers in a buoyant market.

## **2. Post Development Interventions – home owners**

While raising the standard of new development is important, most impact on home energy efficiency and affordable warmth will be made through investing in existing homes.

As approximately 80% of homes in Solihull are owner-occupied, much of the activity of the strategy is aimed at assisting homeowners to heat and improve the energy efficiency of their homes.

Based on the principles set out at page 12, the available assistance reflects the needs of different segments of the customer base.

**Table 3: Advice and assistance available to residents**

	<b>Able To Pay</b>	<b>Need Help to Pay</b>	<b>Fuel poor</b>
<b>Energy efficiency Advice</b>			
• Renewables	✓	✓	✓
• Insulation Measures	✓	✓	✓
• Heating Systems	✓	✓	✓
• Tariff Optimisation	✓	✓	✓
<b>Financial Assistance</b>			
• Warm Front			✓
• Carbon Emissions Reduction Target funding	✓	✓	✓
• Local Authority		✓	✓
• Take the LEAD	✓	✓	

### **Raising Awareness**

It is widely acknowledged that in order to achieve reductions in CO2 and reduce fuel poverty, the profile of energy efficiency, in relation to financial and environmental benefits, must be raised. To this end, every opportunity is taken to promote energy efficiency and affordable warmth to all residents, regardless of their financial circumstances.

The Council uses a range of low cost and free ways to do this and will continue to develop new approaches. Current activities which will continue include:

- Temperature cards with contact details of the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre are distributed through libraries and given out by Officers to residents. By November 2008 approx. 2,500 had been distributed.
- Articles for newsletters are produced by the Home Energy Conservation Officer, most recently for the SCH tenants newsletter.
- Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFL's) given to the Council free of charge by British Gas and Powergen as part of their CERT funding requirement are distributed to low-income households via various Council services including the Handyperson Service, Homecheck scheme and SCH which provides them to all new tenants as part of the SCH welcome pack. Over 9,500 were distributed in 2007/8.
- A Warm Front mail out with Council Tax Benefit notification letters was completed in April 2008.
- An energy advice surgery was held in November 2008 to support clients of Age Concern in Castle Bromwich.

In addition to promotional material provided to residents, Council and other agencies' staff have attended an Affordable Warmth Training Programme which has been developed and presented by the Home Energy Conservation Officer. By the end of 2007/8 over 800 staff from the Council, the Health Trust, SCH and Age Concern had received training as well as 240 residents. The training enables key workers to recognise households that may be fuel poor and to refer vulnerable residents to sources of advice and assistance on energy efficiency and affordable warmth.

During 2007/8 the Energy Conservation Officer received 35 referrals from trained staff as well as in excess of 180 calls from residents requiring further information. It is evident from the increase in calls to the Advice Centre and the number of enquiries received by the Energy Conservation Officer that the training has had a positive effect and vulnerable residents are receiving help and information from sources they have confidence in.

A Winter Warmth Campaign, launched in December 2008, brings together the work undertaken by internal and external partners to ensure that vulnerable households receive information about how to access energy efficiency measures and keep warm this winter.

### Independent Advice

The need to provide independent energy efficiency advice is an important element of this strategy.

Consequently, the Council has developed a long term partnership with the Central Midlands Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (CMEEAC) to provide free and independent energy efficiency advice to all residents of Solihull. Subsidised by the Energy Saving Trust (EST), advice Centre staff are available to offer advice and assistance, carry out home visits to vulnerable residents, attend promotional events, support Council open days and assist with training as directed by the Home Energy Conservation Officer.

The Advice Centre provides the Council with data resulting from the contacts with residents and through the distribution and completion of *Home Energy Check* questionnaires.

During 2007/08 a total of 5,254 Solihull residents benefited from independent energy efficiency advice through freephone and freepost facilities and outreach events including information about national and local grants and energy initiatives from the Advice Centre. The advice centre has now developed a "grow your own energy" website to enable residents to evaluate the use of renewable energy sources that may be applicable for their own homes. The cost of this service to the Council (after subsidy from the Energy Saving Trust) is £19,000 per annum.

### Works to Homes

We will continue to develop pro-active approaches to generate interest and take-up of solutions by vulnerable households, particularly where they live in homes where category 1 hazards have been identified.

There is potential for area based work in line with the Private Sector Renewal Strategy. We aim to establish a Focus Area in the Cranmore area of Shirley during 2009/10.

We offer a range of energy efficiency measures utilising funding from Warm Front, CERT, client contributions, grant and loans.

