This report looks at projects in Local Authority areas in the West Midlands and Cheshire funded by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in 2013 that sought to deliver some of the Department’s key objectives. The projects were funded by the Fuel Poverty Fund, Green Deal Pioneer Places Fund and/or the ‘Cheaper Energy Together’ Collective Switching Fund.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

This report would not have been possible without the support, input and cooperation of:

The officers of Birmingham City Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Cheshire East Council, Coventry City Council, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Herefordshire Council, Lichfield District Council, Newcastle under Lyme Council, Shropshire Council, Solihull Council, Stoke on Trent Council, Telford and Wrekin Council, Warwickshire County Council, Worcestershire County Council and also the project management teams from Marches Energy Agency, Encraft, North Staffordshire Warm Zone, Act on Energy as well as the many other partners who worked on the projects.

Thank you to everyone involved.

Rosemary Coyne – SHAP co-ordinator
Dr Susan Juned, Director, Greenwatt Technology
The SHAP Board
1. SHAP EVALUATION OF DECC FUNDED PROJECTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A competition announced by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in October 2012 offered an opportunity to Local Authorities to support several DECC objectives to address fuel poverty in the transition from the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) and prepare the way for the introduction of the Green Deal and ECO programmes.

This report covers Local Authorities in the West Midlands and Cheshire region who undertook Fuel Poverty projects, Green Deal Pioneer projects and Collective Switching projects and who have shared their findings with SHAP. The successful Local Authorities in the West Midlands along with two nearby LAs who were part of allied bids are listed below.

Successful Council projects

- Birmingham CC
- Coventry CC
- Dudley MBC
- Herefordshire, Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire Councils
- Lichfield DC
- Newcastle under Lyme BC
- Solihull MBC
- Stoke on Trent CC
- Walsall MBC
- Warwickshire CC and Rugby BC
- Worcestershire CC and Worcester CC
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire West and Chester BC
- Switching
- Switching and Fuel Poverty
- Fuel Poverty
- Green Deal
- Fuel Poverty and Green Deal
- Fuel Poverty
- Green Deal
- Fuel Poverty and Green Deal
- Fuel Poverty
- Green Deal
- All three
- Fuel Poverty and Green Deal

This report covers all but the Fuel Poverty projects of Walsall MBC and Birmingham City Council.

The Sustainable Housing Action Programme (SHAP) undertook a programme of evaluation of the 2013 DECC funded projects so that the aspiration, objectives and emerging learning can be used to help Local Authorities design and inform future projects.

The Department expressed their keenness to understand the impact and cost-effectiveness of the projects in order to assist with future scheme design. These pilot projects have been able to develop understanding and point to the necessary success factors required in future projects as well as those areas where further work was required.
OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT STREAMS

FUEL POVERTY FUND

Ten West Midlands and Cheshire Local Authorities were successful with Fuel Poverty bids. This report covers eight of the pilot projects.

The aim of the funding was to continue to address fuel poverty by improving the thermal efficiency of homes occupied by low income and vulnerable households. Several of the projects that won funding had been heavily involved in delivering CERT and CESP funding for many years and had well-established infrastructures available.

All the projects used existing partnerships for the projects which proved to be particularly valuable given the tight timetable. Other funds such as the Warm Homes, Healthy People fund from the Department of Health were frequently used to add value to the projects and enabled work with home improvement agencies and with health professionals.

The Fuel Poverty projects that were the most successful built on well-established partnerships and infrastructure of data and installers built up under the previous CERT and CESP programmes and used targeted approaches that also gave advice on energy efficiency and finance.

A link to a free welfare benefits advice check and free energy efficiency advice maximises household income and provides further protection against fuel poverty.

GREEN DEAL PIONEERS FUND

Seven Local Authority Green Deal pilots are covered by this report involving a spectrum of public, private and community partnerships used to deliver the projects.

The aim of this funding was to kick start local Green Deal activity in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors and test the processes involved. DECC wanted to promote the Green Deal, prepare a portfolio of properties to drive demand, develop and expand existing plans for contiguous areas, test marketing methods, establish links with key players and prepare for links with proposed measures under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA). Several of the Local Authorities involved in these projects used the projects to develop their HECA strategies.

DECC wanted to strengthen and support the supply chain networks including local traders and the local business community. Solihull MBC, Coventry Council and Warwickshire CC all worked with their Local Enterprise partnership (LEP) sponsored trade association. Solihull developed a strong supply chain training and information process with local installers and trade suppliers.

One criterion not frequently highlighted was the development of local planning approaches in relation to Green Deal activity. Coventry Council, Warwickshire CC and Solihull MBC all addressed this by seeking permitted development right flexibility.

Several Local Authorities interviewed for this report emphasised the importance of tried and tested partnerships and the trusted ‘brand’ name of a Local Authority or charity to promote the Green Deal.

The pioneer projects tested the Green Deal mechanisms and highlighted several legal anomalies that have since been addressed. There were problems outside of the control of the project with software, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) lodgements and an issue
with private rented properties that were all referred to DECC for their information and for solutions. For example, guidance has now been issued by DECC for people selling, letting (social or private rented sector) or transferring a property.

**COLLECTIVE SWITCHING**

Several Local Authorities were involved in multi-authority collective energy switch projects including Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry and Cheshire East.

The switching campaigns worked with different partners and took differing approaches to their auctions.

- **Birmingham City Council and Solihull** worked with UKTogether (Eden Project, Energyshare and USwitch) and Buy for Good CIC.

- **Cheshire East** worked with Energy Projects Plus, Cheshire Fire Service and aggregated demand through a partnership with Oldham Council representing the Greater Manchester Authorities. They targeted those in fuel poverty, on prepayment meters, those interested in green energy and those who wished to save money.

- **Coventry Switch and Save** worked with iChoosr in a large campaign. The scheme was open to all householders but particularly those who had not switched before. The scheme was part of a reverse auction involving 7 schemes comprising a total of 160,315 household registrations from nearly 100 LA areas.

The use of the council name as a trusted brand proved more valuable than creation of a new brand where trust and brand recognition could not be built in the short timescale of the funded projects.

The projects have contributed significantly to the understanding of the barriers to energy supplier switching by fuel poor and vulnerable households. Although switching rates overall are still be confirmed and may be lower than anticipated, conversion rates from registering an interest to an actual switch have been reported to have increased overall. Switch rates were reported to be relatively larger in areas of deprivation where significant training, advice and financial inclusion support was offered.

The timing of the switch campaign at the end of the winter impacted on the ability of many households in fuel poverty to switch as the debt built up over the winter and the need to stay with the existing supplier to qualify for Warm Homes Discount were significant barriers.

Switch campaigns aimed at alleviating fuel poverty need to be sustained over the long term and embedded in general, financial inclusion and health and wellbeing support programmes to vulnerable and fuel poor households.

**WHAT WORKED WELL**

- There has been a great deal of learning and testing of the processes involved
- Awareness has been raised of fuel switching, fuel poverty and the Green Deal
- The Green Deal assessment process has been tested
- Further guidance from DECC has resulted from feedback
- Show homes have been developed that will provide publicity in the future
• A future legacy has developed that includes partnerships, materials and supply chain involvement
• Aspects of project delivery that proved to be particularly successful in meeting the scheme objectives were disseminated to other Local Authorities
• The testing of project delivery approaches and the learning from the pilots is already informing the design of future activity to deliver Green Deal and tackle fuel poverty both through capital (ECO and other funding streams) and through other council services and third sector activity

SUCCESS FACTORS:
The reporting through SHAP of the evaluation findings of such a wide range of DECC funded projects across the West Midlands has allowed a number of different success factors to be identified. These are discussed more fully later in the report but can be summarised as:

• Existing infrastructure – local authority, third sector, private sector – where the ability to draw on existing data, partnerships and frameworks supported project delivery within the funding timescales
• Confidence to start work at risk – which gave some projects the 'head start' in advance of formal contract which helped successful delivery within the funding timescales
• Relationship between local authorities and DECC – which allowed joint resolution of issues arising which threatened to impact on project delivery – this was particularly important for elements of projects which were innovative and/or relied on external factors and timely responses to issues beyond the control of projects

Presentations on success factors identified through the pilots made on 13th June 2013 can be viewed at:


GENERAL:: OBSERVATIONS

PARTNERSHIPS:
Many Local Authorities had committed to considerable preparatory work before the bid winners were announced and found that this was of immense assistance given the tight timetable. Using existing partners to deliver projects allowed councils to move quickly and deliver through proven and trusted partnerships. An infrastructure connected to previous funding such as Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) or to winter warmth campaigns was particularly valuable.

END OF CERT/CESP:
The end of the previous Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) funding programmes placed additional pressures on some projects where local companies had begun the process of reducing their commitments to the market. Cash flow was verbally reported to be a problem for some small companies on one project.
CAPACITY:
The tight timetable resulted in some capacity issues particularly where there had been recent personnel changes. Outsourcing the project management was a solution used by many Local Authorities for their projects and proved to be very successful.

INNOVATION:
Some innovative approaches to addressing fuel poverty and Green Deal preparation were shown by projects and these will be further emphasised in the report. Some examples were:

- Warwickshire County Council, Solihull MBC and Coventry CC who worked with their local businesses and trade associations to develop support for the Green Deal supply chain including local installers of insulation and heating improvements.
- Worcestershire CC and Worcester City Council who worked together to address the particular problem of student accommodation in university towns, many of which are in Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOS), and worked with private landlords to test the Green Deal.
- Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin councils who all worked together on an ambitious approach to kick start Green Deal activity across a largely rural area working with community groups and public sector staff.
- Newcastle BC, Stoke on Trent City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council who had funded and worked closely with their Warm Zone organisations for many years and had strong links with their local home improvement agencies, housing organisations and other public sector organisations. Their expertise was used to extend support to neighbouring Chester East Council.
- Lichfield DC who investigated issues of Park Homes and legal barriers to some occupants being able to sign up to Green Deal Plans.
- Coventry CC, Solihull MBC and Warwickshire CC who investigated allowing planning flexibilities for the installation of external wall insulation.
- Dudley SMBC who built on existing infrastructure and low cost added value interventions to increase the outcomes from the DECC funding.

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY:
Marketing and publicity for all the programmes was an issue. For the Green Deal projects targeted mailings to those households highlighted by existing quality databases as being appropriate, proved to be a more cost effective way of engaging householders than community events and stalls in public places. However, the point was made by several project managers that building successful effective community involvement takes the time not available to these projects.

TIMEFRAME:
The funds awarded through the competition were originally expected to be spent by the 31st March 2013. However, after it became clear that this timeframe was extremely short for some complex projects, some flexibility for the completion date was introduced, initially on a project specific request basis.
The timetable for the projects was very tight and had several consequences. Some Local Authorities did not bid as a result; others were less ambitious than they would have wished whilst others required an extension of the timetable in order to complete their projects.

The tight timetable was a particular problem for Green Deal Pioneer projects as the infrastructure of training, finance, software and other processes was slow to be established. The tight timetable also impacted on the delivery of Fuel Poverty projects where external insulation works programming was impacted by the long, cold winter weather.

CONCLUSIONS:

All three DECC funds were useful in testing the processes that will have to become common place in the future if buildings are to become more thermally efficient.

Over running of projects was an issue for many delivery teams particularly where additional un-programmed funded and unfunded resource was required to ensure project completion, evaluation and the monitoring of outcomes.

The success of the project bids and delivery were frequently the result of the commitment of individuals who took the task on over and above their existing work. A longer run-in to bid deadlines and project delivery would allow more Local Authorities to consider their potential to engage and prepare capacity. In addition capital works are better undertaken between spring and autumn.

Sufficient time is required in the lead up to delivery of the scheme to enable a thorough inspection of every property to identify extent of work and anticipate any extra costs that may occur. A dedicated caseworker and Technical Officer allocated to each case would ensure a closer working relationship between the client and the contractor, which would improve communication and resolve any issues and concerns as they arose.

Sufficient time is required to ensure those most vulnerable to fuel poverty are prioritised.

The Green Deal will require publicity. The use of tried and trusted ‘brands’ such as the Council name and the support they can give will assist. A significant national campaign is required as the overall success of the Green Deal will be dependent on quality marketing.

The customer journey through the Green Deal has to be carefully thought through. The journey must be short and consideration taken of any barriers to the market place; such as price, acceptance and concerns regarding quality.

It has been suggested that the Green Deal could have a pre-assessment stage to screen out those homes where the Green Deal would not be suitable. The customer would be disappointed if the report showed that nothing could be done after a payment had been made. A free assessment or a pre-assessment stage would be useful to remove an obstacle to the Green Deal.

Supply chain engagement was considered by Solihull CC to be critical to any successful product launch in the domestic energy sector and for the Green Deal. Installers and builders control what products are offered to most homeowners, who may only engage in significant building or energy works to their properties infrequently or under distress circumstances (e.g., boiler failure). Persuading small local installers to routinely offer access to Green Deal Assessments to their customers could be very effective.
Enabling small businesses to up-skill, retrain and diversify will generate local economic growth and training will encourage the good standards of delivery essential for success.

Small businesses in the private sector appear to be very keen to see the Green Deal and ECO succeed and a mixture of public, private (small) and private (large) with community partnership has been shown to work exceptionally well in some projects.

The likelihood of match funding for ECO in the future means that some Local Authorities would be more confident of planning for ECO investment if there was certainty over DECC pilot funding to pump prime activity in a local area.
2. BACKGROUND TO THE PILOT PROJECTS

THE FUNDING STREAMS AND THE DECC CRITERIA

In October 2012 the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) announced a Local Authority Competition, designed to support Local Authorities in the delivery of some of the Department’s key objectives.

Top tier and lower tier Local Authorities were invited to submit proposals for the following funds:

- Fuel Poverty Fund
- Green Deal Pioneer Places Fund
- The ‘Cheaper Energy Together’: Collective Switching Fund

The **Fuel Poverty Fund** offered up to £25 million of funding for Local Authorities and/or consortia of Local Authorities in England to support Local Authorities in projects to reduce the extent of fuel poverty particularly amongst low income and vulnerable households.

The **Green Deal Pioneer Places Fund** offered £10m to Local Authorities and/or consortia of Local Authorities in England to demonstrate ambitious approaches to kick start local Green Deal activity in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors. Applications were invited for initiatives of around £300k, with a maximum of £3m total per bid provided that State Aid rules were met.

The **‘Cheaper Energy Together’** scheme was a £5 million fund designed to support the development of innovative collective switching schemes, where consumers group together, through a trusted third party, and use market power to negotiate lower energy bills particularly amongst vulnerable consumers.

**TIMEFRAME:**

The funds awarded through the competition were originally expected to be spent by the 31st March 2013. However, after it became clear that this timeframe was extremely short for some complex projects, some flexibility for the completion date was introduced, initially on a project specific request basis.

The timetable for the projects was very tight and had several consequences. Some Local Authorities did not bid as a result; others were less ambitious than they would have wished whilst others required an extension of the timetable in order to complete their projects.

The tight timetable was a particular problem for Green Deal Pioneer projects as the infrastructure of training, finance, software and other processes was slow to be established. The tight timetable also impacted on the delivery of Fuel Poverty projects where external insulation works programming was impacted by the long, cold winter weather.

**CRITERIA:**

A range of general and specific criteria for each fund were specified. These are summarised in Appendix 1.
3. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The Department expressed their keenness to understand the impact and cost-effectiveness of the projects in order to assist with future scheme design. They attached additional weight to projects that had robust monitoring and evaluation plans including:

- The number of households helped, type and number of measures delivered and total cost;
- Characteristics (for example, income and vulnerability status) of households supported through measures.

The department wanted to understand aspects of project delivery that proved to be particularly successful (or unsuccessful) in meeting scheme objectives

Evaluation was expected to include:

- The number of households helped, type and number of measures delivered and total cost;
- Tenure of households supported through measures.
- Aspects of project delivery that proved to be particularly successful (or unsuccessful) in meeting the scheme objectives

Project evaluation could also cover:

- Techniques that were effective in reaching households and vulnerable people
- Barriers to delivery and engagement;
- Impact of measures in households: e.g., energy use behaviour, wellbeing.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

The Energy and Climate Change Committee, appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Department of Energy and Climate Change and associated public bodies is undertaking a watching brief on the Green Deal. In their first report issued on the 22nd May 2013, seven key areas were identified for further scrutiny. These were:

- public awareness and communications;
- take-up levels;
- energy and carbon savings;
- financial savings and value for money;
- access to the Green Deal and ECO;
- customer satisfaction; and
- supply chain and job creation.

THE SHAP EVALUATION:

SHAP undertook to capture the aspiration, objectives and emerging learning from the projects for the benefit of designing future projects and informing on-going projects.

DECC considers that evaluation is the robust analysis of how a policy/programme/project has been delivered in practice and whether its objectives were met.

Evaluation can provide an understanding of the actual economic, financial, social and environmental impacts of a policy/programme/project and can provide an assessment of how the policy was implemented, why it did (or did not), deliver as expected, and whether it represents value for money.
Evaluation looks at what actually happened in practice and measures the impact of a policy/programme/project compared with what would have happened without it and to develop an understanding of why. Specific elements of evaluation include:

- understanding whether policies/programmes/projects work in practice and whether or not targets will be met
- understanding which elements worked and which elements did not
- understanding whether the project represented value for money
- demonstrating effective use of resources

**EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation was carried out through liaison with the SHAP project manager by means of phone conferencing, minutes of meetings, visits and completion of evaluation templates.

This final report has used information from completed template forms, the evaluation reports produced by project managers and interviews with officers and project managers.

**EVALUATION FINDINGS, CAPTURE AND DISSEMINATION**

This evaluation has fed into the work being undertaken by SHAP to capture and disseminate the learning from projects funded by DECC.

The lessons learnt were utilised and presented at two dissemination events for all participating West Midland and neighbouring Local Authorities. An interim workshop was held on the 28th February. The final workshop was moved from late March until June 13th to allow individual project evaluation reports to be finalised and shared with the SHAP partners and participating Local Authority delivery teams before the final report was issued.

**FINAL SHAP EVALUATION WORKSHOP:**

Invitations were sent to all participating delivery teams, via DECC to other Local Authorities and to local networks with an interest to an event hosted by the Sustainable Building Futures Project, Coventry University on the 13th June 2013

The agenda covered:

- An overview of other DECC funded projects across the country
- An overview of the West Midlands / Cheshire DECC LA funded projects
- Lessons learnt from these projects that can be used to support rapid adoption of best practice
- Emerging initiatives and points of contacts
- The emerging success factors
- Existing delivery capacity and local infrastructure

Sessions looked at the experience of the local authority and third sector, private sector and local supply chain and community groups/grass roots organisations. Discussion sessions were held on the lessons learnt, success stories, barriers and recommendations for future projects. Finally the workshop discussed how to build on the pilots to develop the low carbon sustainable construction economy and make an impact on fuel poverty.

DECC sent three representatives to present information about other DECC pilot projects across the country and receive feedback from the conference participants.
THE SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS IN THE WEST MIDLANDS AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS:

The following projects were awarded funding through the three DECC funding streams open to Local Authorities and the collective energy switch stream that was also open to community groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority/Community Group</th>
<th>Fuel Poverty</th>
<th>Green Deal Pioneer Places</th>
<th>Collective Energy Switch</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham City Council</td>
<td>1,973,625</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>312,000</td>
<td>2,285,625</td>
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<td>Coventry</td>
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<td>63,000</td>
<td>660,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudley MBC</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td>No application</td>
<td>Applied but not funded</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Herefordshire Council with Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire Council</td>
<td>No application</td>
<td>450,639</td>
<td>No application</td>
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<td>Lichfield District Council</td>
<td>59,300</td>
<td>87,300</td>
<td>No application</td>
<td>146,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council</td>
<td>74,500</td>
<td>Applied but not funded</td>
<td>Applied but not funded</td>
<td>74,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solihull MBC</td>
<td>No application</td>
<td>295,800</td>
<td>With BCC</td>
<td>295,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke on Trent City Council</td>
<td>290,000</td>
<td>32,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>322,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walsall MBC</td>
<td>349,880</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>349,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwickshire County Council with Rugby Borough Council</td>
<td>387,000</td>
<td>Applied but not funded</td>
<td></td>
<td>387,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcestershire County Council with Worcester City Council</td>
<td>Applied but not funded</td>
<td>297,822</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheshire East Council</td>
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<td>197,500</td>
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<td>278,500</td>
<td>27,500</td>
<td></td>
<td>306,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Power – areas including: Tamworth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>178,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY: projects forming part of this evaluation report
4. ANALYSIS OF THE PROJECTS:

A competition announced by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) in October 2012 offered an opportunity to Local Authorities to support several DECC objectives to address fuel poverty in the transition from CERT and CESP programmes and prepare the way for the introduction of the Green Deal and ECO programmes.