We will continue to work with the North Solihull Regeneration Partnership to improve retained owner-occupied homes in the regeneration area, including improving energy efficiency.

Works to improve energy efficiency and to provide affordable warmth will remain an important part of the overall private sector housing renewal approach.

### Types of Work

Where an occupier qualifies for assistance in having energy-related work done to their home (or when they are given advice on the matter) our strategy is clear on the order of priority of different types of work.

1. Cavity Wall Insulation should be completed prior to the consideration of other energy efficiency measures due to its cost-effectiveness in reducing heat loss. This work attracts Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) Funding from utility companies and is free to vulnerable residents who are in receipt of an income related benefit
2. Loft Insulation is also widely used and accepted as a cost-effective way of preventing heat escaping from the home. This also attracts CERT funding from utility companies and is also free to vulnerable residents who are in receipt of an income-related benefit.
3. Draught proofing can be free to Warm Front clients but is only available when allied to other insulation or heating works.
4. Boiler Replacement - It is now Council policy to install condensing boilers where practicable in both private and public sector homes as this is currently the most cost effective way of providing space and water heating in the home. Grant funding is limited as these are now required by the Building Regulations, but Warm Front funding is used where possible and Renovation Grant funding may be available for applicants who cannot obtain assistance from Warm Front.

Other intervention methods that may be considered are:

5. External cladding is a good form of insulation to homes without cavity walls. It is, however, expensive to install and there is a long period before payback. Low levels of grant funding are available from utility companies as part of their Energy Efficiency Commitment. Solihull Community Housing may wish to use external cladding as part of the refurbishment of multi-story blocks.
6. Internal Dry Lining is also a good form of insulation to homes without cavity walls, however there is a potential loss of living space and major disruption for occupants. Again, Low levels of grant funding are available from utility companies as part of their Energy Efficiency Commitment.
7. It is anticipated that the installation of renewable energy technology will become more affordable over time and as this happens we will factor-in renewables to our options appraisals. The extent to which we can do this will depend in part on householders' financial ability and propensity to invest in the technology. Further information on renewables is given at page 18 below.

### **3. Post Development Interventions (landlords and tenants)**

Approximately 13,100 households in Solihull rent their home from a public sector landlord, 11,000 from Solihull Community Housing and 2,100 from a housing association.

Whilst this is a smaller number than in the private sector, tenants of SCH and housing association are more likely to be older and on lower incomes than Solihull households generally. Ensuring that tenants and leaseholders benefit from energy efficiency and affordable warmth improvements is therefore an important aspect of this strategy.

All public sector housing must meet the **Decent Homes** standard by 2010 for housing associations and 2012 for SCH. The standard includes a thermal comfort criterion so energy efficiency related work is a key part of the programmes that have been put in place by social landlords to ensure that their properties achieve the standard.

For SCH, a major programme of works has been put in place that will see approximately 8,900 homes improved over the period 2002 to 2012. In terms of energy efficiency and affordable warmth the programme includes:

- new central heating systems to 4,385 homes
- double glazing to 4,411 homes
- insulation measures to 4,127 homes
- 

The works are funded by the Council's Housing Capital Programme that has been enhanced by up to an additional £63m that SCH secured through achieving 2-star status at inspection.

**Carbon Emissions Reduction Target** funding has been arranged via British Gas as part of their 'Here to HELP' programme. In excess of £900,000 is available to SCH over the lifetime of the Decent Homes Programme for loft and cavity wall insulation measures.

At the commencement of SCH's Decent Homes programme the overall SAP for homes in their management was 46. By the end of the programme in 2012 this is expected to have increased to 67.

Most of the capital resources available to SCH until 2012 will be spent on the Decent Homes programme. There will be some investment in other aspects of property maintenance, particularly on health and safety issues, but it will not be until after 2012 that significant investments in non – decent homes related work can be carried out unless additional funding is received.

In order to focus on activity that can significantly improve energy efficiency in the short and longer term SCH are developing a **Climate Change Plan**. This will consider the investment needs of different types of housing and how the overall SAP rating can be most cost-effectively improved using internal and external insulation and new renewable energy technologies can be used. These are expected to become more affordable as capital costs and payback periods reduce over coming years.

One example of what can be achieved through additional external funding is the pilot project to install photovoltaic cells onto seven multi - storey blocks to reduce the cost of the landlord lighting in communal areas that was completed in December 2007. This project secured grant funding of 50% (£108,000) from the **Low Carbon Buildings Programme**. Due to the success of this project a further 30 installations are planned for 2008/09/10 at a cost of £960,000. Funding from the Low carbon Buildings Programme will be sought to supplement a 25% contribution from both the council (Single Capital Pot bid) and Solihull Community Housing. Work is due to begin on site in November 2008.

Solihull Community Housing have allocated £100,000 for a new pilot project to install Ground Source and Air Source heat pumps together with Solar thermal systems in

social housing. There is also the potential for Frank Haslam Milan, a Decent Homes partner, to develop an Eco-home in Solihull in 2008/09.

In addition to investing in the housing stock, SCH are assisting in the implementation of other aspects of the strategy, particularly advice and economic issues.

The Here to HELP programme administered by British Gas offers residents a free benefits health check and support from a number of charity partners i.e., Help the Aged, RNIB, SCOPE, National Debtline, Save the Children and the Family Welfare Association. The take up of this support is monitored by British Gas and annually reported to the Home Energy Conservation Officer. This links to the proactive approach that SCH are taking on reducing debt and maximising benefits take-up amongst tenants and leaseholders.

SCH and the Council are currently developing an **Affinity scheme** with EBICo, a not for profit company that offer both gas and electric at a competitive rate and does not charge standing fees. EBICo also charges one rate across their price structure regardless of payment methods. In effect this means that those on prepayment meters are not disadvantaged compared to customers who pay by direct debit or quarterly payment. This is of benefit to fuel poor households and those with a fixed income as it is they that often use prepayment meters.

The Affinity deal allows EBICo to change the utility supply contract for gas and electricity when a property becomes void. A small fee is paid to SCH and this money can be used to help finance other projects that aim to combat fuel poverty. At 31st March 2008, 155 clients had switched to EBICo.

The Fuel Poverty Advisory Group's 2007 Annual Report states that only one in fifteen fuel-poor households use a social tariff including 0.05% Npower, and 2.3 of British Gas customers. The government's most recent budget called for energy suppliers to increase spending on social tariffs from £50M to £150M.

### Renewable Energy Technologies

There is already evidence that some better-off householders have been investing in solar and wind technologies and this trend is expected to continue with more householders coming to see renewables as a viable investment, depending on capital costs and payback periods; subject to the impact of the economic downturn on individual households.

Our strategy is to increase knowledge of the possibilities that renewables can present to householders through information and advice. We will also keep under review the contribution that renewables can make to cost-effective solutions for customers who require assistance to afford energy efficiency improvements.

Given the rapid development of these options, the following assessment of what they can offer in terms of additional solutions to able-to-pay and fuel-poor households will need to be updated regularly, as will our strategic approach.

**Solar Thermal Systems** - are the most common form of renewable technology used in the UK and have been in use for over 30 years. All systems require a solar collection panel (usually placed on the roof, south facing), a solar heating cylinder and a pumping station. Solar thermal systems generate energy when the light levels are strong enough and in an average UK dwelling will provide up to 60% of the energy required to heat hot water. Systems can be fitted in new and existing buildings with 30% grant funding currently available via the DTI's Low Carbon Buildings Programme.

**Photovoltaic panels** can provide up to 60% of all the electricity used in a domestic dwelling i.e. heating, lighting and appliances. As Photovoltaic installations are currently the most expensive renewable technology, 50% grant funding is available via the DTI's Low Carbon Buildings Programme. Systems can be fitted in new and existing buildings

**Wind Turbines** – the efficiency of single-property installations is dependent upon the location of the home. Customers need to have a structural survey of their property prior to installation. These are still expensive and there is a long period before payback. Grant funding of 30% of the capital cost is available from utility companies and the Low Carbon Buildings Programme.

**Ground Source Heat Pumps** - operate by extracting heat from the ground using refrigerant gases, raising the temperature of the gas by compression and then dumping the heat to a suitable medium i.e. water. The heat is passed around the property through a wet central heating system, through radiators or under floor heating. The heat from the ground is obtained by digging a trench 2 metres below the surface for a distance of 40 metres or a borehole drilled 100 metres deep. There will be a need to install over- sized radiators as the temperature of the water is between 35-45 degrees centigrade compared to output flow from gas boilers of 80C. These are expensive to retro fit although they should be considered in new build. 35% grant funding is available toward installation costs.