This report covers Local Authorities in the West Midlands and Cheshire region who undertook Fuel Poverty projects, Green Deal Pioneer projects and Collective Switching projects and who have shared their findings with SHAP. The successful Local Authorities in the West Midlands along with two nearby LAs who were part of allied bids are listed below.

The Fuel Poverty projects led by Walsall MB Council and Birmingham CC were not a part of the SHAP evaluations.

TIMETABLE:

The timetable for the projects was very tight and had several consequences. Some Local Authorities did not bid as a result; others were less ambitious than they would have wished whilst others required an extension of the timetable in order to complete their projects.

The tight timetable was a particular problem for Green Deal Pioneer projects. The infrastructure of training, finance, software and other processes has been slow to be established. Green Deal Providers were still establishing their processes as these projects started. The pilot projects have helped to establish the need and have tested the processes for the Green Deal but often at a cost of great deal of extra work to project managers and delivery teams.

The tight timetable also impacted on the delivery of Fuel Poverty projects where external insulation works programming was impacted by the long, cold winter weather.
PARTNERSHIPS:
Many Local Authorities had committed to considerable preparatory work before the bid winners were announced and found that this was of immense assistance given the tight timetable. Using existing partners to deliver projects allowed councils to move quickly and deliver through proven and trusted partnerships. An infrastructure connected to previous funding such as Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) or to winter warmth campaigns was particularly valuable.

END OF CERT/CESP:
The end of the previous Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) and Community Energy Saving Programme (CESP) funding programmes placed additional pressures on some projects where local companies had begun the process of reducing their commitments to the market. Cash flow was verbally reported to be a problem for some small companies on one project.

CAPACITY:
The tight timetable resulted in some capacity issues particularly where there had been recent personnel changes. Outsourcing the project management was a solution used by many Local Authorities for their projects and proved to be very successful.

INNOVATION:
Some innovative approaches to addressing fuel poverty and Green Deal preparation were shown by projects and these will be further emphasised in the report. Some examples were:

- Warwickshire County Council, Solihull MBC and Coventry CC who worked with their local businesses and trade associations to develop support for the Green Deal supply chain including local installers of insulation and heating improvements.

- Worcestershire CC and Worcester City Council who worked together to address the particular problem of student accommodation in university towns, many of which are in Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOS), and worked with private landlords to test the Green Deal.

- Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin councils who all worked together on an ambitious approach to kick start Green Deal activity across a largely rural area working with community groups and public sector staff.

- Newcastle BC, Stoke on Trent City Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council who had funded and worked closely with their Warm Zone organisations for many years and had strong links with their local home improvement agencies, housing organisations and other public sector organisations. Their expertise was used to extend support to neighbouring Chester East Council.

- Lichfield DC who investigated issues of Park Homes and legal barriers to some occupants being able to sign up to Green Deal Plans.

- Coventry CC, Solihull MBC and Warwickshire CC who investigated allowing planning flexibilities for the installation of external wall insulation.

- Dudley SMBC who built on existing infrastructure and low cost added value interventions to increase the outcomes from the DECC funding.
MARKETING AND PUBLICITY:
Marketing and publicity for all the programmes was an issue. For the Green Deal projects targeted mailings to those households highlighted by existing quality databases as being appropriate, proved to be a more cost effective way of engaging householders than community events and stalls in public places. However, the point was made by several project managers that building successful effective community involvement takes the time not available to these projects.

MEETING THE DECC AIMS AND CRITERIA:
The DECC project aims and criteria for the Green Deal and Fuel Poverty Fund were quite specific and were delivered by Local Authorities in partnership with a wide range of public and private organisations.

DECC asked for stakeholder engagement, value for money, indications of the project milestones and modifications that were required, the lessons learnt, additionality and state aid compliance. The detailed reports on the projects reflect these aims.

THE PROJECTS

FUEL POVERTY FUND
Ten West Midlands and Cheshire Local Authorities were successful with Fuel Poverty bids. This report covers eight of the pilot projects.

The aim of the funding was to continue to address fuel poverty by improving the thermal efficiency of homes occupied by low income and vulnerable households. Several of the projects that won funding had been heavily involved in delivering CERT and CESP funding for many years and had well-established infrastructures available.

All the projects used existing partnerships for the projects which proved to be particularly valuable given the tight timetable. Other funds such as the Warm Homes, Healthy People fund from the Department of Health were frequently used to add value to the projects and enabled work with home improvement agencies and with health professionals.

In areas where fuel poverty work has been in existence for many years a diminishing number of homes are without the most basic insulation measures and flexibility was sought from DECC during the project to extend the funding to cover other measures such as boiler replacements.

The Fuel Poverty Fund proved to be a useful transition measure as, with the ending of CERT and CESP, some local companies had started to lay off staff.

The Fuel Poverty projects that were the most successful built on well-established partnerships and infrastructure of data and installers built up under the previous CERT and CESP programmes and used targeted approaches that also gave advice on energy efficiency and finance.

A link to a free welfare benefits advice check and free energy efficiency advice maximises household income and provides further protection against fuel poverty.
GREEN DEAL PIONEERS FUND

Seven Local Authority Green Deal pilots are covered by this report involving a spectrum of public, private and community partnerships used to deliver the projects.

The aim of this funding was to kick start local Green Deal activity in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors and test the processes involved. DECC wanted to promote the Green Deal, prepare a portfolio of properties to drive demand, develop and expand existing plans for contiguous areas, test marketing methods, establish links with key players and prepare for links with proposed measures under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA). Several of the Local Authorities involved in these projects used the projects to develop their HECA strategies.

DECC wanted to strengthen and support the supply chain networks including local traders and the local business community. Solihull MBC, Coventry Council and Warwickshire CC all worked with their Local Enterprise partnership (LEP) sponsored trade association. Solihull developed a strong supply chain training and information process with local installers and trade suppliers.

One criterion not frequently highlighted was the development of local planning approaches in relation to Green Deal activity. Coventry Council, Warwickshire CC and Solihull MBC all addressed this by seeking permitted development right flexibility.

Several Local Authorities interviewed for this report emphasised the importance of tried and tested partnerships and the trusted ‘brand’ name of a Local Authority or charity to promote the Green Deal.

The pioneer projects tested the Green Deal mechanisms and highlighted several legal anomalies that have since been addressed. There were problems outside of the control of the project with software, Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) lodgements and an issue with private rented properties that were all referred to DECC for their information and for solutions. For example, guidance has now been issued by DECC for people selling, letting (social or private rented sector) or transferring a property.

A commitment to sharing learning with other Local Authorities was a criterion (15% of the Green Deal bid weightings) which has fitted well with the SHAP dissemination/evaluation proposal and plans.

COLLECTIVE SWITCHING

Several Local Authorities were involved in multi-authority collective energy switch projects including Birmingham, Solihull, Coventry and Cheshire East.

The switching campaigns worked with different partners and took differing approaches to their auctions.

**Birmingham City Council and Solihull** worked with UKTogether (Eden Project, Energyshare and uSwitch) and Buy for Good CIC.

Carillion provided the contact centre as part of their Birmingham Energy Savers work. The project was aimed at all households in Birmingham and Solihull, but with a focus on vulnerable households and a particularly intensive engagement strategy in 2 wards with high levels of deprivation. The unique parts of the project were:

- An auction before the switch window opened.
- An attempt to involve shopkeepers offering top up facilities to pre-payment customers
- The width of the community involvement
- The best deals from a whole market comparison in addition to the winning tariffs through the auction

**Cheshire East** worked with Energy Projects Plus, Cheshire Fire Service and aggregated demand through a partnership with Oldham Council representing the Greater Manchester Authorities. They targeted those in fuel poverty, on prepayment meters, those interested in green energy and those who wished to save money.

**Coventry Switch and Save**
The partner chosen by Coventry was iChoosr. The scheme was open to all householders but particularly those who had not switched before. The scheme was part of a reverse auction involving 7 schemes comprising a total of 160,315 household registrations from nearly 100 LA areas.

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**Diagram 1:** Comparison – Collective Switching campaigns for Birmingham City Council, Solihull MBC, Coventry City Council and Cheshire East Council

The use of the council name as a trusted brand proved more valuable than creation of a new brand where trust and brand recognition could not be built in the short timescale of the funded projects.

The projects have contributed significantly to the understanding of the barriers to energy supplier switching by fuel poor and vulnerable households. Although switching rates overall are still be confirmed and may be lower than anticipated, conversion rates from registering an interest to an actual switch have been reported to have increased overall. Switch rates were reported to be relatively larger in areas of deprivation where significant training, advice and financial inclusion support was offered.
The timing of the switch campaign at the end of the winter impacted on the ability of many households in fuel poverty to switch as the debt built up over the winter and the need to stay with the existing supplier to qualify for Warm Homes Discount were significant barriers.

Switch campaigns aimed at alleviating fuel poverty need to be sustained over the long term and embedded in general, financial inclusion and health and wellbeing support programmes to vulnerable and fuel poor households.

CONCLUSIONS:

All three DECC funds were useful in testing the processes that will have to become common place in the future if buildings are to become more thermally efficient.

Over running of projects was an issue for many delivery teams particularly where additional un-programmed funded and unfunded resource was required to ensure project completion, evaluation and the monitoring of outcomes.

The success of the project bids and delivery were frequently the result of the commitment of individuals who took the task on over and above their existing work. A longer run-in to bid deadlines and project delivery would allow more Local Authorities to consider their potential to engage and prepare capacity. In addition capital works are better undertaken between spring and autumn.

Sufficient time is required in the lead up to delivery of the scheme to enable a thorough inspection of every property to identify extent of work and anticipate any extra costs that may occur. A dedicated caseworker and Technical Officer allocated to each case would ensure a closer working relationship between the client and the contractor, which would improve communication and resolve any issues and concerns as they arose.

Sufficient time is required to ensure those most vulnerable to fuel poverty are prioritised.

The Green Deal will require publicity. The use of tried and trusted ‘brands’ such as the Council name and the support they can give will assist. A significant national campaign is required as the overall success of the Green Deal will be dependent on quality marketing.

The customer journey through the Green Deal has to be carefully thought through. The journey must be short and consideration taken of any barriers to the market place; such as price, acceptance and concerns regarding quality.

It has been suggested that the Green Deal could have a pre-assessment stage to screen out those homes where the Green Deal would not be suitable. The customer would be disappointed if the report showed that nothing could be done after a payment had been made. A free assessment or a pre-assessment stage would be useful to remove an obstacle to the Green Deal.

Supply chain engagement was considered by Solihull CC to be critical to any successful product launch in the domestic energy sector and for the Green Deal. Installers and builders control what products are offered to most homeowners, who may only engage in significant building or energy works to their properties infrequently or under distress circumstances (e.g., boiler failure). Persuading small local installers to routinely offer access to Green Deal Assessments to their customers could be very effective.

Enabling small businesses to up-skill, retrain and diversify will generate local economic growth and training will encourage the good standards of delivery essential for success.
Small businesses in the private sector appear to be very keen to see the Green Deal and ECO succeed and a mixture of public, private (small) and private (large) with community partnership has been shown to work exceptionally well in some projects.

The likelihood of match funding for ECO in the future means that some Local Authorities would be more confident of planning for ECO investment if there was certainty over DECC pilot funding to pump prime activity in a local area.

WHAT WORKED WELL

- There has been a great deal of learning and testing of the processes involved
- Awareness has been raised of fuel switching, fuel poverty and the Green Deal
- The Green Deal assessment process has been tested
- Further guidance from DECC has resulted from feedback
- Show homes have been developed that will provide publicity in the future
- A future legacy has developed that includes partnerships, materials and supply chain involvement
- Aspects of project delivery that proved to be particularly successful in meeting the scheme objectives were disseminated to other Local Authorities

THE FUTURE SHAP ROLE:

SHAP has undertaken to maximise the learning, draw out lessons to inform future policy development, capture information on any interesting, innovative, and effective approaches being used and disseminate the results. This report will form the basis for future work.
5. THE PROJECTS IN DETAIL:

WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL WITH RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Applied for - Green Deal Pioneer and Fuel Poverty
Funding was received for Fuel Poverty - £387,000
Named delivery partner – Rugby Borough Council
Named evaluator – SHAP

This project addressed fuel poverty in two rural villages, Brinklow and Wolvey in Rugby Borough Council and prepares the way for the Green Deal with a web portal.

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

The aim of the project was to support the installation of improvements to the thermal efficiency of up to 50 rural dwellings in Warwickshire. Rugby Borough has the highest percentage of households in fuel poverty (19.8%) of any district or borough in Warwickshire, with a significant problem in rural areas.
The dwellings were identified by overlaying a range of datasets to target those households most in need. The community and third sector organisations undertook the assessments and then local contractors and installers were engaged to undertake the work.

The legacy of the project is supported by the development of a “one front door” web portal to enable individuals and support agencies to access local energy efficiency information online.

News Release: Warmer Homes for Wolvey and Brinklow

Residents in Brinklow and Wolvey could benefit from nearly £400,000 of energy saving improvements between now and the end of March.

A successful bid to the government’s Fuel Poverty Initiative resulted in funds to help reduce fuel poverty for up to 50 households in these villages. Qualifying householders could benefit from new energy efficient boilers and insulation measures that could significantly lower their energy bills.

Rugby Borough Council is working in partnership with the county council, the Local Enterprise Partnership, Act on Energy (an independent energy advice organisation) and the Renewable Energy Technology Alliance (RETA) on this project. The intention is to use local installers and suppliers, as far as possible, to support the local economy.

Cllr Leigh Hunt, Rugby Borough Council portfolio holder for sustainable inclusive communities, said: “With changes to benefits about to come into force as a result of government welfare reform, we know that many householders will struggle to make ends meet.

“Lower fuel bills mean more money available for other household spending, so we want to help as many residents to make their homes energy efficient as possible.”

The scheme means that eligible properties will be entitled to a grant to fund home improvements that make the property more energy-efficient - and cheaper to heat. The grant does not need to be paid back.

The organisation Act on Energy has been commissioned to visit eligible properties in the villages selected for the scheme. However, interested residents can call them on 0800 988 2881 to see if they qualify.

THE PARTNERSHIP

The partners with Warwickshire County Council and Rugby Borough Council were:

- Hardyman Ltd, a local SME who acted as principal contractor for the physical installation works.
- Act on Energy, a charitable energy efficiency advice centre who undertook assessments
- Renewable Energy Technology Alliance (RETA) a group of contractors and installers who undertook the physical works
- Solutions Squared – who carried out the design and development of the web portal

Each partner brought a specific skillset to the table. Hardyman was chosen for their contractor management, Act on Energy for their expertise in community and resident engagement, RETA for the ready-made supply chain for all of the energy efficiency

1 Rugby Borough Council news release 6th February 2013
measures that needed to be installed and Solutions Squared for complex web design talents.

The County Council initiated the proposal, prepared for the project well in advance of hearing the final outcome of the proposal and used its existing framework procurement for suppliers. The project built upon previous work done under DECC LEAF funding

**PROJECT OUTPUTS**

These were:

- To create an “intelligence-led” dataset through combining existing socio-economic and property information to more effectively target those most in need and significantly reduce fuel poverty in rural communities.
- To engage the local supply chain to install energy efficiency measures in up to 50 dwellings targeted at the most vulnerable to fuel poverty.
- To test and understand the most effective roles of private, public and community stakeholders to ensure best value across the whole delivery process and share with wider West Midlands authorities.
- To establish and test new, and evaluate existing, communications channels to more effectively engage and receive feedback from individuals and community groups to ensure that Green Deal, ECO and any other future funding to target fuel poverty can be easily accessed and understood.

**STRATEGIC OUTCOMES**

The project was designed to:

- To create a scalable model that can be used across the rest of the county and shared with others.
- To enable the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) to assist SMEs across the region to up-skill, retrain and/or diversify to generate local economic growth through the installation of measures.
- To create a single sub-regional sustainable market ready platform, including systems and processes, to enable the installation of energy efficiency measures using financial mechanisms such as Green Deal, Fuel Poverty Initiatives and the Energy Company Obligations (ECO).
- To link with an existing national interface by way of a licence agreement, in order to tap in to existing proprietary software that marries product information with user requirements. A web portal will take this information and then drill down to the local level, resulting in a completely tailored, local and ready to go package, for the consumer.

Warwickshire County Council had developed a process, funded by DECC through the NEA, to deal with funding streams such as the Green Deal and ECO and the web portal built upon this work.
THE WEB PORTAL

A web portal is being developed and structured to allow the user to obtain information about installed energy efficiency measures in an area along with reviews of installers and installed measures from householders who have had various measures installed. This will form part of the legacy of the project.
The web portal which can be accessed in a PC, tablet or smart phone format allows householders to input data on their homes, calculates the energy savings that can be made, takes the householder through a stepped series of interventions from low cost/high saving/DIY measures to more extensive measures, shows case studies of similar homes in their area and finally links an enquiry to local companies able to install the measures. Feedback comments and a forum will be available.

Screen shot of the website under development

PROPOSAL MODIFICATIONS

The council felt that it was inappropriate to test any new communications channels, e.g. social networking, but focused on existing methods – door knocking, telephone, letters, etc. as the majority of residents who passed most of the criteria were over 60.

No specific problems were found in the project set-up as a significant amount of work had been done before the announcement as to who would be allocated funding.

PROJECT DELIVERY

A total of 396 residents were contacted in two villages and of these 130 had energy assessments completed by the third sector. Ninety two homes were identified with 112 possible measures. Forty five residents judged to be in vulnerable households and/or on low income were supported by the project with the installation of 54 measures consisting of a mix of:

- 20% - Boilers,
- 20% - Insulation (Cavity & Loft)
- 60% - EWI
VALUE FOR MONEY

The chosen principal contractor undertook a mini-tender exercise with RETA members for each potential energy efficiency installation measure using indicative sizes/types of properties. From these budget costs from potential installers they selected the best three prices for each installation measure.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

Skills and expertise were drawn in from the partner organisations. Programme and project management was provided by WCC and Hardyman Ltd, then site management was provided by the installers actually on the sites.

No capacity issues were identified; however the weather had an impact on the programming of the high number of External Wall Insulations (EWI) undertaken.

It was the Council’s intention to demonstrate an approach that could equally be applied whatever the funding stream. In the future ECO/Green Deal funding could easily be slotted into the model to replace the DECC money, and it is already the intention to try this in Stratford District.

PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT

The weather caused some delays – due to the high level of EWI work. A degree of time contingency was allowed for in the programme but February and March was not the best time to do external wall insulation.

A pre-agreement was reached with Rugby BC planning department that EWI would be considered “permitted development” as long as it was not undertaken in conservation areas.

The selection and appointment of a principal contractor using an existing County Council Framework Contract for Building Maintenance helped greatly. A mini-tender process could be used rather than a full procurement exercise.

All targets for the number of households to be assessed by third sector Act on Energy were met and slightly exceeded (112 against a target of 100).

LESSONS LEARNT:

- Make as much information as possible available at the tender stage on the homes likely to be worked in.
• Allow sufficient time for pre-visits, resident liaison, asbestos surveys/removal, power and services alterations, location of site compounds and getting to know the team.
• Consistent communication with residents throughout the process is of assistance
• The on-going involvement of Act of Energy was beneficial throughout the duration of the works to help advise residents on specific and general affordable warmth options.
• Close working between District and County Council staff assists
• The roles between each partner organisation must be clear and adhered to by all.
• Involve and advise local councillors and community interest groups during the process.
• Consistency in communication and clarity is important when there are specific criteria to be followed and a finite amount of capital funding available.
Applied for - Green Deal Pioneer

Funding was received for Green Deal Pioneer - £295,800

Solihull has worked with Birmingham on a Collective Switching scheme.

**Named delivery partner –**

**Named evaluator – Encraft and SHAP**

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**Named as: Solihull Energy Pioneers**

**PROJECT OBJECTIVE:**

The proposal aim was to build a mechanism to deliver a minimum of 2000 requests for Green Deal Assessments within the next 12 months.

The local authority plan was designed to be underpinned by an energised local supply chain offering Green Deal Plans to the majority of its customers as a direct result of the project.

The project focussed on engaging and empowering the local supply chain as a channel to market for national Green Deal Providers, in parallel with a targeted area-based marketing and community engagement programme.
Supply chain engagement and information events took place in two local Green Deal Demonstration Centres and engaged over 90 participants. These events were supported by a road show visiting six community venues and direct marketing.

Alongside the project, 35 high rise blocks will be clad in solid wall insulation using British Gas and ECO funding, and this high profile activity will be leveraged to provide additional local marketing benefits.

The project was expected to generate 300 requests for Green Deal Assessments in Solihull, of which 100 are expected to proceed to Green Deal Plans.

The council saw the main beneficiary of the project to be the local economy, with an increase in demand for retrofit work as a result of the new financing mechanism that the Green Deal makes available. The ECO funding will deliver a reduction in fuel poverty, and the whole project is expected to demonstrate how multiple stakeholders can work together in new ways to take advantage of the opportunities created by the Green Deal and ECO.

THE PARTNERSHIP:

The partnership included three locally based private companies. These were Encraft (as project managers), EH Smith (a trade supplier) and New World Energy (installers).

British Gas – were not directly involved in this project but their expertise and finance was used on an ECO pilot.

The partnership between the public and private sector was essential to the success of the project. It assisted with building engagement and raising awareness of the Green Deal with the supply chain and installers. The backing of the Council added to the confidence of the householders receiving Green Deal assessments.

The database held by EH Smith; one of the biggest trade suppliers in the country, was of immense value in getting a message to the trade about the Green Deal, how to get accreditation and how to engage customers.

The Energy Savings Trust provided data and assistance. Their database was of value in targeting those most likely to take up and respond to the Green Deal from private sector households.

PROJECT AND STRATEGIC OUTPUTS:

The DECC funding was used to engage and motivate trusted local installers and builders who are the most efficient route to market for energy efficiency measures in households.

Practical demonstration centres and events were supported by a targeted area-based household marketing campaign and a high profile ECO scheme.

The legacy of the project is to establish a locally-led on-line referral system to connect installers to Green Deal Providers. This is intended to be self-funding within 12 months.

The project has been used to feed into the preparation of the Council’s Green Deal Delivery Plan. This sets out how the Council proposes to meet its HECA obligations and support the delivery of the Green Deal and ECO into the future. The Plan has been published on the council website.
The project had five work streams:

- **Household engagement**
  The project funded up to 300 free Green Deal Assessments for Solihull properties. A variety of marketing channels were used to convey this message including nine community and household events and a direct mail of 17,000 households across the Borough.

- **Supply chain engagement**
  The supply chain in Solihull were accessed via the builder’s merchant EH Smith, who have their largest UK depot in the Borough and see up to 250 companies each day pass through their doors. Two Green Deal events for local installers were held at the new EH Smith training centre which provided an opportunity to learn about the Green Deal and to meet with Green Deal Providers working in Solihull.

- **Green Deal Provider liaison**
  Making sure that as many Green Deal Providers as possible were engaged in the project was key to the success of the Green Deal in Solihull. Green Deal Providers were required to undertake the 300 free assessments, to attend the supply chain events and to support the Green Deal web portal (see below).

- **Green Deal web portal**
  The web portal is part of the legacy of the Pioneer Places project and will act as a link between the Green Deal Providers and the supply chain in Solihull. The portal allows local installers to identify and record properties that may be suitable for the Green Deal or ECO and to transfer the information to Green Deal Provider who may then pay a referral fee for quality leads.

- **Evaluation and reporting**
  Reporting is an important part of the project to evaluate and record lessons learnt, not only for Solihull Council, but for other Councils in the UK. Encraft produced a comprehensive report for the Solihull project in addition to the SHAP collection of information from Pioneer Places projects in the West Midlands.

  Encraft collected data throughout the project, from surveys of installers and households, at events and over the phone. Encraft have also undertaken a series of one to one meetings with Green Deal Providers to better understand the processes and involvement of each.

Supply chain engagement was considered critical to any successful product launch in the domestic energy sector and for the Green Deal. Installers and builders control what products are offered to most homeowners, who may only engage in significant building or energy works to their properties infrequently or under distress circumstances (e.g., boiler failure). A key focus of this project was to persuade small local installers to routinely to offer access to Green Deal Assessments to their customers.

The project aimed to do this by:

- Making it easy, through a simple web referral process to Green Deal Assessors and Providers

- Making it attractive and profitable, by inviting them to visit new Green Deal showcases at EH Smith and New World Solar, introducing them to Green Deal
Providers and demonstrating the business case for including signposting to Green Deal among their services

- Making it normal, by demonstrating Council support and running an area-wide household and community marketing campaign in parallel.

SMEs will be given free access to the referral portal for the first year of the Green Deal, but have been told from the outset that from 2014 this will be a paid-for subscriber service (provisionally £200 a year per company). In this way the project will be self-funding and a permanent legacy.

PROPOSAL MODIFICATIONS:
No specific modifications were made. The council found that a stepped process of running articles on the Green Deal in the Council magazine (delivered to all householders) followed by targeted letters using the council branding and articles in a newsletter of a major local employer (Jaguar Landrover) built awareness more successfully than community engagement events, leaflets in GP surgeries or stands in health centres or the local shopping centre. Engaging the public during February was not the best time for community events but the targeted mailings drew a big response.

The Council approached all 36 Green Deal providers before the project to assess whether they could deliver on time and to cost and finally worked with three (Carillion, Legal and General and Keepmoat Ltd).

The Green Deal Providers undertook 233 Green Deal Assessments for the project. Assessments were available until the end of June 2013. None of the Green Deal Assessments completed have progressed into a Green Deal Plan, mainly due to the lack of availability of finance. Eight Green Deal Providers attended the Green Deal supply chain events to liaise with local installers and collect contact details.

The GDAs were followed by advice on how to take them to market and obtain offers. Awareness of energy efficiency was also provided.

Two supply chain events involving over 90 delegates were held on the 19th February and 19th March along with direct emails and on-site promotions at E H Smith. Awareness of the Green Deal has been monitored with installers before and after the project period.

PROJECT DELIVERY:
The steering group that the council formed with the private sector partners was formed before the bid was submitted. It was reported to have worked well, was focused and was crucial to the delivery and success of the project.

The project management was outsourced because of the tight timetable for delivery of the project.

Communication, partnership and using a trusted brand to promote the project were considered essential ingredients for both installers and householders in ensuring success.

Although not a part of the bid, Solihull MBC is working with British Gas on biomass district heating and overcladding tower blocks.
Summary table from Encraft:

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<th>Measure</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<td>Number of Green Deal Plans issued</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Green Deal Assessments completed</td>
<td>233</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of referrals from households for Green Deal Assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of supply chain companies registered to participate in SEP</td>
<td>161</td>
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<td>Number of supply chain companies attending events</td>
<td>47</td>
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<td>Number of households contacted</td>
<td>91,790</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of participants at community events</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer feedback</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green Deal Assessments are the number completed between 5th March and 31st May, but assessments are still on-going. The total number of referrals is the number of households that have contacted the SEP project for a free Green Deal Assessments.

Solihull has developed its own Green Deal website: www.solihullgreendeal.org.uk which hosts information for businesses and householder. Reference to the pilot has now been removed from the site.

VALUE FOR MONEY:

This project was designed to provide a long-term local infrastructure to support the sourcing and delivery of Green Deals in Solihull.

As well as the partnership with local companies for this pilot project, the council is working with British Gas ECO team on biomass district heating pilots and the external cladding of tower blocks in the borough. British Gas has contributed £10m to these schemes.

EH Smith, New World Solar (New World Energy) and British Gas provided their input for the project free of charge, including all capital works. The support from EH Smith and New World Energy is in the form of their Green Deal Demonstration facilities, which are being built in Solihull (New World Energy) and just over the border in Sutton Coldfield (EH Smith).

These purpose built demonstration centres are designed to show installers and customers alike how various energy efficiency technologies look and feel in practice. New World Energy have constructed a centre focused on various types of solid wall insulation, and EH Smith are exhibiting a variety of methods of achieving high airtightness standards, as well as a wide range of insulation and energy efficient building materials.

The Energy Savings Trust (EST) provided detailed data for targeting household marketing and EH Smith provided data for the Green Deal supply chain.

The council has gained input to its Home Energy Conservation Act 2013 report which is available on their website.
The council engaged with all the declared Green Deal Providers available at the time to understand their business models and to invite them to local promotional events to assist in taking forward the Council’s strategy to support the Green Deal before building a business case for local activity.

The Council retains control of social housing in the Borough through an arm’s length management organisation and will be working to externally clad high rise apartment blocks. The pilot will inform this project.

**Solihull Green Deal website – Solihull’s Energy Pioneers Project**

**Free Green Deal Assessments**

The Green Deal is an innovative new financing mechanism that will help you or your tenants make energy-saving home improvements, like insulation, heating and renewable technologies, to your rental property to make it more comfortable.

It allows the cost of the improvements to be met through the savings made and is deducted at source from each property’s fuel bills over a number of years. It will help tenants keep their properties warm and cosy, reduce the amount of gas and electricity they need and keep heating bills down.

Every Green Deal begins with a Green Deal Assessment, which will suggest the improvements that will be best for the property and is normally carried out at a cost of around £150.

However, Solihull Council has won government funding for the Solihull Energy Pioneers project, which will promote the Green Deal to residents and will see 300 Green Deal assessments carried out free of charge.

Early adopters may also be eligible for the Green Deal Cashback scheme, which provides cashback related to the energy efficiency measures installed. Packages could be worth over £1,000.

**How the Green Deal can help Landlords**

Signing-up to a Green Deal could make your rental property cosier and cheaper to run. This would make it more attractive to tenants at little or no cost to you.

The benefits are:

- Higher EPC rating
- Potentially fewer and shorter void periods.
- Improved property at little or no cost.
- Protection from legislative reforms and penalties

The current electricity payer (usually the tenant) will pay for some or all of the improvements over time through their electricity bill. Because of this, Landlords must seek tenants’ permission to take out a Green Deal Plan and similarly tenants must get permission from their landlords.

The Green Deal makes good business sense and landlords should act now while there are financial incentives in place. From 2016 landlords will not be able to refuse reasonable requests from tenants to install Green Deal measures. From 2018 landlords have to ensure their privately rented properties meet a minimum energy efficiency standard (likely to be set at EPC rating ‘E’) or that they have installed the maximum package of measures under the Green Deal. (The Energy Act 2011).

To find out if you qualify and to book an assessment call the Solihull Energy Pioneers advice line on 0800 488 0543 and speak with one of our qualified advisors. Further information can be found on our website [www.solihullgreendeal.org.uk](http://www.solihullgreendeal.org.uk).

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY:**

Project management was outsourced because of the tightness of the project timetable. Good quality data was essential to the project success.
PROJECT MARKETING:

The council ran an article on the Green Deal Pioneer project in their council magazine that is circulated to all householders in the borough and featured the project on a website linked to the Council’s own website.

The householder marketing campaign was managed by the Energy Savings Trust (EST) and used their property database on the suitability for Green Deal finance or ECO funding. The majority of referrals came through the direct mail to households and was the most cost effective marketing measure.

The project managers reported that marketing for the Green Deal Installer events at EH Smith was a lot simpler than the householder marketing campaign. It consisted of an email campaign, leaflets and pop-up in the EH Smith depot and finally through the Solihull Green Deal Website and the linked event website.

The email campaign produced the most ticket sales for the events with a notable increase after EH Smith sent out an email to their customer database in Solihull. A smaller increase in the number of ticket sales were recorded after Solihull Council sent an email out to their Solihull for Success business database.

The project originally aimed to organise 10 events in total, 2 for installers and 8 for householders. An extra event for community groups was organised making 11 events in total. There were 257 attendees at householder and community events and 47 supply chain companies attended the two Green Deal events.

In total, 161 local businesses engaged in the Solihull Energy Pioneers project. This was either through registering for, or attending Green Deal events, completing the Green Deal survey, or they were interested in obtaining Green Deal finance on their property.

Attendance at business events

Some public events had a very low attendance, particularly those that did not have a natural footfall. The community event did not have any attendees although it was well advertised by SEP and the Council. A third sector event to be held at New World Solar was cancelled due to low attendance. Those events that were in public places, for example in Touchwood shopping centre had a good turnout, but many of the attendees did not reside in Solihull or had no interest in the Green Deal.

Timescales were extremely tight. The first project meeting took place on Friday, 25th January with completion scheduled for the 28th March, a period of less than nine weeks. Project timescales meant that the events had to take place in February. This left very little time to organise and promote events to ensure good attendance and overcome the negative attention the Green Deal was receiving in the national media.
Other factors, which affected attendance, were timing and the weather. Winter is not conducive to good attendance especially at evening events. The project managers reported that householders already informed by the "Your Solihull" magazine and by the 17,000 targeted letters were very well-informed and did not see the need to attend external events. This was verified by post project research.

A web referral portal has been developed to capture basic data about households that could benefit from the Green Deal or ECO. The web referral portal is not currently live and is not automated. It will be developed over the coming months in collaboration between Encraft and SMBC.

PROJECT EVALUATION AND LESSONS LEARNT:

- Direct targeted mail proved to be more successful in engaging householders than community events.
- Free Green Deal Assessments were delivered by three Green Deal providers. Four had been initially involved but three were finally chosen to deliver the assessments.
- A pre-assessment of Green Deal Provider partners was helpful.
- Residents prefer free GDAs
- The Council ‘brand’ matters
- 83% of GDA recipients were impressed with their GD assessor.
- The pilot helped to improve the customer process
- The customer must not ‘get lost’ once the GDA is complete
- The way ahead could be to offer free GDAs backed by a trusted ‘brand’ such as the council
- The process must be short with the customer journey properly mapped

Additional comments from Encraft, the project managers, included:

- The private sector is very keen to see the Green Deal and ECO succeed
- Public + private (small) + private (large) + community partnership can work exceptionally well
- The national mechanisms are too complex, and risk penalising local SMEs unnecessarily and unfairly
- Local SMEs could be the strongest advocates for the Green Deal as they can do most of the work
- Local supply chains need to be pro-active, well-informed and focused
- Local Authority plus community support works well
- Green Deal Providers add significant value in logistics and customer management
- Encraft also added value by providing impartial facilitation and focus and facilitating partnerships
- There is some way to go to secure maximum local economic benefits from these national schemes
Applied for - Green Deal Pioneer
Funding was received for Green Deal Pioneer - £297,822
Named delivery partner – Worcestershire County Council and Worcester City Council
Named evaluator – Encraft and SHAP

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:

Worcestershire is working towards a Worcestershire Green Deal offer. This proposal gave the council the opportunity to test the delivery model options. It aimed to maximise the uptake of the Green Deal in Worcestershire through a concerted marketing effort targeting students in consultation with their landlords, training student energy surveyors to drive this, and supporting this with a county-wide network of show buildings.

The project builds on detailed Green Deal delivery preparation work funded by all seven local authorities during 2012 and partnership relationships developed through this activity.
Pre-assessment surveys (PaS) were carried out by University of Worcester students employed to collect stock data from student properties using an online tool developed as part of this project. The survey gives an immediate result on the buildings’ suitability for a Green Deal Assessment (GDA). A GDA is then carried out via their choice of:

- a community interest company
- a local energy service referral to a national Green Deal Provider (GDP)
- Worcestershire Energy Savers (a brand of Birmingham Energy Savers potentially to be delivered by Carillion)

The results of this pilot will feed into the decision process for Worcestershire Councils to support their decision on a Green Deal delivery model.

Eight show homes around the County will be created to kick start wider marketing and implementation programmes.

The project includes two weeks concerted campaigning in the University, and pre-assessment training for student surveyors.

There is a strong legacy element, with Green Deal Champions created in each District supported by show homes and tested marketing methods, and a County-wide support plan for the Green Deal formalised in District-level HECA reports.

The beneficiaries will be tenants with improved accommodation. Whilst it cannot be guaranteed that tenants will have lower bills the potential will be for lower bills but also for improved thermal comfort. In the wider community people be signposted towards the opportunities for energy efficiency and the local economy.

RATIONALE

The project has trained university students to prepare online pre-assessments of student (and private sector) accommodation to promote Green Deal uptake in Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in Worcester City that are mainly student accommodation. There are 714 Houses of Multiple Occupancy in Worcester, many housing students.

The preliminary work was assessed, and where appropriate, approved for a full Green Deal assessment. Two Green Deal Provider (GDP) options were trialled: one with a large GDP and another through a local social enterprise/referral agency.

8 show buildings are also being developed to promote the Green Deal.

A Green Deal options appraisal, commissioned by cross-county working group of all local authorities within the county, was in its final stages when this competition was announced. It was seen as a timely opportunity to trial short-listed options.

Student accommodation was chosen because:

- It was a market that could be accessed quickly
- It tests the tenant/landlord relationship in regard to the Green Deal
- Student accommodation is known to be poor stock and can suffer from condensation
- It was considered an innovative approach
- It empowers tenants
The project enabled the partners to engage with Green Deal Providers. Using students to conduct pre-assessments was considered the link to engage landlords with the Green Deal market as it would further their own interests in warmer accommodation and reduced energy bills.

Other aims were to:

- Use a Pre Assessment tool to streamline the GDA process. The pre assessment avoided a full GDA being completed for a property that could not make further improvements.
- Skill students to improve employability and awareness whilst improving their standards of accommodation
- Be replicable in university towns

THE PARTNERSHIP

The partnership for this project was Worcestershire County Council, Worcester City Council, the University of Worcester and Act on Energy. The project was managed by Encraft. Domestic and General and Carillion were the Green Deal providers involved.

The partnership had previous experience of working together which was valuable on this project given the tight timetable. Problems that arose were able to be addressed and overcome. Trust between the partners was high and was considered to be a key part of getting the project up and running quickly.

PROJECT OUTPUTS

The project targeted students in consultation with their landlords, trained student energy surveyors in particular to drive this, and supported this with a County-wide network of show homes.

The student landlord market is a standalone sector with some specific challenges including a high turnover of tenants and issues around who pays for the fuel bill. The project was designed to empower students to improve living conditions for themselves and future tenants which may otherwise not be achieved, whilst providing practical skills and a knowledge base in energy efficiency from industry experts to give the students key employability skills.

The group conducted a landlord engagement session and wrote to all HMO landlords in the City and offered the opportunity to attend an information session for more detail.

The project formed the basis for a post-graduate dissertation topic for a University of Worcester student examining novel marketing approaches. The student worked on the project for a month looking at the marketing techniques to reach students.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key project parameters</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of student surveyors trained</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of individuals registering for a pre-assessment survey</td>
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<td>250</td>
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### Key project parameters

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<th></th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pre-assessment surveys completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of pre-assessment surveys referred to delivery partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessments completed</td>
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<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GD plans issued</td>
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<td>50</td>
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</table>

*This has since increased to 54 Assessments completed but these were outside of the project timescales.

- A pre-assessment tool has been developed by Encraft and launched
- All 8 buildings have been identified for 'show building' status: surveys are currently being carried out
- Setting up show buildings across the County which will demonstrate the technology available through the Green Deal. These will be a mixture of properties and community buildings

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**Examples of leaflets used**

**PROPOSAL MODIFICATIONS**

The timetable for the project was extremely tight. A great deal of preparatory work was done before the project approval was received.
There was a change in the process and a GA was either carried out by local energy agency referral (Act on Energy) or through Carillion to test the national provider model. The Carillion model was Worcester Energy Pioneers.