**Combined heat and power** - is a possible solution on new developments and for single dwellings. In the home, a micro-CHP unit resembling a gas-fired boiler will provide both heat for space and water heating, as does a boiler, but also electricity to power domestic lights and appliances. Micro-CHP units are a very new technology only recently appearing in the UK market, but the potential for them is as large as the number of homes in the country. The main design criterion is that, to make the investment worthwhile, there must be a need for both the heat and electricity produced by the CHP unit.

**Biomass** - fuels from three sources - waste wood from industrial or domestic use, wood chips made from chipping of waste wood and tree toppings and wood pellets made from trees grown for the purpose or processed from timber yard off-cuts. There are a variety of heating appliances that can burn biomass fuels. Some appliances, as well as providing room heating can also provide hot water. The control of biomass heating appliances is relatively difficult to achieve storage of the biomass fuel is also a consideration that may limit its applications.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE

During the past three years approximately £10M public and £31M private funding has been utilised through the Home Efficiency and Affordable Warmth strategy.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Estimates calculated using HECA data (2005-2008)

Over the period 2007 – 2010 it is expected that a further £48m will be committed to home energy conservation and affordable warmth activity via this strategy. An estimated £18m of this will be public finance with owner-occupiers investing an estimated £27m. The latter are subject to the impact of economic trends and householders' confidence and their ability and propensity to invest in their homes.

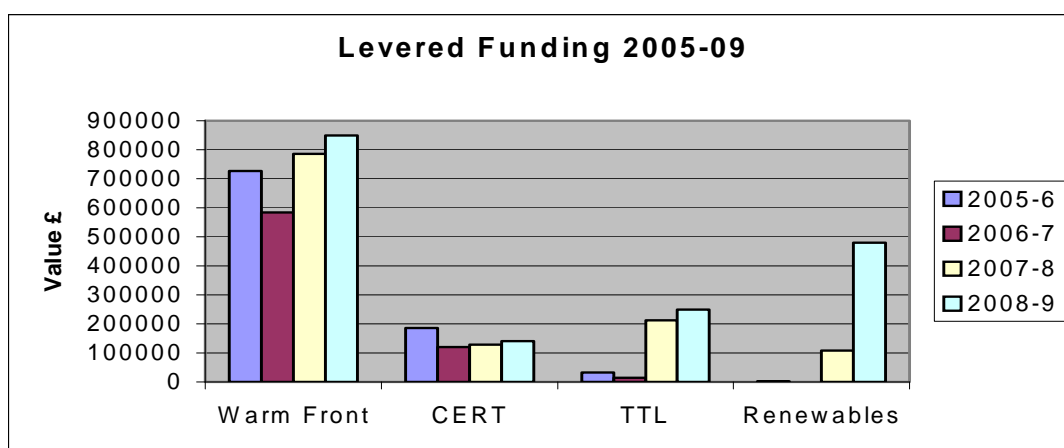
**Table 4: Estimates calculated using HECA data (2005-2008)**

Funding Stream	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	Totals
Solihull Community Housing	4.5M	4.5M	4.5M	13.5M
Renovation grants	0.1M	0.1M	0.1M	0.3M
EEC Funding	0.2M	0.2M	0.2M	0.6M
Warm Front	0.9M	0.9M	0.9M	2.7M
Private Sector (owner occupiers)	10M	10M	10M	30M
<b>Total</b>				<b>47.1M</b>

### Financial Assistance

In recognition of the fact that many Solihull residents cannot afford – or be reasonably expected to afford – to invest in energy efficiency, a major part of the Strategy involves reducing or removing the cost of improvements to occupiers. This is achieved primarily through four externally funded schemes that are continually available:

**Table 5: Levered Funding 2005-09**



The **Warm Front** scheme is the primary source of assistance. The Energy Action Grants Agency (EAGA) provides heating and insulation measures to vulnerable private sector households in receipt of an income-related benefit. The average annual contribution from Warm Front in Solihull is £800,000.

The number of installations carried out by the Warm Front scheme has increased over the past 2 years and this trend is likely to continue. Prior to the development of Warm Front, vulnerable households were entitled to financial support in the form of Renovation Grants from the local authority. Therefore, this scheme provides both levered in funding and a saving to the local authority in terms of reduced Renovation grant payments.

As a consequence of the introduction of grant maxima in June 2005, 5% of Warm Front clients now have a contribution to make prior to the works commencing. In

order to assist vulnerable clients our strategy has been and will continue to provide a grant of up to £500 to help meet client contributions.

To date we have assisted 51 clients with their contributions at a cost of £22,800. Without this support vulnerable clients would not be able to work with EAGA and may turn to the local authority for assistance with the full cost of the heating works. It is estimated that this realises a saving to the council of £97,500.