There were a number of Green Deal teething issues (such as concerns over Green Deal ‘ownership’ in the private rented sector, availability of finance, readiness of Green Deal Providers, accreditation of assessors and software glitches). There were some problems with accessing landlords which were overcome by approaching letting agents.

The show ‘homes’ are now show ‘buildings’ – either Local Authority or community-owned, but with similar characteristics to domestic dwellings. This was due to some concerns over how private homes would be chosen for the works / investment, and the extent to which residents would be happy to host open days. The change from show home to show building was also a public liability insurance issue.

However, these buildings will not have Green Deal Assessments as the non-domestic software/processes was not ready. Nevertheless, similar assessments of the buildings are being conducted to determine what improvements could be made and any measures recommended will match those that will be available through a Green Deal plan.

PROJECT DELIVERY
The project had multiple partners: the county and district councils, a managing agent, the university and two delivery agents. A host of local independent Green Deal Assessors were also involved at an arms-length. The lead partners already had existing relationships and had worked together in the past: the delivery partners had been identified through the Councils’ Green Deal options appraisal.

LESSONS LEARNT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Partner working

- Trust is the key to getting any project up and running quickly: existing relationships and project ideas were also enormously helpful.

Targeting students / private rented accommodation

- Early in the year is not the best time to target students. By February they are already looking for their next house or thinking about moving out. Earlier engagement would also mean they could take advantage of any measures installed through the heating season.
- Letting agents had a role to play and could have been approached earlier on
- The student assessors suggested approaching landlords rather than tenants as landlords know more about their properties such as whether it has insulation.
- Landlords have shown a keen interest in making improvements to their property through the Green Deal and are the key to the process.

Marketing

- There needs to be more longer-term, on-going marketing activity amongst students
- Any social media marketing needs someone to manage it
- Marketing should be focussed at landlords first with an auxiliary campaign to students to keep them engaged; landlords seem to drive the process
Green Deal delivery

- There are still lots of Green Deal teething problems which have caused delays. There needs to be clarity on ‘what happens next’ after the pre-assessments – e.g. who’s responsibility is it to get landlord consent for a Green Deal Plan?
- Cash backs didn’t seem to be a big enough incentive for students, despite initial interest
- Prices for a Green Deal Assessment vary widely
- Negotiating Green Deal Assessments down to a low cost had an unintended effect of incentivising the Green Deal Provider not to give Assessments until they were convinced that there was a strong chance of progressing to a full Green Deal Plan.
- Some works were progressed without the need for a Green Deal Assessment (e.g. works that were to be carried under 100% ECO funding which could be commissioned using a Chartered Surveyors report)

BENEFITS

Students and their landlords (and the other properties of those landlords) were the main target for this project. Private householders were included in the project but this was a lower priority.

The main marketing message to students has been ‘is your house too cold?’ and ‘are you spending too much money on your fuel bills?’, then focusing on reduced energy bills and the Green Deal cash back. The Green Deal has been explained as simply as possible (e.g. no upfront costs, pay out of savings made, leave the obligation behind when you move out).

There has been peer-to-peer marketing by the student assessors and some social media marketing (e.g. Facebook, Twitter). The students were given free training, work experience and payment for completion of surveys.
CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL, CHESHIRE WEST AND CHESTER COUNCIL, NEWCASTLE UNDER LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL, AND STOKE ON TRENT COUNCIL

Cheshire East Council, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council, and Stoke on Trent Council all worked with their local Warm Zones.

Warm Zones CIC is a Community Interest, not for profit Company, limited by guarantee. This social enterprise has been operating since 2001 and is a wholly owned subsidiary of National Energy Action, an independent charity.

North Staffordshire Warm Zone is backed by Stoke on Trent City Council and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council. Cheshire West also backs its own Warm Zone. All applications named the Warm Zone as a delivery partner.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM ALL FOUR PROJECTS

- Previous work and an infrastructure connected to CERT/CESP or Department of Health work was extremely valuable for three of the councils. Starting without such an infrastructure in Cheshire East caused some delays.

- Potential changes in personnel have to be considered as a risk factor.

- As these projects started some contractors had laid off staff, or were in the process as previous CERT/CESP work was ending - so getting them back into post - or new people - for these projects had to be done.

- Councils that have been active for many years with insulation work are noting diminishing returns on cavity and loft insulations and funds were usefully used for heater/boiler work.
• Being able to group homes irrespective of eligibility could make projects more efficient especially where flats and terraces are involved.

• A waiting list from CERT, a database of eligible homes and knowledge of who has had measures installed can boost conversion rates.

• Future ECO funding will be very important for solid wall insulation.

• Some of the areas can access both DECC funding and Department of Health Warm Homes, Healthy People funding which is useful although this adds to the complexity in deciding which is the most suitable for a household. Varying eligibility criteria (range of benefits) between areas and projects requires staff to be clearly briefed.

• Costings for similar projects have to be carefully considered and might be an issue for some areas.

• Previous infrastructure provided by CERT and CESP work has been useful.

• Communications between all organisations is essential and a confirmation of the allocation of budget spend at the beginning of the project is considered essential to aid delivery.
Cheshire West and Chester Council applied for all three funding streams. Funding was received for two projects - Green Deal Pioneers and Fuel Poverty - £306,000

Named delivery partner - Warm Zone
Named evaluator – SHAP

Local characteristics: The Council recently gained Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People Fund as there is a high incidence of excess winter deaths in the borough.

The council is working towards profiling the housing stock in each area to identify the areas that best meet the ECO objectives.

The council has provided funding to Warm Zone and the CERT programme since September 2011.

FUEL POVERTY

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Cheshire West has adopted a collaborative approach to dealing with fuel poverty and thermal inefficiency by a partnership with Warm Zone to deliver a CERT project which has successfully delivered over 5000 thermal-efficiency measures over the last 14 months.

The CERT project legacy and the strong links forged with multi-agency partners has created a strong database to enable households that needed the most help to be targeted within the project timeframe.

PROJECT RATIONALE:

Cheshire West has developed an Affordable Warmth Strategy through a process of consultation with multi-agency stakeholders including the Council and other public services, social housing partners, health colleagues, third sector partners and local communities in order to address affordable warmth, tackle fuel poverty and reduce the health impact of people due to excess cold.

Cheshire West successfully received funding through the DoH Warm Homes Healthy People Fund which supported a range of complementary initiatives being delivered by a number of different partners. These individual projects support a wider programme of advice and assistance for affordable warmth, income maximisation and improvements to the thermal efficiency of houses across the borough. These projects have been developed to have strong links to voluntary and community groups to ensure effective delivery and direct face to face contact with the most vulnerable residents where possible.
The same collaborative approach was at the centre of this project and used a system of referral from previous schemes to existing projects to allow householders to receive the full range of benefits available.

RISK MANAGEMENT:
Warm Zone was a part of an existing funded partnership with the Council. A pipeline of potential customers from a previous CERT programme had been held on a ‘waiting list’ and they were able to be contacted for this project.

Warm Zone had procured a panel of contractors to manage increases in retrofit at peak times.

Certainty of funding in the transition between CERT and the DECC funding was an issue and the Council would have liked to have been more ambitious but were aware of the tight timetable.

GREEN DEAL PIONEER

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:
Cheshire West and Chester Council is working in conjunction with Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Cheshire East Council on a proposal for future delivery of the Green Deal and ECO.

This partnership will allow collective working across a large, contiguous geography to provide economies of scale in delivery, negotiating Green Deal rates and a cohesive marketing campaign across the geographical area of Cheshire and North Staffordshire.

The project was designed to make use of the existing infrastructure to encourage take up of the Green Deal by providing free assessments during the challenging early stages and remove market entry barriers to consumers who are uninformed or unsure of Green Deal.

RISK MANAGEMENT:
Warm Zone is looking at ways to provide their staff with appropriate Green Deal accreditation. In addition an exercise was carried out to identify all local providers who could provide this service to assist with delivery.

There was a potential that not enough interest would be generated from the community for Green Deal Plans. The Council and Warm Zone identified over 200 addresses that had the potential to be eligible for Green Deal.

In total their target of 200 Green Deal suitability pre-assessments were completed and 60 Green Deal Assessments for domestic properties were completed.

LED bulbs were held up in transit from the manufacturer in Europe and will be fitted by Warm Zone.
VALUE FOR MONEY AND LESSONS LEARNT:

A collaborative approach is considered to be the way forward delivering energy efficiency, ECO and Green Deal as part of a package through a one-stop shop service.

This project has opened up a discussion on future collaboration and the way forward for ECO and Green Deal across a partnership of Cheshire West and Chester and other councils.

Collaborative working with other local authorities provides economies of scale, enabling the council to benefit from the coordination and management through a key delivery partner.

Green Deal could have a pre-assessment stage to screen out those homes where the Green Deal would not be suitable. The customer would be disappointed if the report showed that nothing could be done after a payment had been made. A free assessment or pre-assessment would be useful to remove an obstacle to the Green Deal.

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The Green Deal

Householders in Cheshire West and Chester can get a Green Deal Plan completed for your property free of charge as part of a scheme backed by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

This plan would usually cost around £120. The first stage of the plan is to assess your home to identify which energy saving measures are most appropriate to install, the costs and identify potential savings on your fuel bills. Green Deal allows you to pay for some or all of the improvements over time through the electricity bill.

Open to all households, tenants and owners. Free assessments are limited until 31 March 2013 on a first come, first served basis. To register your interest, please phone 0800 033 7873.

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Apply Now for Free Insulation

All rights reserved - Copyright © Warm Zones 2011
Cheshire East applied for and received funding from all 3 funds
Total - £449,900
Named delivery partner - North Staffs Warm Zone
Named evaluator – SHAP

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

- To create a collective group of 7,000 households targeting low income, rural, those not on the internet and those with chronic health conditions.
- Form partnerships with existing programmes, projects and organisations to maximise the impact of proposal in the short timescale available.
- Use local knowledge, expertise and data held by statutory and third sector organisations to reach these residents.
- Make use of targeted key messages tailored to the three main consumer types: those in fuel poverty, those interested in green energy, and those who wish to save money.

The proposed scheme was strategically targeted to encompass disadvantaged communities, focusing on CSCo areas and BME communities, as well as targeting vulnerable people through existing community groups and users of services. In particular, the council sought to engage with people on pre-payment meters, and people who do not have internet access,
especially in rural areas. Vulnerable groups were offered a variety of ways to engage, including events, engagement through, a helpline and freepost communication options and online enrolment.

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service was a key partner in the engagement process and provided a dedicated officer for community engagement. A data sharing protocol with Age UK and local health services was available to identify over 65s and people with chronic health conditions.

Other local organisations such as the Home Improvement Agency, older people’s forums, Citizens Advice Bureau, Energy Projects Plus, and Cheshire Community Action played an important role by engaging people at events, using existing community infrastructures such as lunch clubs, children’s centres and social groups and through their daily activities. Local partners added credibility through their trusted positions.

The aim was to engage directly with in excess of 1,000 vulnerable households, and create a collective group of 7,000 households.

The proposal aimed to use high levels of targeting and engagement with some of the most vulnerable households in Cheshire East and develop partnerships with existing programmes, projects and organisations to maximise the impact of the proposal in the short timescale available.

Local knowledge, expertise and data held by statutory and third sector organisations were an important part of the proposal as were targeted messages tailored to the three main consumer types: those in fuel poverty, those interested in green energy, and those who wish to save money. A focus on offline consumers gave an opportunity to test methods of engagement with residents who would otherwise be less likely to take part.

By working with the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) an association of the ten local authorities of Greater Manchester, the aim was to achieve significant economies of scale and utilise existing resources, benefit from experience in engaging with the most vulnerable groups and aggregate demand to achieve the best value.

THE PARTNERSHIP:

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service, public sector

CFRS carried out home safety assessments to a targeted group of vulnerable people, and were able to promote and discuss the collective switching scheme to older and vulnerable households. CFRS have a strong relationship with Age UK in Cheshire and have a data sharing protocol with local health services, enabling them to target the most vulnerable.

The collective switching scheme tied in well with their work – by reducing the amount people have to spend on energy, it would enable people to use their heating properly and avoid using more creative and potentially hazardous methods to keep warm.

The trusted face of a fire officer brought confidence in the scheme, and promotional events led by CFRS encouraged greater attendance and participation.

Energy Projects Plus - Registered charity

EPPlus were able to provide holistic advice about energy saving as well as promoting the collective energy switching scheme.
Cheshire Community Action - Rural community council

Existing relationships with community groups; existing rural fuel poverty project; and existing community building links – all enabled the messaging to reach rural communities

Oldham Council on behalf of AGMA - Public sector

Oldham Council were able to share their experience of a previous successful campaign, including marketing strategy and materials

PROJECT RATIONALE

There was considerable Member support to deliver this project and to take any learning from the project to apply to future projects to support collective oil buying schemes in rural communities.

The plans were based on a tried and tested methodology used by Cornwall Together: gather together a significant number of households interested in switching through an intensive marketing campaign and take this group of potential business to an auction to achieve the best possible discounted price.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT:

The council found that the concept of collective switching required no additional training. Resources secured for training were used to co-ordinate and support the delivery partners.

Early engagement with non-core partners was the main lesson from the project. The timescales as a result of the DECC funding meant that it was not possible to engage early enough with housing providers. The requirement for internal approvals meant that there was insufficient time to secure commitment to support the collective switching scheme at an early enough stage in all organisations.

The council monitored where registrants lived and responded to dips in registrations in different geographical areas. Part way through the campaign the strategy was changed to encourage greater take-up in the north of the Borough and more registrants were attracted through a local radio campaign.

PROJECT DELIVERY

Early engagement proved to be the key to working with partners. The council spent a lot of time developing plans and who should be engaged. Voluntary and community groups found it easier to respond quickly to this initiative, but larger organisations (such as housing providers) needed internal approvals to be able to divert resources. The council reported that with more partners involved, more people talked about the scheme and promoted it.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Value for money was ensured by applying learning and experience from previous collective switching schemes around the country, and by utilising existing networks and communication channels (e.g. the timing of the project allowed the council to utilise the Council Tax billing as a communication channel) rather than creating new channels and networks.

The target was to engage 1,000 older and vulnerable people. This target was exceeded. Over 2,000 registrants indicated that they met at least one of the vulnerability indicators.
PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

The council reported that they underestimated the capacity needed to deliver the project. A scheme of this size requires a dedicated project manager as well as project support to be able to deliver events. Resources from training were able to be diverted into project support, and the project was managed jointly by two officers amongst other duties.

There were no problems in meeting project milestones and the project was completed to the target set.

GREEN DEAL

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The aim of the original proposal was to create early successes for the Green Deal and build a platform to stimulate future demand by supporting promotion of the Green Deal across Cheshire East whilst also piloting innovative approaches to localised activity by building upon successful LEAF funded work in Macclesfield.

Activities across Cheshire East were planned to include:

- A targeted area-based approach to marketing Green Deal and the Fuel Poverty Fund, to build demand amongst 1000 residents
- Facilitating Green Deal assessments for 300 appropriate households to ensure a conversion from assessment to delivery, creating consumer confidence
- Overlaying a range of datasets to provide coherent information to identify areas suitable for future delivery of Green Deal.
- A comprehensive promotion and engagement campaign building on existing strong community networks to create demand.
- Events for civic leaders and businesses through economic forums to stimulate debate about how Green Deal can contribute to economic regeneration.
- Targeted events for special interest groups will raise awareness of Green Deal and the benefits for their members.
- Building a patient referral programme with local GP practices and respiratory health professionals in the NHS.

In Macclesfield these activities were planned to be facilitated by the Transition Town Macc2020 who will also pilot a range of approaches to delivering a local Green Deal Advisory Service including:

- Enhancement of the LEAF-funded go-lo website to provide reliable local information
- Show casing retrofit through the creation of two show homes, promoting the benefits of Green Deal and creating a monitoring package to gather evidence, to feed into the resources used by go-lo
- The creation of a number of volunteer Energy Ambassadors

The Pioneer Fund was expected to leave a lasting legacy for Cheshire East by:

- Creating a critical mass of awareness of the Green Deal amongst residents and key special interest groups
- Establishing the marketing tools and systems to enable the Council to create demand for Green Deal solutions
• Kick starting a network of super homes
• Providing accurate data from actual retrofit costs and energy savings, enabling residents to be better informed of the benefits of undertaking Green Deal measures
• Establishing links with local Green Deal providers and installers to enable the Macc2020-sponsored go-lo project to operate effectively in the future as a self-sustaining “one stop shop”, go-lo will be incorporated as a community interest company to deliver this.
• Transferring the learning from the pilot in Macclesfield to the other low carbon communities to enable them to roll out similar initiatives.

DELIVERY PARTNERS
1. go-lo Community Interest Company (formerly a transition town community group)
   Additionality – Local knowledge; Experience of delivering a LEAF project and allowed continuation of the Green Deal work put in place through the LEAF project; Establishing relationships with local supply chain
2. Energy Projects Plus - Registered Charity
   Additionality - Local knowledge and data from previous projects and initiatives
3. North Staffs Warm Zone - Community Interest Company
   Additionality - Cross-project working on Green Deal and fuel poverty enabled more effective marketing and reduced confusion on communication methods

PROJECT RATIONALE
The council was keen to test whether intensive activity and support would make a difference to the uptake of Green Deal, to help inform a decision whether to be a promoter, partner of provider in the future delivery of Green Deal. The majority of activity was planned in a small geographical area (Macclesfield), but opportunity to take part was made available to all residents in Cheshire East.

MODIFICATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT:
A number of modifications were made to the project in response to opportunities, difficulties and limited timescale:

• Opportunity - A disused community building was identified to make a suitable building to showcase Green Deal, energy efficiency and renewable energy technology – replacing one of the two show homes planned
• Timescale limitation / Difficulty –. The assessor was unable to deliver the assessments within the timescale required due to a lack of suitably qualified assessors and multiple Green Deal Pioneer Places projects operating locally drawing on the same assessors, so a request was made for an extension to the project, and go-lo appointed another assessment company.
• Difficulty – the GD assessor was unwilling to release the GD advice reports to customers as they were unable to advise people on the next steps; the reason cited was that they felt that the Green Deal chain was not in place and they couldn’t cope with the demand from customers needing advice on the next steps. This problem was overcome by developing go-lo’s role to act as an intermediary and support people through the Green Deal process
• Timescale limitation – Negative press on Green Deal press hindered the ability to generate interest and delayed the delivery of the project. This was resolved through the extension to the project approved by DECC
• Difficulty – lack of knowledge / confidence in Green Deal and ECO by Warm Zone led to more focus on Fuel Poverty (which linked more closely with their previous experience in delivery CERT and CESP projects) – additional support was provided by go-lo

VALUE FOR MONEY
The project was delivered through community interest companies who are committed to reinvesting in local communities. Whilst it is difficult to place a figure on value for money, the council believes it has minimised expenditure by working with lean organisations close to the ground who have existing networks and communication channels.

Screening of Green Deal enquiries enabled the identification of the most appropriate households to undertake full Green Deal assessments, thereby maximising the opportunity presented by the Pioneer Fund to fund the production of Green Deal plans for those households most likely to benefit.

There had not been any conversion from assessment to Green Deal plan by the end of the project but as people become more confident about Green Deal and start taking up plans, the council believes that they should be able to see that sowing the seeds through this project will pay dividends.

The retrofitting of the community building drew in additional grants in the region of £40,000 which would not have been available without the DECC funding.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY
The project was principally delivered by go-lo who have a mix of eco-retrofit, marketing and community engagement expertise. Capacity to deliver GD assessments posed an issue, however there are signs of improvement in the Green Deal marketplace.

PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT
The project was extended in agreement with DECC to allow the completion of the Green Deal assessments. It is anticipated that 258 of the 300 planned assessments will be completed.

FUEL POVERTY
Cheshire East Council Fuel Poverty Partnership

PROJECT SUMMARY
• To work with NHS partners and Hotspots network;
• To target low income families and those with young children or disabilities
• Use local knowledge and existing data to target.
• Coordinate with the Green Deal Pioneer Fund.
• To use the Fire and Rescue service to identify fuel poverty through their home safety assessments and NHS for those with health conditions.
• To raise awareness of the fund amongst frontline public service staff and Home Improvement Agency in order to identify households and other funding for home repairs.
• To concentrate on insulation measures, heating repairs, boiler replacements, new central heating systems, holistic assessments and area based targeting in parallel with the Green Deal Pioneer Fund
• To provide energy advice for households receiving measures.

The proposal was to tackle fuel poverty and reduce excess winter deaths by delivering insulation and heating measures to vulnerable households - helping increase the comfort of their home, reduce their fuel bills and increasing their ability to afford to heat their home.

A holistic assessment of the person and home was part of the proposal with the provision of practical measures including insulation, heating repairs, boiler replacements and new central heating systems.

In addition to energy advice residents were connected through the council’s Hotspots network to existing services for welfare benefits, debt advice, home repairs and home safety was planned. As part of the package households were given information and support to access the collective switching scheme, as well as information and advice about Green Deal and their eligibility for ECO for other energy efficiency measures. Other funding sources were used to stretch the resources further, including local authority grants and hardship funding.

DELIVERY PARTNERS

1. Warm Zone - Community Interest Company
   Additionality – Existing systems and experience of delivering CERT / CESP schemes; benefit of having single delivery partner covering Cheshire and North Staffordshire area

2. Home Improvement Agency - Public sector
   Additionality - Holistic approach to improving homes – looking at overall housing conditions and customers’ independent living needs together with addressing heating measures

3. Energy Projects Plus - Registered Charity

PROJECT RATIONALE

A health impact assessment of private housing in Cheshire East indicates that cold and damp housing is costing local NHS services £1.6 million per year. By working specifically with local NHS partners to identify people most at risk of cold related ill health, the project hopes to reduce excess winter deaths and reduce the impact of cold and damp homes on vulnerable people’s wellbeing.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

Working with a partner new to Cheshire East (North Staffs Warm Zone) meant the new partnership had to be developed at the same time as project delivery to tight timescales was required. This resulted in some delivery responsibility changes.
Some problems arose as the result of staff illness resulting in staff changes and requiring the use of external assessors to supplement the delivery team numbers.

It was originally envisaged during the planning stage that the area based approach would involve assessors employed by one of the delivery partners working in specific areas of Cheshire East to promote and assess the project, however changes meant that marketing was carried out through the media and mail shots.

The introduction of a new partner into Cheshire East also meant that time was required to develop contacts and networks, so the Council assisted in making the connections and promoting the project to other services and agencies.

The Council tried to combine the Warm Zone and Energy Project Plus services to deliver the project – utilising Warm Zone to deliver household assessments, and then referring cases where works were completed to Energy Projects Plus to offer energy efficiency advice and information on how to use heating systems. The Council considered that delivery by one organisation would have been a more successful method of delivery.

Introducing the Home Improvement Agency into the delivery of this project added additional capacity to deliver heating measures quickly.

VALUE FOR MONEY
Collaborative working with other local authorities through North Staffs Warm Zone provided economies of scale, enabling the Council to benefit from the co-ordination and management by one key delivery partner with existing systems in place.

BENEFIT
The project focused delivery on owner occupiers and private tenants who met at least one of the following criteria:

- Low income
- Disability
- Ill health exacerbated by cold
- Child under 5, or expectant mother

The project is still in progress; DECC have agreed to continue with the project until all funds are committed – an underspend arose from a low take-up of insulation measures
Newcastle under Lyme BC applied for all 3 funds but received the Fuel Poverty funding only - £74,500
Named delivery partner – North Staffs Warm Zone
Named evaluator – SHAP

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The proposal under the Fuel Poverty Fund was to install insulation and heating measures, primarily those that typically cost less than £1,000 per home, targeting households and homes in the private sector that are deemed to be vulnerable and have a high propensity to fuel poverty: Households were identified using data collated from the North Staffordshire Warm Zone (NSWZ), the Borough Council, the home improvement and handyperson service and leads from community/voluntary and health care organisations.

The DECC funding was sought to enable the partnership to make the transition from CERT and CESP funding to promote Green Deal in Newcastle and North Staffordshire.

PARTNERSHIP:
The project was delivered by the council’s CERT delivery partner - the North Staffordshire Warm Zone (NSWZ) and Revival (a non-profit-making home improvement agency owned by Staffordshire Housing). Revival Home Improvement Agency provides a range of property repairs, adaptations and wellbeing services to vulnerable home owners and qualifying tenants in North Staffordshire.

North Staffordshire Warm Zone (NSWZ) is a Community Interest Company. An existing partnership with the Borough Council, Stoke City Council and Cheshire West Chester Council has been successful in the delivery of CERT and CESP projects. The Council has provided funds and has worked in partnership with North Staffordshire Warm Zone since 2007.

Working with these partners meant that all the data from NSWZ, Revival and the council was able to be used and in addition a link was made with the Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People funding stream.

The partnership was also able to deliver Welfare Benefit Checks and Energy Advice to complement the bid and four members of staff of NSWZ are to be trained as assessors for the Green Deal.

PROJECT RATIONALE:
Fuel Poverty within Newcastle under Lyme is at 21.9%, 5.2% above the mean for England.

The Housing Stock Condition Survey 2008 stated that 16,960 households, 39.8%, are in fuel poverty within the Borough. The report also stated that higher relative levels of fuel poverty exist in:

•  Coordination Area 7 (Audley & Bignall End, Halmerend)
•  Pre-war housing
• Private-rented sector
• Converted flats
• Single Parent Families
• Elderly Households
• Young Single Households
• Economically Vulnerable Households

The proposal was to install 50 cavity wall insulations, 40 loft insulations, 25 heating measures and also new heating systems to priority households. The households visited were offered free welfare and energy advice designed to maximise their household income and reduce energy consumption.

PROPOSAL MODIFICATIONS:

The fund from DECC was split between NSWZ and Revival because of the tight timetable and to maximise linkages with a Department of Health Warm Homes Healthy People funding stream. NSWZ and Revival have a working relationship and both were able to provide data.

PROJECT DELIVERY:

All organisations had a recognised local 'brand' that assisted in contacting residents.

Partners were able to direct residents to the more appropriate of two funding streams and pick up health problems at the same time.

The assessors knew their area and knew where properties were situated. Experience from previous CESP and CERT programmes was valuable.

North Staffs Warm Zone and Revival were organisations already in operation so there were no set up costs and the people and systems for the project were already in place and resourced.

PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT:

Some problems arose as the result of changes in management personnel at NSWZ. Cover was provided until a replacement manager was in place. External assessors were used to supplement NSWZ staff.

Some installers had made staff redundant or put staff on short time at the end of the CERT programme. This affected the timescale of the project.

North Staffs Warm Zone had procured a panel of contractors to manage increases in retrofit at peak times.

Newcastle under Lyme BC had a smaller Fuel Poverty budget (£74,500) than Stoke on Trent CC who also used NSWZ for their project. Newcastle under Lyme Council decided to target the funds on the most vulnerable groups of residents – those who had both qualifying benefits and health conditions, using available data. Risk management mitigation was to train staff of NSWZ to be aware of the difference between the two council requirements when assessing eligibility.
The Newcastle project was able to spend the whole of the budget allocated by DECC for this project.

**News Release:**

**Warming News - Council Wins Cash for Vulnerable**

Plans to tackle fuel poverty in Newcastle-under-Lyme have been given the green light after the borough council was announced a winner in a national competition.

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has been awarded £74,500 to repair or install efficient central heating systems and cavity wall/loft insulation in the homes of vulnerable residents on means-tested benefits who are struggling with rising energy bills.

It bid for a share of £46 million by applying for three streams of funding from the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The aim of the national initiative is to help households slash energy bills and keep warm this winter and beyond.

The borough council was successful in the “fuel poverty” category which saw 136 applications from most councils in England compete for £31 million. A total of 61 projects were awarded funding.

Cllr. Ann Beech, Cabinet member for environment and recycling, said: “I welcome the announcement. Fuel costs continue to rise which is placing huge pressures on family budgets, especially elderly people and those on low incomes.

“The funding will help the council continue its excellent work in helping ensure the borough’s most vulnerable residents are protected from the effects of cold in their homes.”

Edward Davey, Energy Secretary, added: “We need to find new ways to help people with their energy bills, working with communities and councils across the country.”

For more information, contact the borough council’s housing team on 01782 742543 or Revival Home Improvement Agency on 01782 749202. The money must be spent by the end of March 2013.

**North Staffordshire Warm Zone - website**

**Newcastle-under-Lyme Schemes Available**

**DECC Scheme**

North Staffordshire Warm Zone have secured DECC funding for free loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and central heating repairs for private households where one resident is in receipt of certain qualifying benefits (see list below) AND satisfies one of the following:*  
Household resident aged 60 or over  
Household with a child aged under 16  
Household located in a rural area (Loggerheads & Whitmore or Madeley)  
Household resident has a cold related health condition (see list below)  
This offer is limited until 31 March 2013 on a first come, first served basis. To register your interest, please call 01782 479099.  
*Subject to survey

**Qualifying Benefits:** Pension Credit (Guarantee or Savings), Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Income Based Job Seeker's Allowance, Income Related Employment & Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit with income less than £16,788, Working Tax Credit with income less than £16,788

**Health Conditions:** COPD, Emphysema, Chronic Bronchitis, Severe Asthma, Heart Disease, Stroke, Cancer, Terminal Illness, Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Reynard's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis
Funding was applied for from the Fuel Poverty and Green Deal Pioneer funds and was successful with both applications - £322,000
Named delivery partner - NSWZ
Named evaluator – SHAP

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
To facilitate a smooth transition between the former CERT and CESP obligations and the new Green Deal and ECO initiative.

An existing partnership between the council and North Staffordshire Warm Zone has completed over 60,000 property assessments in the city which provided the evidence base for targeting resources effectively into communities and households that require thermal efficiency measures.

FUEL POVERTY
Twenty eight per cent of households in the city are fuel poor. Local evidence shows that the extent of fuel poverty is much higher in the private housing stock where fuel poverty has increased from 31% in 2004 to 46% in 2008. One quarter of housing stock is terraced housing with low SAP ratings.

A link to a free welfare benefits advice check and free energy efficiency advice was designed to maximise household income and provides further protection against fuel poverty.

Working with existing and developing council strategies and a successful Warm Homes Healthy People Application 2012 will provide affordable warmth services to vulnerable people most affected by cold homes.

This project helped to reduce the extent of fuel poverty and reduce the risk of cold related deaths by targeting free heating repairs, loft and wall insulation to properties with a low SAP rating. These are the most cost effective measures to remove households from fuel poverty and reduce the number households living in cold homes.

Households receiving this service also benefitted from a free welfare benefits advice check and free energy efficiency advice designed to maximise their household income thus providing further protection against fuel poverty.

The infrastructure of existing partner networks ensured that those in most need benefitted from the support and measures available within the timescale for delivery.
**North Staffordshire Warm Zone - web site**

**Stoke-on-Trent Schemes Available**

**DECC Scheme**
North Staffordshire Warm Zone have secured DECC funding for free loft insulation, cavity wall insulation and central heating repairs for private households where one resident satisfies one of the following:
- Household resident aged **60** or over
- Household with a child aged under **16**
- Household income less than **£16,788** per year
- Household with a low energy efficiency rating (calculated by NSWZ)

This offer is limited until 31 March 2013 on a **first come, first served basis**. To register your interest, please call **01782 479099**.

*Subject to survey*

**Green Deal**
Householders in Stoke-on-Trent can get a Green Deal Plan completed for your property free of charge as part of a scheme backed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council.

This plan would usually cost around **£120**. The first stage of the plan is to assess your home to identify which energy saving measures are most appropriate to install, the costs and identify potential savings on your fuel bills. Green Deal allows you to pay for some or all of the improvements over time through the electricity bill.

Open to all households, tenants and owners. Free assessments are limited until 31 March 2013 on a **first come, first served basis**. To register your interest, please call **01782 479099**.

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**GREEN DEAL**

This proposal used the council’s NSWZ (North Staffordshire Warm Zone) to offer free Green Deal Plans on a first come first serve basis. The aim was to generate interest in Green Deal by removing barriers to the market place; such as price, acceptance and concerns regarding quality.

The concept was that by removing risk from Green Deal and ECO investment and creating economies of scale, energy suppliers and Green Deal Providers would be able to deliver their obligation/ service cost effectively.

A strength of this proposal is that the council will be able to sustain, enhance and service the interest generated from this funding over the next three years because of the resources and infrastructure that are in place to manage a housing retrofit across the city.

A delivery plan is being developed for Green Deal and ECO delivery in Stoke-on-Trent. On the 9th of November, a prospectus detailing the retrofit opportunity in five Carbon Saving Community Obligation (CSCO) areas was circulated to all energy suppliers to test the market on the availability of fully funded ECO schemes. The council envisages that this competitive market test will be repeated for each CSCO area.

If customer contributions are required toward the cost of works, NSWZ, acting as an impartial organisation backed by the council, will refer each household to a panel of trusted Green Deal Providers (e.g. Birmingham Energy Savers) to obtain three quotations. The customer will be able to choose which Green Deal Finance Plan they wish to take out with the Provider.
This proposal aims to create consumer confidence in Green Deal rather relying on consumers, in some instances, vulnerable people, having to search for and generate Green Deal enquiries themselves. As well as directing and targeting investment into the deprived communities where the concentration of solid wall properties and the risk of fuel poverty is highest, it is a critical objective of the council that NSWZ provide/offer a council led service available to all residents and businesses across Stoke-on-Trent that will act by becoming a single point of contact for all residents and businesses enquiring about insulation grants and Green Deal Plans.

THE PARTNERSHIP:
The council worked with Elite, a Green Deal Network that was commissioned by NSWZ. Elite delivered Green Deal Advisory Reports and were able to turn reports around quickly.

PROJECT RATIONALE
- Free Green Deal Plans on a first come first served basis should remove a barrier to the market place; such as price, acceptance and concerns regarding quality.
- Creating a potential to lever in ECO funding will support the cost of solid wall insulation.
- Removes one barrier perceived to limit engagement in the Green Deal programme early – the cost of the assessment.
- Develops a framework agreement for local and national installers to carry out retrofit works.
- Working closely to support the provision of a highly skilled workforce equipped with all the necessary skills to create sustainable, environmentally friendly homes through refurbishment.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:
NSWZ commissioned a Green Deal Accredited organisation to provide Green Deal Advisory Reports. The agreement was cancelled due to a misunderstanding about what was expected of each party. NSWZ had to commission an alternative provider to complete the works but were able to secure the provider relatively quickly.

It is important for the service requirements and their costs to be explicitly set out to avoid complications or delay in service later down the line.

PROJECT DELIVERY
- There is a need to set very clear SLA agreements for Green Deal delivery
- The use of existing data is very important to help with targeting letter drops and generating referrals
- Engagement with local agencies is critical to ensure the spread for delivery is maximised.
- Delivery has to be branded locally if residents are to trust agencies delivering programmes – this will help mitigate negative media coverage of GD and ensure residents access impartial advice.
VALUE FOR MONEY

The mobilisation of NSWZ to deliver a programme within a small window of time was critical for this programme. This positions the authority to take advantage of funding programmes that often become available at short notice.

BENEFIT

- People at risk of fuel poverty.
- People occupying hard to treat properties

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

Capacity is an important measure of success for this project as the local authority would not have had the capacity to manage this programme internally within the tight timescales that applied without the involvement of NSWZ and their understanding of Green Deal policy.

PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT

Changes in management personnel occurred at NSWZ at the start of the project. Cover was provided until a replacement manager was in place. External assessors were used to supplement NSWZ staff.

North Staffs Warm Zone had procured a panel of contractors to manage increases in retrofit at peak times.

The staff of NSWZ had to be aware of the relevant criteria from Stoke on Trent CC when assessing eligibility.
Applied for Green Deal Pioneers and Fuel Poverty Fund

Funding was received for Green Deal Pioneers and Fuel Poverty Fund - £146,600

Named delivery partner – Beat the Cold (BtC), Marches Energy Agency (MEA) Metropolitan, a Home Improvement Agency.

Named evaluator: SHAP

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The project was designed to deliver ‘foundation’ actions to:

- Establish a pipeline of Green Deal Assessments (120 Domestic Green Deal Assessments & 9 Non-Domestic Assessments) leading to an estimated 49 Green Deal Plans (working with Private Sector Landlords; Show Homes; Faith Leaders; Area Based Parish/community promotion; and through an existing Energy Smart Businesses project to deliver non-domestic Green Deal Assessments)

- Give certainty over ECO opportunities and funding by developing an ECO Opportunity Prospectus and taking this to the market;

- Support some of the most vulnerable citizens in achieving affordable warmth (Park Homes pilot; match funding for Solid Wall Insulation project; capital support for Heating Repair Fund)
- Deliver a number of significant promotional pilot actions to deliver valuable skills that will support legacy actions and drive future demand (Green Deal Show Homes; Green Deal Advocacy Training for Parish Councils/Communities)

**FUEL POVERTY**

The Fuel Poverty Fund involved three projects:
- Heating Repair Scheme
- Park Home Pilot Project
- Solid Wall Pilot funding

**THE HEATING REPAIR FUND**

This project was designed to build on a successful Warm Homes Healthy People funded project, which has provided emergency support to vulnerable households when their heating systems fail. The fund was managed by Metropolitan Home Improvement Agency and was allocated to fully fund four new systems for owner-occupiers and partially fund one system for a vulnerable RSL tenant to enable their release from hospital and one renewable system in an off-gas area.

Through the ECO prospectus work (see below) the Council will aim to secure ECO Home Heating Cost Reduction Target support to continue this valuable service.

**PARK HOMES PILOT:**

This was led by Marches Energy Agency as a pilot to see how ECO opportunities could be developed in Park Homes. Some limited capital was attached to it for measures and property owners were advised that they could also access the Heating Repair Fund.

MEA worked with the site owner, the site manager & the Chair of the Residents Association of the Lower Lodge site in Armitage.

MEA investigated finding an ECO partner, to fund measures on the site – both an ECO provider (funder) and an ECO delivery partner (contractor). It was planned that any contractor commissioned for works would be done via a mini-tender process run by MEA, and would explore the availability of ECO funding from the providers.

Discussions with energy company npower progressed to an advanced stage but the offer was withdrawn as the pilot was not felt to be large enough for npower to proceed. The work was completed to four homes fully-funded by DECC monies.

The purpose of this project was to pose the question of how or if ECO could be used in mobile home parks, rather than trying to find a definite offer. Works were commissioned by MEA and funding paid by LDC as a capital grant on behalf of the client from the DECC bid monies.

**SOLID WALL INSULATION PILOT:**

This project arose from a pilot scheme with British Gas – unfortunately after the DECC funding was awarded British Gas withdrew their match funding. Although two households were interested, there was only sufficient capital to complete one property with the DECC monies.
Marches Energy Agency led this project & investigated ECO funding opportunities with VnR and Rockwarm for both properties. Both are local and trusted contractors who have previously worked in the District and are keen to do so again. As ECO funding was not available, MEA ran a mini-tender for one property to be fully funded through the DECC monies. Funding was paid in the form of a grant to the householder.

Both households potentially qualify for both Affordable Warmth and Rural CSCO ECO.

THE PARTNERSHIP:
The project used a number of established partners including South Staffordshire Community Energy Ltd (SSCE), an Industrial and Provident Society cooperative. The project ran in conjunction with a Warm Homes Healthy People grant.

PROJECT RATIONALE:
The project was designed to:

- Work with existing partnerships and projects to give the maximum opportunity of delivering high quality outcomes;
- Benefit some of the most vulnerable households and take an area based and communities of interest approach to the Green Deal.

The project had three strategic ambitions:

- **First mover advantage:** The Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation are considered to be transformational in terms of fuel poverty and local economic opportunities in Lichfield.
- **Diversity & innovation:** The project proposal covered Fuel poverty; Green Deal; Energy Company Obligation; domestic and non-domestic; show-homes; area based approaches; communities of interest & collective switching (as a partner in the People’s Power proposal)
- **Learn by doing:** Lichfield DC is a small Local Authority and do not have significant resources to invest in developing Green Deal and ECO capability and capacity. This project gave an opportunity to ‘learn by doing’.