We will continue to promote Warm Front and offer assistance with client contributions thereby ensuring that energy efficiency measures are available to households in most need.

The **Take the LEAD (Loans, Energy Advice and Discounts)** scheme began in November 1999 as a joint venture between Solihull, Herefordshire and Sandwell Councils. Initially a 3 year HECAction project, funded by the Energy Saving Trust, this project encourages *able to pay* private sector householders to invest in energy efficiency in their homes.

The project provides advice on the range of energy efficiency technologies available, details of suppliers, information on insulation grants, discounted insulation measures and access to a revolving interest free loan fund of £70,000. Within Solihull to date, 82 loan applications have been agreed totalling in excess of £100,000. The loan fund is available to all residents of the Borough (subject to a personal credit check) and our strategy will to be to continue into 2007/8.

'Take the LEAD' now includes details of renewable technologies to ensure that 'able to pay' residents have easy access to new ways of heating/ lighting their homes

Details of the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target funding and the Low Carbon Buildings Programme can be found at page 18 and 19.

## **DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY**

As energy efficiency and affordable warmth are important wellbeing issues for residents and for the environment, Council and partner agencies will be involved in maximising our opportunities in this field.

Working with colleagues from the Council and partner agencies, the Home Energy Efficiency Officer has the lead responsibility for ensuring that the objectives of this strategy are realised.

### **1. Partnerships and Support**

Successful implementation of strategy on home energy efficiency and affordable warmth depends on effective partnerships.

The HECO maintains and develops partnerships with relevant business sectors, including energy suppliers, housing developers, social and private landlords, the North Solihull Regeneration Partnership and support organisations such as Hestia, CMEEAC, Age Concern and others.

Through this network the HECO has raised and will continue to promote the profile of energy efficiency and affordable warmth and the options which are available to organisations to contribute to the objectives of the strategy.

Through the Council's corporate Energy Development Group (EDG) which is tasked with developing the linkages between strategy and operational delivery, the HECO will ensure that the Council's forthcoming Climate Change Strategy takes full account of the needs and opportunities of the residential sector. The HECO is a member of

the Climate Change officer group that is charged with achieving reductions in Co2 emissions across the Borough.

The HECO has assisted SCH to develop its Climate Change Plan and specific initiatives within it (most recently the Photovoltaic panels on high-rise blocks).

## **2. Knowledge and understanding of the energy market and emerging solutions**

Resources available to the Council and partners to improve energy efficiency and affordable warmth are limited, so it is essential that they are applied in an effective way. For this it is essential that the Council develops a clear understanding of the issues and possible solutions.

The HECO will further develop and update intelligence on all matters relating to the strategy including:

- Energy supply - price trends, market changes and supply options
- Strategic framework – including government and other targets for sustainability and current financial and other initiatives to work toward these
- Development industry – economic aspects of housing supply and scope for improving the environmental performance of new homes
- Support for consumers – agencies and new approaches to providing advice and assistance to all market segments
- Renewable technology – products and their applicability and affordability for business sectors and consumers
- Fuel poverty – extent and characteristics, trends and scope for reduction

## **3. Assistance for Home Owners**

Providing advice and assistance to all home-owners in the Borough is a key objective of the strategy. The approach taken will vary according to the circumstances of the customer. There will be a particular focus on the needs of vulnerable people who are in or at risk of fuel poverty and on homes with a low SAP.

The HECO will continue to work with internal and external agencies in order to provide support for home-owners to save energy and adequately heat their homes by:

- Ensuring that free advice and assistance is available to all residents through the CMEEAC via an annual Service Level agreement
- Ensuring that the availability of financial assistance to help owners improve their homes is maximised and targeted in the most cost – effective way through the use of external and internal funding i.e. CERT and Warm Front
- Ensuring that where customers require and qualify for assistance in carrying out works to their home that this is done efficiently in line with the principles set out in this strategy. – The Service Level Agreement with the CMEEAC requires assist to be available from accredited insulation installers and the advice staff to have received relevant training.
- Devising new pro-active approaches to encourage and assist vulnerable home owners to invest in energy efficiency improvements as part of the private sector renewal strategy – Warm Front and take the LEAD mail outs were carried out during 2007/08. Winter Warmth campaign planned for 2008/09.
- Co-ordinating a Winter Warmth campaign for 2008/09 and ensuring that this is taken up annually by the Solihull Partnership.