GREEN DEAL PIONEER PLACES

The Green Deal Pioneer Places was comprised of six separate projects:

- Two Eco Show Homes
- A Green Deal Assessment faith project
- A Green Deal Assessment project for private sector landlords
- Non-domestic GDAs
- Parish/ Area-based GDAs
- Improved understanding of how to maximise the ECO opportunities in the District

ECO SHOW HOMES:

**Green Deal Show Homes Project** – The aim was to raise awareness amongst residents as to what can be achieved and the savings to be made through solid wall insulation for different types of properties. This included a project to deliver solid wall insulation to 4 different homes and promote them via an open day.
A competition was run to find suitable properties and four properties were chosen; three involved external wall insulation (EWI) & one involved an internal wall insulation (IWI) in a conservation area within the District. The project has been co-ordinated by a local community group with support from a community interest company who have delivered the actual works. The project has run smoothly. A video is being produced of the process and will be available on the internet.

South Staffordshire Community Energy Ltd (SSCE) ran a competition through the local press and existing contacts to identify two homes with solid walls in the district that could benefit from free solid wall insulation – either external or internal – and possibly other measures as well.

An application form & guidance notes were agreed & made available from the SSCE website. The applications were assessed by a panel which included the Council.

ESC organised the delivery of the actual insulation on the homes following identification of the winning households. Issues over planning were resolved and a video was produced of the whole project. Four installations were completed; 3 external and 1 internal and all works were completed by May 19th 2013.

COMMUNITY BASED GREEN DEAL ASSESSMENTS FOR DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLDS:

There were 30 GDAs for domestic households funded through the bid - which were available for SSCE to allocate and arrange to carry out – these were advertised via the WFEG/SSCE contacts and were also available to competition entrants. All these have been allocated but due to issues regarding registration of Green Deal Assessors not all the assessments were lodged within the timeframe.

GREEN DEAL ASSESSMENT – FAITH PROJECT:

Faith Project – The aim was to see how the Green Deal could work for vicarages by working with the Diocese of Lichfield to give free GDAs to 40 vicarages across the Diocese which included Lichfield District, Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire.

The project was initially given approval to proceed by the Diocesan Housing Board. Unfortunately this project stalled in February due to legal issues raised by the Diocesan Registrar that were unable to be resolved. The Diocesan Registrar came back with advice that under ecclesiastical law and the terms of the tenure of clergy (particularly those with a freehold) this presented difficulties regarding Green Deal.

The issue regarding ownership of the GDA and the option of changing this to an energy assessment was discussed but the Diocese were reluctant to proceed due to the potential for raised expectations and who would be liable for the charge during an interregnum. The matter was referred to DECC and the Church Commissioners but it became clear it would not be resolved within the timescales so the monies were transferred to the Show Homes Project to enable additional homes to be completed.

GREEN DEAL ASSESSMENT – PRIVATE SECTOR LANDLORDS:

Private Sector Landlords Project – This project was to raise awareness of the Green Deal amongst private sector landlords in the District and to give 50 free GDAs to private sector landlords.
Marches Energy Agency (MEA) managed this project & 50 GDAs were available for private landlords. An initial presentation was given to the Landlords Forum on 31st Jan – along with several email mailings to landlords. All 50 assessments were initially booked and 42 were completed; 8 dropped out due to either landlord or tenant consent or access issues. The remaining money was re-allocated.

The purpose of the project was to identify how many GDAs can be turned into full GD Plans and how interested local landlords are in using Green Deal as well as investigating potential ECO opportunities. This part of the project stalled due to the lack of a supply chain and the difficulties in registering the GDAs through the software. It is hoped to pick this up in the future when the local picture becomes clearer.

NON-DOMESTIC GDAS:

**Energy Smart Businesses** – This was designed to raise awareness of the opportunities of Green Deal to the business community and to provide non-domestic GDAs to 4 local businesses and turn them into case studies as to what can be done. This was managed by Marches Energy Agency and ties in with a business smart project which was started in the Autumn funded by the council’s District Board.

Two businesses have so far taken up the GDA offer with others taking up the energy advice on offer through the initial project and considering a GDA. Work has been done through local chamber of commerce and other business communities.

Funding was available for four non-domestic GDAs for Businesses – the assessments were to be carried out through the business part of the District Board bid and businesses identified through the same. MEA led this project and one business signed up for a GDA.

It is felt that awareness amongst the business community is lower than originally thought and that energy assessment and information packs would be useful to provide information to businesses rather than full GDAs, which they can then look at and take forward in the future.

An underspend will be placed into a reserve to look at alternative options along with the District Board funded project over the Summer of 2013.

**PARISH/ AREA-BASED GREEN DEAL ASSESSMENTS:**

**Parish Area Based Green Deal** – To raise awareness amongst the community about the Green Deal and train some ‘energy champions’ to work in communities. Training was delivered to local volunteers and non-domestic GDAs are being made available to local community buildings to showcase how Green Deal can be accessed.

These linked with the Community Project part of the District Board activity and funding was available for four non-domestic GDAs or the equivalent for community buildings as well as enhancing this part of the project through creating GD advocates/energy champions in the communities.

This project was led by SSCE and funds will be paid for the GDA in the form of a grant to the Community organisation. Three training events were held, attended by a total of 29 volunteers – some of whom attended 2 or 3 of the sessions and three community buildings were identified. This project is still in progress due to delays in accreditation for Green Deal Assessors.
ECO PROJECT:
This was to look at how HHCRO & CSCO can be utilised to best effect within the District – to look at the options for delivery of Green Deal available to a small local authority and carry out an options appraisal. Marches Energy Agency led on this. A draft report has been received, which will be further developed to look in more detail, and utilise lower level data.

Lichfield District has only 1 LSOA eligible for community ECO – which is half of Chadsmead in North Lichfield, although LSOAs do have a 20% flexible boundary. A dialogue is needed to ascertain what is needed in this area, including the social landlords with stock in this area – mainly Bromford and Midland Heart. This would be eligible for an area based scheme which has not been done in Lichfield District before.

Another potential funding source could be the Rural ECO which is available for settlements of less than 10,000 – which would include most of Lichfield District.

The project is to develop a strategy to enable the Council to move forward with Green Deal as a District, and inform the HECA report.

PROPOSAL MODIFICATIONS:
British Gas Solid Wall Project – British Gas withdrew their funding proposal after the project application. ECO was then explored and one property has had work carried out funded by the DECC project monies.

Diocesan Project – This failed due to barriers raised by the Diocese regarding the legality of a GD plan for a vicarage. This was referred back to DECC & the Church Commissioners. It was not possible to resolve this in the time available so the money was transferred to the solid wall show home project. DECC are pursuing this (to also determine the implications for other tied accommodation where the form of agreements do not meet criteria for tenants to sign up to Green Deals)².

RISK MANAGEMENT:
Tight deadlines meant the risks to the Council had to be taken to the Management Team & Cabinet after the DECC funding had been awarded. Exception reports were written to ensure the Authority complied with its financial regulations.

The project delivered five heating system replacements which were funded though the DECC project added to a fund accessed through the Warm Homes Healthy People activity.

Park Home support: Nine potential households were originally to be involved but when ECO funding fell though only 4 were completed.

Solid Wall Insulation - Three fully funded systems were installed – 3 EWI & 1 IWI.

All works were completed in April/May 2013.

² Guidance for people selling, letting (social or private rented sector) or transferring a property.
LESSONS LEARNT

Partnerships with local community groups are essential to reach people and gain trust – joint branding is the key to success – not just relying on the council or volunteers but building on the strengths of both.

Clear delivery timescales & outcomes and close monitoring require regular updates and communication.

Ensuring the project complied with financial regulations meant that value for money was inherent within the project.

Being open to discussion and changing the way a project works if it isn’t succeeding adds to the success factor.

Using 3rd sector and not for profit organisations & building upon existing partnership & schemes meant that set up costs were kept to a minimum.

The project was resource intensive – more so than anticipated and timescales were very tight.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM SSCE

- the competition ‘model’ was engaging
- local networks are extremely valuable - community / media / business
- householders are reassured by council involvement
- householders like the idea of local contractors
- householders need more than a quote!

In the future SSCE will:

- continue to develop the local supply chain to promote energy efficiency with partners
- continue to make sure that education plays a large part of energy conservation
- work with ‘Energy Ambassadors’ to promote energy efficiency and sustainability
**Applied for:** Green Deal Pioneer  
**Funding was received for:** Green Deal Pioneer - £450,639  
**Named delivery partner:**  
**Named evaluator:** SHAP

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**PROJECT OBJECTIVE:**

This proposal focuses on Green Deal Pioneer Places across a largely rural area and a consortium of three councils.

The aim of the project was to maximise the uptake and increase the ‘normalisation’ of the Green Deal locally. The project targeted private sector landlords, public sector staff and local businesses and included a community-led Transition Streets element, a show homes/buildings programme, the development of a Green Deal trailer (to take to events) and joint-working to assess the opportunities provided by ECO.

The three local authorities involved in the project had already worked together through their local LEP and had commissioned a Green Deal options appraisal. The partners saw this competition as a timely opportunity to test two of the emerging options.
Transition Streets was included as a way of trialling ‘deeper’ contact with householders, educating them about sustainability more widely to help engender a stronger commitment to the Green Deal model.

Community facilities, rural communities and tenants of private rented accommodation were also included.

THE PARTNERSHIP:
The project was led by a consortium of three councils (Herefordshire Council, Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council) along with existing partnerships within the public, private and community sectors.

The project managers were Marches Energy Agency, a registered charity and social enterprise founded in 1998 that specialises in the delivery and promotion of energy reduction and renewable energy solutions.

The total partnership was:
- Marches Green Deal & ECO Task & Finish Group
- Local Enterprise Partnership Housing and Planning Group
- Marches Sustainable Housing Partnership
- Private Sector Landlords
- Warm Home Healthy People project
- Age UK and Shropshire County Primary Care Trust
- Diocese of Lichfield – *a note has been added on this partnership later in the report*
- Transition Streets – New Leaf Sustainable Development Ltd
- Shropshire Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- Marches Energy Agency

PROJECT OUTPUTS:
The main outcomes planned by the project were to create a significant pipeline of Green Deal Assessments in the domestic sector, supported by representative non-domestic Green Deal Assessments along with a short and intensive ECO-opportunity study to jointly define the scale of the Energy Company Obligation across the Marches and produce a Prospectus for future action.

The proposal was expected to:
- Be delivered using existing partnerships and/or projects;
- Achieve Green Deal Plans (working with Private Sector Landlords, large employer staff (Public Sector), rural communities, non-domestic Green Deal Assessments);
- Provide certainty over ECO opportunities and funding by developing an ECO Investment Prospectus;
- Develop the capacity to drive demand for the Green Deal.
**FUNDING:**

The project received £450,639 from the Green Deal Pioneers fund. This was matched by in-kind officer time, volunteer time, existing partnership commitments and by existing Service Level Agreement commitments. British Gas contributed to the cost of the ECO prospectus.

**LANDLORDS:**

The take up of applications evolved steadily and continued into the extended project period after further promotion.

By the 21st March 94 landlord applications for a GDA had been received, 49 allocated and 6 reports completed. At this stage further letting agents were emailed and discussion undertaken on measures to boost uptake.

Two months later, by the 16th May, 272 landlords had applied (54% of 500 total funded by DECC) split across the council areas as follows - Herefordshire: 81; Shropshire 171; Telford & Wrekin 20. At this point further applications were stopped and promotion ceased. All assessments were expected to be completed by 30th May.

**Diocese of Lichfield:** After initial work by the project manager, the Diocese withdrew after their solicitor gave a view that it would be illegal for a vicar to take out a Green Deal loan. Clearer direction is required from the Church Commissioners who oversee all 43 Diocese, which was not available within the timeframe of the project. DECC have taken up this issue directly with the Environmental Adviser to the Church Commissioners.

The issue is not a straightforward landlord-tenant relationship and entails an understanding of the detail of Ecclesiastical Measures which govern vicar-Diocese tenancy relationships. The benefit of this project has been to expose only one of 43 Diocese to Green Deal and clarify at this point the opportunity/ problems and allows DECC to understand the issues in more detail.

Despite the problem a faith show home has proceeded after an assessment but with a lesser contribution of £2k. The show home will be in Pant just south of Oswestry and the Diocese will be match funding some of the work and are now paying for the Green Deal Assessment Report (GDAR) as well.

The input from the Diocese will result in a project worth around £3-4k and will include a package of draught proofing, loft insulation and a solid fuel stove in the home of a well-connected vicar across several rural parishes as well as within the Diocese who is about to join the Diocesan Housing Board. An agreement is in place for the vicar to promote the work and associated savings and provide short written report to be used as case study. This work is now being costed by the Diocese of Lichfield.

**PUBLIC SECTOR STAFF:**

Free Green Deal Assessments were offered to public sector staff within the councils involved. A promotional event was held and by the 21st March 164 GDA applications had been received split over the three local authority areas and 109 allocated with 6 GDA reports.

The offer was expanded to include the fire service, NHS &PCT staff as well as selected schools and by the 16th May a total of 238 staff members had applied (48% of 500 total funded by DECC) split as follows: Herefordshire: 51; Shropshire 113; Telford & Wrekin 74.
These should all be completed by 30\textsuperscript{th} May. By the 13\textsuperscript{th} May applications were stopped and the promotion ceased.

**NON-DOMESTIC GREEN DEAL ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS:**

The original target for non-domestic buildings undertaking a Green Deal Assessment was 60. The final total with a commissioned GDAR was 42 (70\% of 60 total funded by DECC).

These were a mix of buildings split across the council areas as follows:

- Herefordshire: 8 properties, total £10,326
- Shropshire: 14 properties, total £15,474
- Telford and Wrekin: 20 properties, total £27,420

**SHOW HOMES AND BUILDINGS:**

By the 16\textsuperscript{th} May a total of 118 Assessments had been allocated. There was some delay in getting the show homes selected but a number have now been shortlisted and/or commissioned. Thirty five applied: (58\% of 60 funded by DECC).

**GREEN DEAL TRAILER:**

**The Green Deal Trailer** was delivered on March 5\textsuperscript{th} and fitted out with physical resources.

The logos are to be completed after discussion between the partners. Several events were covered and bookings were proceeding when significant problems developed with the trailer and it has been taken off the road for repairs that have involved the manufacturer. Twelve families were engaged at the first event.

*Green Deal trailer*

**ECO ‘SIZE OF THE PRIZE PROSPECTUS:**

This is progressing well and a draft prospectus was expected to be complete by May 20\textsuperscript{th} when it will be shared with the partners for feedback.
COMMUNITY GROUPS:

**Herefordshire New Leaf** is a small not for profit co-operative working in Herefordshire. The group gained publicity as a result of the project and now has a Green Deal page on their website which includes advice for householders who want to proceed with a GD plan after receiving their Assessment.

New Leaf offered a training course in early January of 2013, equipping nearly 50 people from around Herefordshire to lead their own Energy Saver groups. The training, provided by Transition Town Totnes, has equipped local people to work with small groups of 6 - 10 friends, neighbours, colleagues or community members in order to start to address the energy efficiency needs of their households. Those involved were given access to a free home energy assessment from an accredited local energy assessor (worth £150).

New Leaf organised a meeting on 15th May in central Hereford for all the assessors they used to talk about the assessment experience and what support can be offered to householders after the project finishes at the end of May.

**Stretton Climate Care**, a Shropshire based charity, now has a Green Deal page on its website.

MODIFICATIONS

An email and mailshot was sent to known landlords and a presentation was given in Shropshire and Herefordshire. Targeted approaches were taken and a database of privately rented dwellings for which category 1 hazards of excess cold/heat, previously assessed under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS), were used to identify potential beneficiaries of GDAR’s and ultimately Green Deal improvements.

Early on in the project the National Landlords Association had agreed to work with the Marches GDPP partners to promote the offer of Green Deal Advice Reports to their members in the Marches area. However, in February it was reported that the National Landlords Association had signed a deal with a national facilities company to carry out GDAs at a reported £59 per Assessment which meant that some landlords pulled out of the project. Letting agents were targeted instead and have since been involved.

At the time of writing the bid, the partners anticipated that they would be able to recruit fully trained and registered Green Deal Advisors (GDAs), and follow a simple process of issuing an overarching agreement, individual purchase orders, and receive the report and invoice. In reality the partners were faced with Green Deal Advice Organisations (GDAOs) and GDAs that were just learning their roles and their own processes.

The project partners spent a lot of time working with GDAOs, Ofgem, Gemserve and DECC to convince GDAOs that they did not have to be the first point of contact for clients and that GDAs could bring in their own work and still lodge it on the GDAOs system. This also made it difficult to use GDAOs to recruit the assessor panel and lengthened the time taken.

A lot more support than anticipated had to be given to GDAs – explaining the system of registering with a GDAO, ensuring that they had received their certificate and registered with Landmark, as many were unaware of the need for this.

Although a panel had to be set up fairly quickly, many were still awaiting certification and registration, so the project team had to keep following up each GDA to see what stage they were at in the process and determine when they were able to actually lodge assessments.
This problem continued throughout the project right up until the last week of the extended deadline as people struggled to get the registration completed for various reasons.

As a result of this a lot of work that was allocated eventually had to be reallocated sometimes as many as three times when assessors could not complete a job. Given the size of the three county area the project needed to be strategic in the allocations so having to reallocate was a problem.

The project team initially recruited a panel of 28 assessors, 7 of which never managed to perform a single assessment under the scheme. 1 managed 6 of the 20 assigned and then only in the last 8 days of the project but most of his work could not be reallocated due to short notice and a shortage of local assessors in Hereford.

There have been numerous software and lodgement issues throughout the project which delayed the return of reports and again led to a lot of follow up contact with assessors to give advice and chase up the reports.

There have also been various issues around the Private Landlord project that have needed to be clarified with the various authorities and then relayed to both landlords and assessors, e.g. whether assessments could be done on vacant properties at all; whether or not such properties would need to be classed as non-domestic; who is responsible for the Green Deal plan during void periods; and what the system would be when there was a change of tenant.

All such issues needed several calls to resolve as the Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS) and gemserv seemed to have only a very basic knowledge of the schemes and of the ongoing changes and clarifications happening throughout the project.

In conclusion the extra work at the end of the project was as a direct result of the problems at the beginning, alongside unforeseen complications of the system, on-going changes, and a lack of knowledge amongst those involved as to how the scheme should run. The latter may be down to very mixed quality in the training schemes.

Despite the unforeseen work, the project added value as it has helped build the capacity of many assessors who would not have had the experience or support that offered. The project also clarified many questions about the processes involved.

The Councils are currently developing related projects for which they will seek approval from DECC and will use the unspent grant funds for their delivery.

**PUBLIC SECTOR STAFF:**

A range of publicity information was used, such as staff e-newsletters and specific working groups were targeted such as the Herefordshire Council employee CO2 group.

Similar issues affected this project to those mentioned above under the Private Rented Sector project. Part-way through the delivery of these projects redundancies led to increased difficulty in engaging members of staff.

**PROJECT DELIVERY:**

Working with public sector and local authorities allowed the non-domestic properties to progress well. Public sector staff were easier to engage than the general public in a tight time scale.
Working with community organisations such as Transition Streets ensured that committed members of the public were engaged.

VALUE FOR MONEY:

The proposal's value for money is derived from the potential scale-up and replication of the constituent projects. There has been a strength in the delivery partnership and a track record in delivering effective sustainable energy outcomes over more than 15 years.

The project has the potential to deliver real value for money by providing Green Deal ‘proof of concept’ for area-based, and ‘communities of interest’ projects. Many of the constituent projects are based on a ‘one decision: many homes/buildings’ approach to minimise the costs of promoting the Green Deal and reduce the attrition rate between the first communication and the signing of the Green Deal Plan.

The three Councils used existing partnerships which avoided a lengthy project development phase allowing them to use resources productively on delivery directly.

Domestic Green Deal Assessments have been priced at £150, in-line with the suggested likely market price within DECC’s consultation process. This includes travel costs, which can be significant in isolated rural communities. The ambition is to secure them at a lower cost, to allow more assessments to be done.