#### **4. Assistance for Landlords**

Landlords have their own responsibilities for the environmental performance of homes in their management and the wellbeing of their tenants.

The HECO will provide advice and assistance to landlords on meeting their responsibilities and continually improving their housing offer and services to their tenants and leaseholders.

This will include:

- continuing to help and advise SCH on investment options for the Decent Homes programme and supporting initiatives consistent with the climate change policy
- helping landlords to access external funding such as CERT and Warm Front
- monitoring the progress of SCH and housing associations on improving the SAP rating of homes in their management and assisting with EPC production
- continuing to assist landlords to address the financial wellbeing of tenants and leaseholders through advice on options to reduce the cost of fuel (e.g. affinity schemes and tariff optimisation) and pay for consumption (e.g. benefit checks)

#### **5. North Solihull Regeneration**

The HECO will provide advice to the Regeneration Partnership on:

- the content of, and need to update, the North Solihull Design Code on matters related to this strategy.
- the scope and opportunities for multi-property pre-development solutions e.g. Combined Heat and Power and renewable energy technologies.
- Progress of the regeneration programme in raising the overall SAP of the homes in the area

### **TARGETS**

#### **Statutory Targets**

<b>Statutory Target</b>	<b>2008/09 Targets</b>	<b>2009/10 Targets</b>
Achieve the Government target of 100% of homes in the social sector to be at or above the Decent Homes standard by the end of 2012. This includes a thermal comfort criterion.	Overall, the Decent Homes Programme is on target. Additionally, external funding has been levered in for SCH to install hot water tank jackets and other insulation measures	As 2008/9; additionally, new initiatives including the provision of energy monitoring devices to SCH tenanted and leasehold properties will be implemented.
Achieve the Government target of at least 75% of homes in the private sector which are occupied by households with at least one vulnerable person to be at or above the Decent Homes standard by the end of 2010. This also includes the thermal comfort criterion.	The Government's Decent Homes target in relation to private sector homes has been discontinued.	n/a

<b>Statutory Target</b>	<b>2008/09 Targets</b>	<b>2009/10 Targets</b>
Work towards the eradication of fuel poverty in line with government targets	A reduction in the number of fuel poor homes was achieved in 2007/08. The impact of fuel price increases during 2008 will be felt during winter 2008/09 by residents and the numbers in fuel poverty will increase significantly.	Mitigate the impact of fuel price increases and therefore the number of householders in fuel poverty. No numerical target is possible because the major determinant (fuel price) is beyond Council control.
Achieve the Home Energy Conservation Act target of a 25% reduction in CO2 emissions from residential properties (from 1990 levels) by 2010.	The 25% reduction target has been met three years earlier than envisaged	n/a

### **Local Targets**

<b>Local Target</b>	<b>2008/09 Targets</b>	<b>2009/10 Targets</b>
Raise the overall average SAP of the Borough's housing stock (all tenures) from 55 to 58 by 2010.	The average SAP rating of the housing stock in Solihull to increase to 57.	maintain the annual improvement in SAP across all sectors in order to achieve an average SAP of 58 by 2010.
Proportion of homes in the private sector which are occupied by households with at least one vulnerable person which do not have a cold – related category 1 hazard	75%	75%
Increase the number of residents accessing advice and assistance from, or contacted by, the Central Midlands Energy Efficiency Advice Centre by 10% per annum (review 2010).	3,500 contacts were made in 2007/08. A 10% increase requires 3850 contacts in 2008/9.	4,235 contacts
Provide Energy and Affordable Warmth training to a minimum of 50 front line staff per annum (review 2010)	Provide Energy and Affordable Warmth training to a minimum of 50 front line staff per annum.	As 2008/9
Targeted level of levered funding from external sources for energy efficiency projects in all tenures.	£1m	£1.5m
Number of grants of up to £500 to vulnerable residents who have a Warm Front client contribution (review 2010)	30 grants	50 grants

## **Appendix 1 - Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA)**

In order to notify Government of policies and strategies that are likely to result in a significant improvement in the energy efficiency of housing in Solihull the annual HECA report is submitted to the Department of the Environment, Farming and Rural affairs (DEFRA)

Following submission of the 9<sup>th</sup> HECA report (September 2005), commendation has been received from Government Office for the West Midlands congratulating the Council on its achievements and clarity of calculations.