The three Councils committed to ‘open sourcing’ all their findings to ensure that other localities can benefit from DECC’s investment and the knowledge created.

ECO PROPOSAL

A short-term focus on the Home Heating cost Reduction Target and Carbon Saving Community elements of the Energy Company Obligation is considered likely to secure significant investment from the obligated parties. To achieve this aim the Marches Energy Agency will bring together a range of stakeholders, partners and organisations who can collectively define the size of the ECO prize and define eligible communities and households and begin to secure ECO projects.

Securing DECC funding has enabled this work to be commissioned which will deliver very significant ECO leverage. It has been estimated that a ‘fair share’ of ECO funding amounts to around £12.6 million a year for the region. The funding of £10k for this element of the proposal could achieve a return of £1,260 of ECO each year for each £1 invested by DECC.

CAPACITY

All project partners had previous experience in domestic and non-domestic energy efficiency projects. However, capacity issues began to arise when the projects’ time-frame moved continually throughout the duration. Whilst some partners had limited experience of Green Deal this was a relatively new policy to work with. There were capacity issues amongst the Green Deal Advisers and the Green Deal Advice Organisations which significantly increased the duties of the project managers.

RESULTS:

There were very similar take-up rates across the board for all domestic GDAR’s (Landlords – 46%, Public Sector – 45%, Show home/ Community groups – 57%, Transition Streets – 47%)
TELFORD AND WREKIN UPDATE:

Telford and Wrekin is making good progress with a Green Deal partner option to deliver “Telford Energy Savers” using the Birmingham Energy Savers model as their first contracting authority. This is seen as part of the Telford and Wrekin legacy project. They are expecting to convert GDAs into GD Plans as a result.

The project has allowed Telford and Wrekin to test the capabilities of Carillion Energy Services within Telford to help develop a robust customer journey, with corresponding high levels of reputation management and customer satisfaction.

The non-domestic assessment theme has generated significant interest in energy performance for the council’s operational buildings, schools and quasi-public buildings (i.e. those in ownership of parish councils etc.) and these buildings will be taken forward as flagships for the eco-refurbishment sector.
COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL:

Applied for: Fuel Poverty and Collective Switching Fund
Funding was received for: Fuel Poverty and Collective Switching Fund - £660,000
Named delivery partners:
Fuel Poverty - Renewable Energy Technology Alliance (RETA);
Collective Switching - Coventry City Council, housing associations and iChoosr.
Named evaluator: SHAP

FUEL POVERTY:

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The project was designed to mitigate the effects of fuel poverty for low income and vulnerable owner occupiers and private tenants. Assistance was provided through the installation of loft and cavity wall insulation and the provision of draught-proofing, boiler replacements and external wall insulation.

There was a geographic focus on households in selected neighbourhoods with high levels of fuel poverty and also a target on Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit recipients city-wide using benefits data available to the council. Disabled households were targeted using data on completed Disabled Facilities Grants held by the council.

Due to the very positive response received from disabled households, the project was subsequently re-focused so it was not possible to implement the neighbourhood-based and benefits-based elements of the project.

The case for concentrating on the disabled households was strong - the council's 2012 private sector stock condition survey showed that 35.5% of residents with a disability were living in fuel poverty, and there were added health benefits for the households concerned.

A total of 292 households who had received Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) in last 2 years were phoned resulting in 106 expressions of interest.

The project has been split between the current DECC funded pilot and an ECO funded follow up project.

PROJECT RATIONALE:

- 72% of all fuel poor households have incomes of less that £10k p.a.
- 48% of households with a person aged 75 or over are fuel poor
- 36% of households that include a disabled person are fuel poor
- 25% of households comprising a lone parent and dependent child are fuel poor
- Disabled persons spend more time at home, so fuel poverty has a greater impact
- Medical conditions can require a higher level of warmth
PARTNERSHIP:

The Renewable Energy Technology Alliance (RETA) is a trade alliance of local SME firms. The framework agreement selected by the City Council, and the arrangements made between the City Council and RETA allowed local contractors to be commissioned to undertake the insulation work. The diversity of the property types to be insulated provided an opportunity for local contractors to develop skills transferrable into the wider Green Deal and ECO marketplace.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS

- Due to higher levels of interest from disabled households, the project was re-focussed to concentrate on these.
- The project was scaled-up by trading the carbon value of the DECC funded work to bring in ECO funding. EPC surveys were commissioned at the outset to enable this.

SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME:

- Procurement of main contractor to allow delivery of work within original DECC timeframe was an issue. The Council entered into discussions with DECC to secure flexibilities on the timeframe.
- Understanding the planning permission requirements for the range of properties to receive external wall insulation required early discussions with planning colleagues. This led to a traffic light classification of properties to use in the scheme preparation. A guidance document for longer-term use has been drafted.

VALUE FOR MONEY AND LESSONS LEARNT

The Local Authority data and an established relationship with disabled householders were useful. A total of 90 disabled households were assisted with: 56 external wall insulations, 6 cavity wall insulations, 27 loft insulations and 19 boiler replacements.

The procurement process used and trading the carbon value of the DECC funded work delivered value for money.

The project was led by the City Council’s Sustainability and Low Carbon team. Resources were strained because of other pressures at the same time (completion of CESP schemes during the project development phase, development of new ECO schemes during the project implementation phase, and development and implementation of a DECC-funded collective switching scheme at the same time as the fuel poverty project).

Further difficulties were experienced because the Council did not have its own retained stock, and therefore procurement and surveying expertise was limited.

The proposal has been developed and will be delivered with local partners – to ensure that the delivery of measures reflects local conditions on the ground. A longer project development timeframe is needed to maximise the contribution of local delivery partners.
COLLECTIVE SWITCHING:

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
This was a scheme for all domestic bill payers in Coventry City, with a specific focus upon householders that hadn’t switched before and who are more likely to be fuel poor. The council worked in partnership with a specialist switching organisation to manage the process and with other key partners including housing associations to ensure that low income, fuel poor households benefit from lower energy costs.

The DECC funding for the project concentrated on a comprehensive marketing and publicity campaign to maximise uptake, with a particular emphasis on ‘off-line’ activity that will reach target households.

Benefits data was used to target the City Council area and branded mail outs were sent to households more likely to be in fuel poverty.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS:

With a longer lead-time to prepare the scheme and promote it, more could have been done with local partners.

Some modifications were necessary – a planned promotion of the Switch and Save scheme at the neighbourhood level was not possible due to internal staffing changes, and use of the ‘SORTED’ initiative to promote it was not possible due to the timing of the initiative. (The ‘SORTED’ initiative is supported by the Big Lottery Fund and aims to improve the budgeting and financial management skills of social housing tenants)

The use of Paypoint terminals around the city to promote the scheme on payment receipts was hindered by the response of the company operating the terminals. Having secured agreement from their agent to promote the scheme to all householders paying gas and electricity bills via the terminals, Paypoint subsequently prevented this from happening. The explanation given was that their contracts with energy companies restrict what the terminals can be used for.

VALUE FOR MONEY AND LESSONS LEARNT:

The inclusion of Coventry’s Switch and Save scheme in the national Big Community Switch meant that the council benefitted from being part of a reverse auction involving 7 schemes comprising a total of 160,315 household registrations from nearly 100 local authority areas. This provided the City Council with the best possible opportunity to obtain a good offer from the energy companies involved in the auction, thereby maximising value for money for the DECC funding invested. The numbers of registrations were encouraging but the details of the offer from the auction winner that required monthly payments to rise in some cases in order to be able to benefit from the cashback offer after 12 months meant that many offers were not taken forward. The number of Switch and Save registrations were 3014.

BENEFITS:

All bill payers in Coventry could benefit by registering for the Switch and Save scheme – it was available to all households in all tenures. The scheme was specifically designed to ensure that low income and vulnerable households could take part. The contract with iChoosr stipulated that pre-payment customers should receive an offer, and paper-based
registration forms were used at accessible locations around the city for householders that didn't have access to the internet.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY:

The project was led by the City Council's Sustainability and Low Carbon team. Resources were strained because of other pressures at the same time (completion of CESP schemes during the project development phase, development of new ECO schemes during the project implementation phase, and development and implementation of a DECC-funded fuel poverty project at the same time as the collective switching scheme).
Applied for: Fuel Poverty and Collective Switching Fund
Funding was received for: Fuel Poverty - £100,000
Named delivery partners: Public Health Team
Named evaluator: SHAP

FUEL POVERTY:

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The aim of the project was to build on Dudley’s existing Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) programme by offering long-term sustainable measures to achieve more energy efficient homes, a reduction in fuel bills and a sustained change in behaviour amongst those most vulnerable to fuel poverty.

In 2010, 26,615 of Dudley’s 127,509 households were in fuel poverty, equivalent to 20.9% of households, and just slightly above the national average of 19%. However Dudley is a diverse borough and within some lower layer super output areas these figures rise to 43.5%.

Support through the project was targeted at those who are most vulnerable to fuel poverty, including the elderly (over 75 years), those with pre-existing medical conditions, families with young children, and those on low incomes / living alone. As a result, the project aimed to reduce the number of households in the borough living in fuel poverty, improve the health and wellbeing of householders and increase their disposable income.

PROJECT RATIONALE:

- 72% of all fuel poor households have incomes of less that £10k p.a.
- 48% of households with a person aged 75 or over are fuel poor
- 36% of households that include a disabled person are fuel poor
- 25% of households comprising a lone parent and dependent child are fuel poor
- Disabled persons spend more time at home, so fuel poverty has a greater impact
- Medical conditions can require a higher level of warmth

PARTNERSHIP:
The infrastructure established for the Warm Homes Healthy People (WHHP) programme was utilised to identify/target new households, manage referrals and install measures – primarily new and replacement heating systems, heating controls and reflective radiator panels. This was provided in conjunction with home energy advice visits and information. The WHHP programme is well established and engaged with relevant stakeholders from the VCFS, NHS and Social Care – who were able to reach the most vulnerable residents. A referral pathway was in place, co-ordinated through a winter warmth hub, a targeted marketing campaign and resourced to support front line professionals to pass on information, advice and signposting. Energyextra, a local not-for-profit organisation,
provided independent home energy advice visits to maximise the benefits of heating and insulation measures.

Existing partnerships enabled the full engagement of frontline professionals and ensured that work around fuel poverty became a core part of their work. See diagram below:

![Diagram]

**PROJECT MODIFICATIONS**

The bid to DECC contained a programme of key milestones which included activity beginning in November 2012 with the launch of the WHHP programme. The project steering group also identified additional staff, an NEA graduate and approved contractors who could all be brought in/procured at short notice to provide additional delivery capacity.

The existing WHHP database meant delivery could start immediately on small-scale energy efficiency measures. However, the following minor modifications were made during the delivery of the scheme in response to specific problems encountered:

- The original plan was to use the council approved gas contractor to carry out major works e.g. new and replacement heating systems and minor works e.g. repairs and heating controls. Unfortunately due to capacity they were unable to deliver on the minor works and alternative contractors had to be sourced. This initially caused a delay in delivery and also significantly increased the involvement with the council regarding administration work and technical officer’s time.
• Demand for the scheme increased as the scheme progressed and unfortunately there was not enough funds to help everybody. During March cases had to be prioritised to ensure the most fuel poor were assisted.

SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME:

A larger number of more complex cases were encountered than anticipated:
• Problems occurred in relation to asbestos and old and inadequate pipe work and radiators existing in the property. This not only increased costs but meant a much greater involvement was required from the council’s Technical Project Officers than had originally been identified.
• Two hoarding problems were encountered and had to be resolved before installation could be carried out. A caseworker had to be allocated to work closely with the client’s social worker to sensitively clear the property to enable the work to go ahead.
• Two problems occurred where clients reported leaks following installation of a boiler. Emergency contractors were called out to rectify the faults. However in both cases it was established that the leaks were another problem that had occurred prior to our involvement.

VALUE FOR MONEY AND LESSONS LEARNT

Value for money was obtained by the use of:
• the existing council procured gas contractor
• the existing WHHP infrastructure to identify fuel poor and vulnerable households
• Dudley’s Home Improvement Service to provide technical support to install radiator reflector panels

Sufficient time is required in the lead up to delivery of the scheme to enable a thorough inspection of every property to identify extent of work and anticipate any extra costs that may occur. A dedicated caseworker and Technical Officer allocated to each case would ensure a closer working relationship between the client and the contractor, which would improve communication and resolve any issues and concerns as they arose.

Sufficient time is required to ensure those most vulnerable to fuel poverty are prioritised.

KEY OUTCOMES

The project successfully targeted and assisted households that are fuel poor. 149 vulnerable and fuel poor households were assisted within the project timescales of January – March 2013.

Through a referral to the winter warmth hub, households received a tailored package of support which could include benefit entitlement checks, energy efficiency advice and access to a crisis fund for emergency heating, blankets and hot water bottles and befriending for those isolated in their homes, in addition to the long term measures provided through the DECC scheme.
Applied for: Collective Switching Fund
Funding was received for: Collective Switching Fund
Named delivery partners: See Partnership

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The Birmingham and Solihull Together (BST) project was designed to support vulnerable households to access, without discrimination, the benefits of a Collective Energy Switching Campaign in Spring 2013 with the aim of establishing a route to achieving long term economic benefit and alleviation of fuel poverty for the city’s most vulnerable residents.

The ambition was to interest 5% of the 98,000 vulnerable households in Birmingham and Solihull in the immediate benefits of tariff and energy switching while offering a holistic support package on budgeting, energy use and the installation of energy efficiency measures to maximise long term savings.

The objectives were to:

- Explore ways of reaching vulnerable households; building on consultation and engagement with a wide range of partners and trial new approaches
- Support households to the point where they can self-refer to the Collective Energy Switch campaign
- Develop bespoke marketing to engage vulnerable households, their friends, neighbours, colleagues, employers and relatives
- Use existing networks and marketing to identify organisations and individuals who could be trained as advisors
- Target every home in Nechells and Chelmsley Wood Wards. These wards have above average levels of vulnerable households
- Use Stay Warm Stay Well and Winter Warmth funding to engage vulnerable consumers
- Use a contact centre provided by the BES Delivery Partner Carillion
- Work with energy companies to facilitate contact with customers on pre-payment meters or in debt
- Trial training local shopkeepers offering PayPoint facilities to signpost customers to the project
- Continuously review the project to maximise effectiveness and provide regular dissemination across the West Midlands and to DECC,
- Create a legacy for future initiatives

The project location(s) were in Birmingham and Solihull with a focus on Nechells (Birmingham) and Chelmsley Wood (North Solihull).
PARTNERSHIP:

UKTogether – a partnership between Energyshare, The Eden Project and uSwitch who provided national advice, marketing, managing the switch and the switch platform.

Local marketing, support to vulnerable households, financial inclusion advice and evaluation was provided by Buy For Good CIC working with a range of contracted partners.

Buy For Good (BFG) is a Community Interest Company, awarding locality based contracts and frameworks, (Purchasing Agreements), for use by the public, Third Sector and private sector organisations. Purchasing Agreements are awarded in full compliance with the EU Procurement Directive and negate the need for public sector buyers to run their own EU compliant procurement exercise.

Founder Members of BFG includes organisations representing the procurement and supply side, these are: Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, Initiative for Social Entrepreneurs (I.S.E), Birmingham City Council, Optima Housing Association and Accord Housing Association.


The organisations covered all sectors including SME, Community Interest Companies, community group, public sector, national charity, tenants association and local charity.

An evaluation video is available at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xi7ucuQYTLw

ADDITIONALITY:

Local partners brought knowledge of local networks and provided the trust and credibility that successfully engaged advice providers and community organisations in the switch campaign. These organisations had the trust and credibility with the local communities they were working with – whether by location, faith or common interest.

Local geographic knowledge helped pinpoint locations for fixed outdoor advertising and the bus routes selected for internal and external advertising – chosen because of the focus on two areas of high deprivation by the campaign.

Local partners with pre-existing knowledge of each other meant working relationships were easily managed and could draw on and relate to other relevant programmes e.g. Stay Warm Stay Well. Local partnerships will be a part of the legacy activities.

PROJECT RATIONALE

At a strategic level the project contributed to outcomes including; financial (lower bills), environmental (carbon emissions reduction), social (improved communities and more confident citizens) and economic (supply chain stimulation).

The project was expected to generate direct financial savings for participating vulnerable households, including those from energy switching, but also from other activities such as improved financial management, receipt of benefits not previously claimed, reductions in energy use from behaviour change and improvements to the energy efficiency and thermal
comfort of the home. This has the additional benefit of releasing finance into the local economy creating local economic multiple benefits. Support for vulnerable households in poor housing is expected to accelerate the installation of measures funded by ECO.

Indirect benefits will include cost savings associated with warmer homes, associated health benefits and reduction in those without work.

The project has informed and benefitted from other initiatives such as Warm Front, Stay Warm Stay Well (Birmingham) and Winter Warmth (Solihull).

The project was designed to facilitate customers wishing to take advantage of current cash back offers from DECC for boiler replacement and other measures.

**BENEFITS:**

The project was ambitious and used community-engagement, welfare referral routes, multi-media marketing and awareness raising campaigns to attempt to reach 5% of the 98,000 vulnerable households in Birmingham and Solihull with particularly focussed campaigns in Nechells and Chelmsley Wood.

**ENGAGEMENT WITH VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS:**

In addition to the overall campaign, the project attempted to contact 3143 vulnerable households in Nechells and Chelmsley Wood through a door to door campaign based on the Warm Zone methodology, aiming to successfully engage with 25% of residents equating to offering support to 786 households. This approach was subsequently amended due to advice from delivery partners and outreach to these households was via direct delivery of printed information produced by trusted local organisations in addition to face to face support by community and financial inclusion advisors.

Experience from Cornwall Together, is that approximately 10% of those registering an interest eventually switched. This project aimed to support 80 households through to actually switching in these two Wards and 490 across the rest of Birmingham and Solihull.

Engagement with vulnerable, fuel poor households in Birmingham and Solihull involved:

- Learning from and influencing existing programmes, working with partners involved in energy efficiency advice, health and wellbeing advice, financial inclusion advice (eg. Stay Warm Stay Well, Winter Warmth and Warm Front) to encourage advisors to promote self-referrals to this project (which addresses any data protection issues).
- Trialling new ways of reaching vulnerable households through a multi-media, multi-language advertising campaign including print media, leaflets, radio, local TV, community papers, social media, targeted door knocking, working with large employers, unions and schools, NHS, Local Authority, Fire, Police, community and faith groups, advertising on buses and trains and by training trusted local people and organisations
- The project supplied information briefings and materials to be included in the marketing campaigns run by the main Collective Energy Switching Project during Spring 2013
- Worked with energy companies to support vulnerable customers on pre-payment meters, those in debt and those off the gas grid in Solihull.
- Worked with vulnerable households engaging with the project to gain skills and confidence to help them manage energy use better, buy cheaper energy, understand how to get support to make their homes more energy efficient, budget more effectively.
• The project provided additional information and support to the Stay Warm Stay Well and Winter Warmth campaigns
• The project worked with Carillion as it begins engagement with up to 4,735 Households in Fuel Poverty not eligible for affordable warmth ECO as part of its commitment to Birmingham Energy Savers.
• The project worked with Birmingham Credit Union and others, providing management fees for those excluded from switching due to debt to help them emerge from financial exclusion.

PROJECT MODIFICATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT:
Some community and financial inclusion organisations expressed an interest in participating in the project but dropped out for a variety of reasons including:

• Lack of capacity
• Existing initiatives by Housing Associations to provide switch advice and lower tariffs to tenants

Longer distance partnerships need time to build the personal relationships that result in added value. Relying on keeping touch by phone and email can result in more intermittent contact, particularly at peak project delivery times.

Other organisations asked to become included and very successfully engaged with the project despite short start up times.

Not all the advisors understood how fuel bill issues related to their wider agenda of Financial Inclusion and Health and Wellbeing.

The switch website was still in development up to the launch of the switch window and testing was carried out as the site went live – this reduced the opportunity for advisors to fully explore the website prior to launch.