### **Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA)**

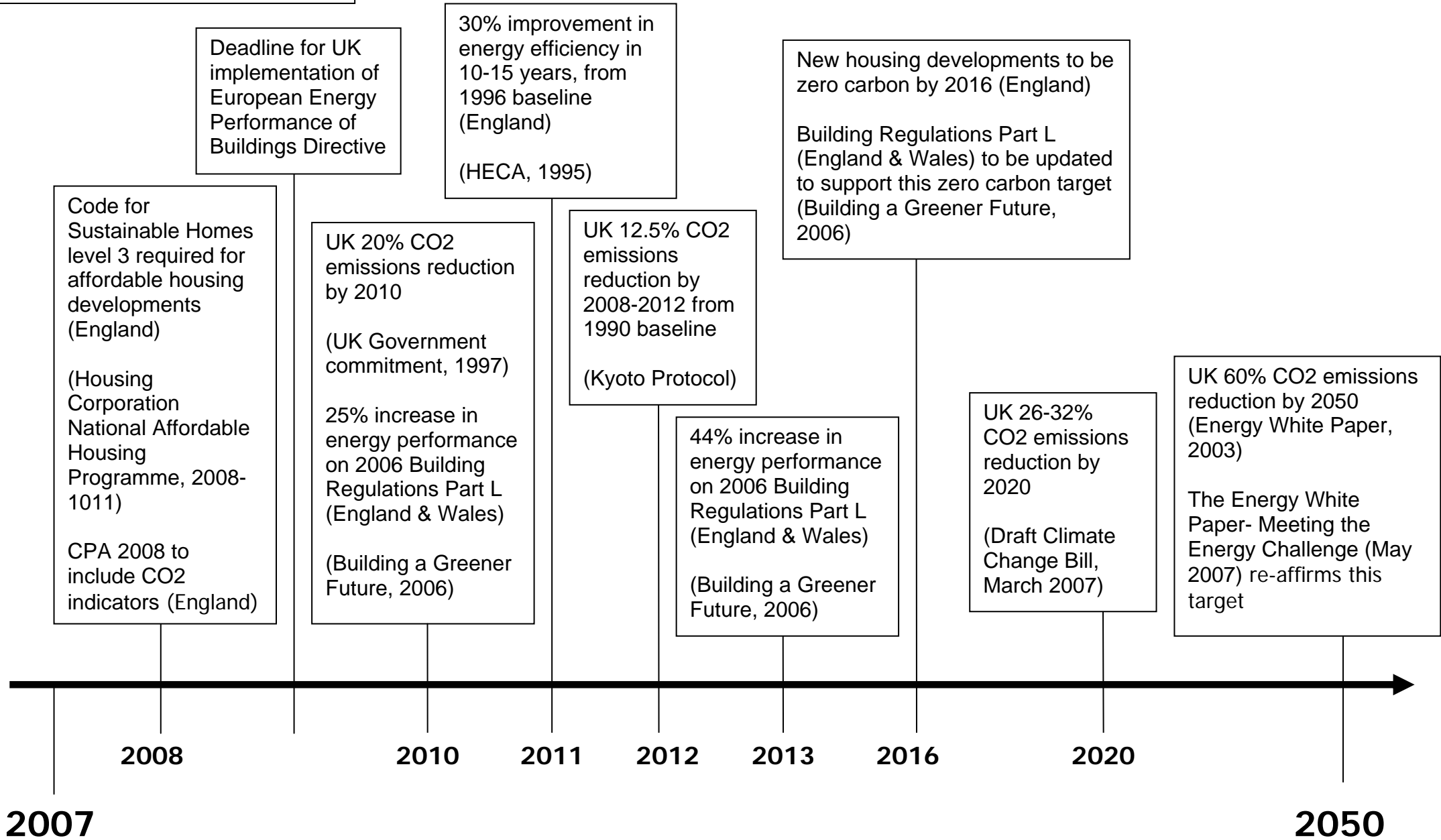
The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) - requires all local authorities to submit to the Secretary of State an annual Energy Conservation report identifying their policies and strategies that are likely to result in a significant improvement in the energy efficiency of all housing in their area.

Solihull's initial HECA submission, which was made in 1996, set an estimated energy usage baseline of 8,613,951 Giga Joules (GJ) and a CO<sub>2</sub> emissions figure of 622,147 tonnes. These baseline figures were achieved by the completion of a calculation spreadsheet received from the Building Research Energy Conservation Unit based upon age, property type and number of dwellings in the Borough together with details of energy efficiency measures previously installed.

Government guidance states that annual improvements in energy efficiency should be calculated using these baseline figures. Realising a reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions requires counting the number of new energy efficiency measures installed, assigning each measure its specific CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction value and then subtracting this total from the baseline.

Solihull's target is to increase energy efficiency by 25% over a 15-year period (1995 - 2010). Based upon annually reported increases in energy efficiency, to date a 25.63% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction has been achieved. The 25% reduction goal has been achieved 3 years earlier than envisaged.

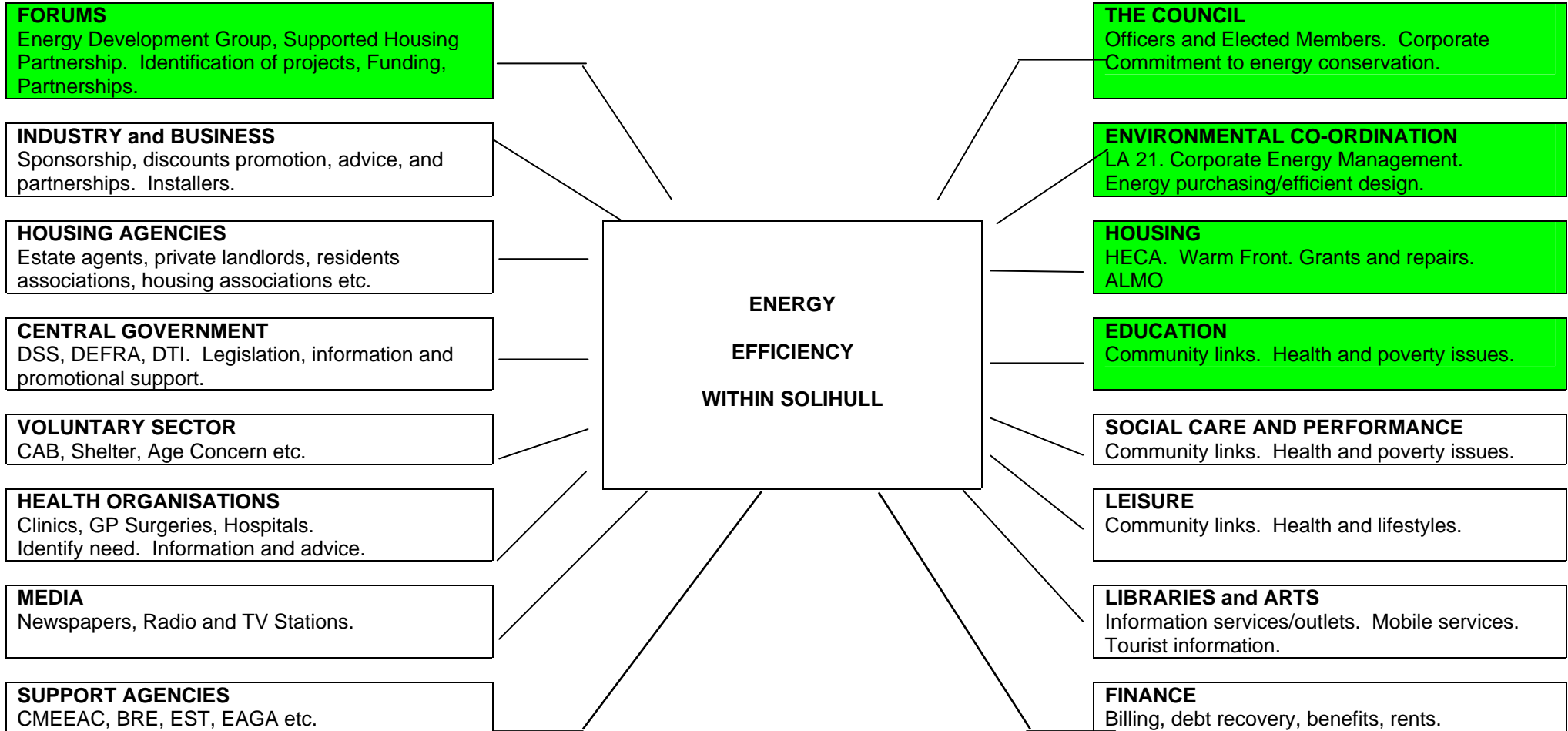
**Appendix 2 – Energy Timeline**



**UK and England carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions reduction targets and other key milestones  
2007 - 2050**

**Appendix 3 – Stakeholder Partnership Web**

**STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIP WEB**



**Green boxes denotes membership of Solihull's corporate Energy Development Group (EDG)**

### LINKS WITH OTHER COUNCIL STRATEGIES