The call centre identified to support the campaign had its own launch issues and did not effectively come on line during the first part of the project to support the switch campaign which was in addition to its own role. Many queries had to be redirected to the uSwitch call centre where not all call centre advisors understood the BST project and one caller on a pre-payment meter was told there was no product suitable for them before any details had been taken.

A pre-payment tariff was included in the auction. However, the auction design and website capacity to cope with those furthest from the on-line, direct debit, dual fuel model was limited and needs to be further sensitised to the issues of fuel poor households which can include pre-payment for one fuel, payment on receipt of bill for the other or not being on-line. However, the whole market comparison allowed bill payers to understand clearly how the auction offer related to other products on the market relevant to their situation. Fuel bills are very difficult to interpret and compare. Monthly payments may well be disguising both debt being built up/paid off and estimated readings.

Campaigns need to make use of trusted brands and be sustained. The auction process and any added benefits from an auction are less important than continuing advice and support.

The auction does reduce the risk of switches going wrong (e.g. dual billing) but may not fall within a timescale within which people are able to switch such as time of year (debt built up) (qualification period for Warm Homes Discount); already switched; on a fixed term contract.
The customer journey needs to be fully defined at the outset so it can be explained to billpayers.

Data protection and commercial protection issues meant it was very difficult to fully understand the impact of the campaign and the characteristics of those engaging. Benefits data was impossible to collect so the evaluation of the impact of the campaign had to be inferred from other information.

Creating a bespoke brand is not recommended, however, reference to Local Authority or geographical areas in the campaign branding also meant many people in the general public seeing the marketing but not living in the areas of Birmingham or Solihull felt excluded from the switch process on offer.

The use of Local Authority mail outs by partner projects seemed to increase engagement which has been reported by other switch projects. BST did not have the opportunity to get letters about the switch into this year’s council tax bills and the campaign timing did not fit with Council newsletter production. Mail outs through the Council may well incur costs. The delivery of the BST leaflets to all council information drop addresses was sponsored by the council. Delivery of newsletters and leaflets to 30,000 households in Nechells and Chelmsley Wood incurred a cost.

Concentrated support in target wards of high deprivation resulted in greater conversion from registration to switch and greater inclusion of local bill payers.

The scheme was designed, as a result of the experience of Cornwall Together programme to have the auction before the switch window opened so that the customer could have the option of seeing their best deal and going through to switch immediately, thereby trying to minimise losses due to the long process of sign up + auction + notification of switch offer. The impact of holding the auction before the sign up process will be examined when the results of the other switch campaigns are available.

Based on the notion of local shops being the centre of communities, supported by Mark Prisk amongst others, the Paypoint shopkeeper strand was included in the bid. However, initial consultation with a number of shops offering pre-payment top ups confirmed that there was no appetite for shopkeepers to provide a service that could potentially reduce footfall. Further, they suggested they were located in areas of transient households where many customers were not known or were not valued customers and there was a reluctance for the shopkeepers to engage in conversation with many of their customers. This strand of the project was not able to be taken forward.

PROJECT DELIVERY

The coverage of local partners able to give general switching advice and specific Financial Inclusion advice varied across the switch campaign area. The project successfully demonstrated the importance of local trusted partners who could include the switch advice as part of other on-going engagement with their local communities.

VALUE FOR MONEY

The average savings per household from switching were in the region of £160.19.

6% of switchers had not looked at switching before. People who didn’t switch stated it was because they wouldn’t save enough money (75%) followed by switching not being a priority right now (50%). In addition to savings from switching, Warm Front figures show that
support for vulnerable households also results in an average increase in household income of £1,894 as a result of benefit entitlement checks.

The project sought to add value by working with Birmingham Energy Savers and identifying opportunities to refer callers to the contact centre to BES or through BES to the switch campaign.

The project sought to influence and be supported by Stay Warm Stay Well, which has secured £440,000 from the Department of Health and includes a campaign to reach 12,000 vulnerable people and direct assistance to up to 2,000 vulnerable people with underlying health issues. Where appropriate referrals from this project will be made for capital improvement works to appropriate funding streams.

The value for money of the project in the bid to DECC was calculated on the basis of both savings on fuel bills and additional household income secured as a result of benefit checks funded by the project.

Money spent on marketing and promotion is best spent on a long term strategy and by building interest and support of the local media. Trying to create a story in a very large urban area in a short timescale proved difficult.

Value for money could in future be obtained from ‘piggybacking’ on other events and initiatives. However, adding an extra topic into existing advice centre activities needs resourcing. Similarly, volunteers and community organisations have limited capacity and cannot be expected to carry out additional activities without some injection of additional resource.

RESULTS:
A total of 171 households switched (158 from the Birmingham and Solihull area) and there were also 331 product switches (i.e. gas + electricity)

BST was relatively successful in engaging poorer households where the average annual saving per household that did switch was £161 (107% of target).

It is estimated that BST delivered an estimated £70,000 worth of savings for households mainly in deprived areas and the campaign identified £170,000 annual savings available to households.

In Nechells and North Solihull, 338 households registered their interest and 32 households switched suppliers (43% and 40% of the target respectively).

In Birmingham, a third of expressions of interest came from the 5% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas

Overall, more than half of expressions of interest came from the most deprived 20% of places – and even in relatively well-off Solihull, BST succeeded in drawing a third of expressions of interest from the most 20% deprived areas.

BST made a tangible impact on energy switching nationally - uSwitch figures showed that, at the peak of the campaign, Birmingham and Solihull (with 2% of UK population) accounted for 6.4% of UK energy switches. The effect continued to some extent after the switch period ended.

BST identified real savings in household energy bills in the most deprived wards:
In the three North Solihull wards, BST helped households identify more than £20,000 worth of savings.

In Nechells BST found savings for households worth more than £12,000 per year.

In Ladywood and Aston wards, BST helped households identify more than £8000 in annual savings.

BST did not meet some key targets set during the switch period. Although about 10,000 households engaged with the campaign, only 1422 households registered their interest in being part of a collective switch as against the target of 4900 (29% of target) and 171 households made 331 product switches during the period as against the target of 490 (32% of target).

However, even a £50 saving on energy bills can be used by Financial Inclusion advisors to help reschedule household debt repayments moving households to financial stability and to an improvement in their credit rating.

**FINANCIAL INCLUSION SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FINANCIAL INCLUSION SUMMARY</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total - Target</strong></th>
<th><strong>Total - Actual</strong></th>
<th><strong>Variance</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of clients receiving a financial inclusion assist – e.g. benefit entitlement check; assistance with budgeting; advice on bedroom tax or universal credit; payment negotiation with energy company</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>86.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of clients receiving a BST price comparison</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>29.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients joining BST and making a switch*</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clients joining a credit union*</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households assisted to move off prepayment meters*</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community engagement event – credit union awareness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*59 of the 133 households receiving a financial inclusion assist were achieved by organisations in Solihull. Two of the people moving off PPMs were achieved by organisations in Solihull. All of the 9 people joining a credit union were achieved by organisations in Solihull.*
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ORGANISATION ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY</th>
<th>Total - Target</th>
<th>Total - Actual</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of BST community events</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>175.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other people’s community events</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of organisations engaged with</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>465.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of articles appearing in print community publications (* + 10,000 special edition of Colebridge news)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3*</td>
<td>50.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of items appearing in community social media e.g. blog articles, posting of BST video</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>112.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of residents engaged with</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>65.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of residents receiving a BST comparison</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>26.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of BST flyers and newsletters distributed by community organizations (+ 10,000 special edition of Colebridge News + 30,000 fliers distributed through Council and BST project channels)</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1276</td>
<td>127.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households joining BST and making a switch</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Householders joining a credit union</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Householders assisted to move off pre-payment meters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

The project used a national co-ordination, advice and auction/switch management partnership – UKTogether (Eden Project, Energyshare and uSwitch) and worked with Exeter Together, Cornwall Together and Scots Together. Branding and materials produced for Cornwall were adapted for this campaign. Funding did not permit a national awareness raising campaign of switching and the Together brand. The campaign found that experience of engagement in Cornwall is not necessarily directly transferable to a large urban conurbation.

Locally capacity was stretched by the short timescale where promotion, delivery, advice and project management all needed to be carried out simultaneously. The same funding could have sustained a significant awareness raising and a Financial Inclusion support project over many months. The auction did not result in significantly greater savings than available on the open market and the ‘whole market comparison’ on the website provided many switchers with better deals than through the auction.
PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT

Time was needed to get the delivery team in place – some of this was done at risk before contracts were signed.

Time was taken for the production of briefing documents and to finalise branding and marketing materials and getting sign off. Sign off protocols were established to make the chain as short as possible. Public Relations activities often need sign off immediately or within hours.

Proximity of the timing of the establishment of the local call centre to the launch of the switch campaign caused a problem and the design of the switch platform and website ran up to ‘go-live’ day.

A campaign of this kind needs a long period of time to build trust, reputation and secure engagement and switches.

Bills from different companies vary hugely and can be very difficult to interpret. Training was provided to advisors but significantly more experience than this is required to be able to support the more complicated enquires.

There is a risk that quotes are based on bills that contain debt repayment and/or estimated figures. Therefore the actual use may be less and savings from switching may be less. This is exacerbated where 12 months of bills cannot be found and use is projected across different seasons.

The target vulnerable/fuel poor households which were the focus for this campaign experience multiple problems and energy switching may not be a priority compounded by the fact that people cannot find their bills, understand them or may not think about looking at their bills until they are in crisis.
The emerging project findings were presented at a conference on 13 June 2013. The programme is given below. The presentations can be seen at http://www.shap.uk.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/FINAL-SHAP-POWERPOINT-13-June-2013-19-June-2013.pdf. Please view before printing as the presentation includes all presentations given on the day.

SUMMARY POINTS

• Huge commitments were made by delivery teams over and above the day job to see projects delivered and overcome barriers such as the extremely cold winter, teething problems with Green Deal Assessment software, limitations of existing Green Deal Assessment report format – eg can’t change EPC recommendations even if not appropriate (wind turbine recommendation)

• Customer journey needs to be short and clear

• ECO may not help some vulnerable groups – eg those not on benefits

• Planning – can be resolved – different approaches in different areas

• Advice and information needs to be available on an on-going basis

• Behaviour change still a key area BUT seeing something happening is an important catalyst

• Geography is an important factor on designing a project – eg long travel times in rural areas must be factored in

• Partnerships developed through the pilots will be taken forward

PANEL DEBATE AND QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL

How do we ensure spend on retrofit does benefit the local economy?

• Warwickshire is piloting an interactive web portal allowing householders to feed back on quality of work by contractors and showing where nearest relevant contractors are located.

• Why have Green Deal Plans been set up to look at Green Deals first rather than ECO?

• Currently Green Deal Assessors are writing letters to accompany Green Deal Assessment reports to clarify recommendations or comment on inappropriate recommendations made on EPCs (for example wind turbines)

• What might the priorities for ECO 2 be (from 2015)?

• No decisions have been made yet. (SHAP offered to co-ordinate local responses to provide a representative cross sector view)

• Should Local Authorities take responsibility for managing ECO?

• This is one question amongst many about ECO and a further meeting is proposed specifically to discuss ECO.
Has collective switching got a future?

• There is no evidence that collective switching has stimulated collective energy buying that has changed the market and some offers were ultimately disappointing. There seems to be a cultural challenge around we don’t switch habitually in the UK. Perhaps another 12 months opportunity for current model. Future schemes should look at offering whole market comparisons and enhanced responses to customers with the most difficult barriers to switching. HOWEVER collective switching campaigns have raised awareness of the links between fuel poverty, financial inclusion and the health and wellbeing agendas. IMPORTANTLY there is evidence that even a £50 annual saving can be used as a bargaining chip to allow existing debt to be rescheduled taking a household into an improved financial inclusion strategy for the future.
SUCCESS FACTORS IN DELIVERING
DECC LA FUNDED PROJECTS
GREEN DEAL PIONEER, FUEL POVERTY AND COLLECTIVE ENERGY SWITCH PROJECTS
WEST MIDLANDS/CHESHIRE CASE STUDIES AND LESSONS LEARNT

THURSDAY 13TH JUNE 2013 – 9.30AM - 4.30PM
HOSTED BY SUSTAINABLE BUILDING FUTURES PROJECT
FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTING, COVENTRY UNIVERSITY, PRIORY STREET, CV1 5FB

Aim – to present for discussion
- an overview of West Midlands / Cheshire DECC LA funded projects
- success factors and lessons learnt from these projects to support rapid adoption of best practice
- emerging initiatives and points of contacts

Project findings to be discussed include Fuel Poverty, Green Deal Pioneer Places, Cheaper Energy Together projects in:
- Birmingham City Council, Coventry City Council, Dudley MBC,
- Herefordshire Council with Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire Council,
- Lichfield District Council, Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council
- Solihull MBC, Stoke on Trent City Council,
- Warwickshire County Council with Rugby Borough Council
- Worcestershire County Council with Worcester City Council, Cheshire East Council,
- Cheshire West and Chester BC and partner in collective energy switch led by Oldham

9.00am– 9.30am Refreshments and registration
9.30am – 9.45am Welcome, introduction and housekeeping
Sustainable Building Futures Team
9.45am – 9.55am Welcome – overview of the day and outline of key objectives
Event Chair – Alan Yates: SHAP Chairman
9.55am – 10.15am Overview of the West Midlands/Cheshire Local Authority Projects within the national context
10.15 – 10.40am Summary description of the West Midlands/Cheshire DECC funded projects – Headlines of emerging findings - Susan Juned, SHAP

AGENDA DATED 12 June 2013
10.40am – 11.30am  Success factors – existing delivery capacity and local infrastructure – local authority and third sector
Chair – Alan Yates – Chair of SHAP
David Jullien, Chief Executive, Act on Energy
Heather Lomas, Sustainability Officer, Worcestershire County Council
Iain Wheeler, Housing Delivery Officer, Telford & Wrekin Council

11.30am – 11.50pm  Refreshments

11.50 – 12.30pm  Success factors – private sector and local supply chain
Chair – John Barnham – Head of Sustainable Investment Futures – Orbit Group
David Faulkner, Business Development Manager, Homworks Energy
Matthew Rhodes, Managing Director, Encraft
David Shiner, Coventry City Council
Ewan Jones, Energy Saving Co-Op

12.30 – 1.20pm  LUNCH – Poster displays and discussion on Smart Grids led by Matthew Rhodes, Encraft

1.20pm – 2.15pm  Success factors – community groups/grass roots organisations
Chair – Alan Yates – SHAP + Director of Regeneration, Accord Group
Dave Green, Energy and Green Deal Advisor, Dave Green Energy Services Ltd
Phil Beardsmore, Sustainability Consultant and Green Leader
Kate Sadler, Southern Staffordshire Community Energy

2.15pm – 2.30pm  Energy Switch Campaigns without DECC funding
Jan Rowley, Project Manager, Wolverhampton City Council

2.30pm – 3.15pm  Roundtable sessions – Lessons learnt, success stories, barriers and recommendations for future project success - LA/Project Leads as Chairs – with refreshments available

3.15pm – 3.30pm  Summary points and burning questions - Susan Juned, SHAP

3.30pm – 4.10pm  Panel Debate – building on the pilots; developing the low carbon sustainable construction economy and addressing fuel poverty
Chair – Kenny Atchison, Service Manager – Housing Strategy & Development, Wolverhampton City Council
Andy McDermid, Improvement & Development Manager, Communities Group, Warwickshire County Council
Rachel Frandigoun, Housing Strategy Officer, Lichfield District Council
Richard Davies, Director, Marches Energy Agency
Tomas Jones, Principal Officer, Health and Housing Services Group
Rita Wadey Fuel Poverty Strategy, DECC

4.10pm – 4.20pm  Next Step and Close – Alan Yates, SHAP Chairman

4.30pm – 5.15pm  Tour of Building – must be prebooked

AGENDA DATED 12 June 2013
Some general criteria were laid out in the application forms along with specific criteria for individual funds. The general criteria asked that there be:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Value for money
- Project milestones
- Additionality:
- State Aid compliance

In addition to the general criteria LAs had to show that bids met the specific criteria associated with each of the funds which were:

**FUEL POVERTY FUND**

**AIM:**
To support Local Authorities in England to reduce the extent of fuel poverty through the provision of resources primarily to support improvements to the thermal efficiency of dwellings amongst low income and vulnerable households with priority given to bids that focused on the delivery of the most cost effective measures.

**CRITERIA:**
Local Authorities were encouraged to consider working with local stakeholders – such as the voluntary/community sector, health professionals, home improvement agencies and handypersons services – to ensure that delivery of measures was focused on households that are most in need of support.

Bids had to demonstrate that they delivered impact on fuel poverty, value for money and showed a strategic fit to Government policies.

**GREEN DEAL PIONEERS FUND**

**AIM:**
Local Authorities (LAs) and/or consortia of LAs needed to demonstrate ambitious approaches to kick starting local Green Deal activity in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors including (in order of importance):

- **Promoting Green-Deal ready plans:** LAs were expected to create a portfolio of households willing to enter into Green Deal plans within the project timeframe;

- **Adopting a street-by-street/area-based approach:** LAs were expected to develop - or expand existing - plans to deliver area based/street by street projects (minimum 50 households per project);

- **Establishing a basis for driving future Green Deal demand** and leverage of the initial funding to deliver more Green Deals in the future including the creation of open/show
homes, testing of marketing approaches, working with the Council’s planning departments; working with local health professionals to develop pilot patient referral projects and/or developing links with intermediaries and other key players;

DECC intimated that innovative approaches were of interest.

CRITERIA
These included value for money, strategic fit with measures such as ECO, the development of strong local Green Deal delivery networks and partnerships involving for example previous LEAF recipients, community groups, social housing providers, local traders and the local business community, linking with proposed measures under HECA and a commitment to sharing learning with other LAs.

The key desired outcomes were to deliver early Green Deals, build a strong legacy for driving future Green Deal demand including show homes; pilot marketing approaches; strong links with intermediaries such as the NHS, the development of local planning approaches in relation to Green Deal activity and development and support for the emerging Green Deal supply chain.

Bids were expected to set out clear and strong metrics/outcomes, an outline delivery plan and costings breakdown.

The bids were judged using the following weightings:

• Delivering Green Deal – 30%
• Driving future demand for Green Deal – 25%
• Leveraging additional funding – 15%
• Proposing innovative and local partnership approaches – 15%
• Providing learning - 15%

‘CHEAPER ENERGY TOGETHER’

This fund was open to applications from Local Authorities in England, Scotland and Wales and to eligible third sector organisations.

AIM:

• To support innovative ways for consumers to group together (through a trusted third party) and use market power to negotiate lower energy bills.
• To support a number of collective switching schemes across Great Britain and to increase public awareness of the potential for reducing energy bills through collective switching
• To develop an understanding of which approaches are the most effective at engaging with consumers, particularly vulnerable consumers.

Examples of activities that the funding intended to support included: infrastructure and systems, marketing and advertising, community engagement and outreach, and specialist expertise e.g. legal or procurement advice.

Engagement with vulnerable consumers: bids were expected set out the proposed approach to reach vulnerable consumers, which included (but was not limited to) fuel poor households, people on low incomes or benefits, those who pay using prepayment meters,
those without internet access and those who haven’t switched before, and the number and types of consumers that were expected to register interest and then sign up to the scheme.

**Innovation:** bids were expected to show how applicants have demonstrated innovative ways of marketing to consumers or design of the scheme.

**Strategic fit:** additional weight was attached to bids that proposed a holistic approach to households energy use such as offering energy efficiency advice or funding energy efficiency measures, which could be through the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation or through the Fuel Poverty Fund

**Evaluation:** bids were expected to set out how the schemes planned to capture and share learning in terms of the delivery approach and the collection of robust data (including the numbers of consumers switching, demographic information and savings expected).

Bids were judged using the following weightings:

- Engagement with vulnerable consumers – 35%
- Deliverability this financial year - 20%
- Innovation in design – 15%
- Strategic fit - 15%
- Approach to evaluation - 15%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGMA</td>
<td>Association of Greater Manchester Authorities</td>
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<td>Birmingham Energy Savers</td>
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<td>Black and Minority Ethnic residents</td>
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<td>Carbon Saving Community Obligation area</td>
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