



**London Borough  
of Hounslow**

# **Home Energy Conservation Act**

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**Further Report March 2013**

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The London Borough of Hounslow

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# Part 1: The context

## Introduction

The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) requires local authorities to publish guidance on plans to improve the energy efficiency of homes in their areas. The Act recognises local authorities' ability to use their position to drive low carbon refurbishment of all types of residential accommodation (such as owner-occupied, private rented and social housing).

A number of new initiatives, backed by legislation, have been developed by Government to improve the energy efficiency of homes. This document describes how the Council plans to take advantage of these initiatives to meet local priorities.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has set a deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 for further reports. Subsequent reports known as progress reports are published at two year intervals from this date

## Hounslow Borough

Hounslow is the 10<sup>th</sup> largest borough in London covering 21.6 square miles, stretching from Chiswick in the East to Bedfont and the boundaries of Heathrow Airport in the West.

The 2011 Census indicates that there are 94,902 households living in Hounslow. Of these households, 79% either rent privately or own their home.

Private rental accommodation is the fastest growing tenure in the Borough. According to the 2011 Census the number of private rental properties in the Borough was recorded at 22,206, which is an 89.6% increase from the 2001 census.

## Achievements so far

A range of energy efficiency initiatives aimed at both private and social housing have been successfully implemented.

## Part 1: The context

- High levels of investment in social housing have resulted in significant improvements to the energy efficiency of dwellings. 6,000 Council owned properties have benefited from cavity wall insulation and 1,500 from solid wall insulation. Double glazing was installed as part of the Council's Decent Homes programme, which was completed in 2006. Windows are now upgraded on a programmed basis taking into account new energy efficiencies.
- Since 2004, approximately 10,000 homes in the private sector have benefited from energy saving measures as a result of programmes such as Warm Zones and Heatstreets. The schemes, aimed at low income, fuel poor households provided a comprehensive package of energy efficiency measures including heating and insulation improvements and benefits advice.
- In December 2012 Hounslow Council was awarded funding from DECC to boost the energy efficiency of homes in line with new initiatives such as the Green Deal and Energy

Company Obligation (ECO). The majority of the funding is being used to install efficient central heating systems and insulation in the homes of vulnerable local residents who are struggling with rising energy bills. A smaller part of the funding is being used to help kick start energy efficiency projects to tie in with the launch of the Government's Green Deal scheme. The results of these projects will be used to inform the Council's involvement in future retrofit programmes under ECO and the Green Deal.

## Part 2: Our key objectives

### Where are we now?

#### Energy use

The residential sector accounts for a third of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Hounslow. Between 2005 and 2009 domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have decreased year on year, rising slightly in 2010. Overall since 2005 there has been a 3.8% decrease in domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Hounslow. Heating is the major energy requirement of homes and there are significant opportunities to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by improving the thermal efficiency of buildings.

#### Fuel poverty

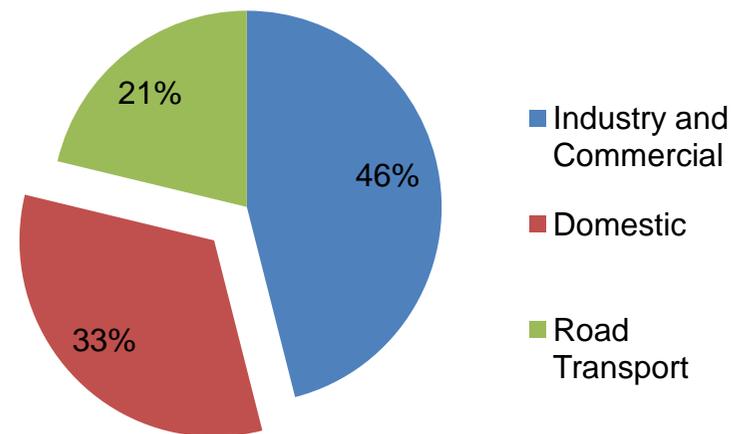
Data from the Department of Energy and Climate Change indicate that in 2010 9,206 households in Hounslow were fuel poor, an increase of 24% since 2006. Above inflation rises in energy prices have been largely responsible for increases in fuel poverty.

#### Excess winter deaths

Data provided by the Public Health Observatory indicates that between 2008 and 2011 there were on average 89 excess winter deaths in Hounslow each year.

There is strong evidence that home energy efficiency improvements can significantly improve health and well-being and reduce costs to the NHS.

**Chart 1: Hounslow's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by sector for 2010**



Source: DECC, Local and regional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions estimates

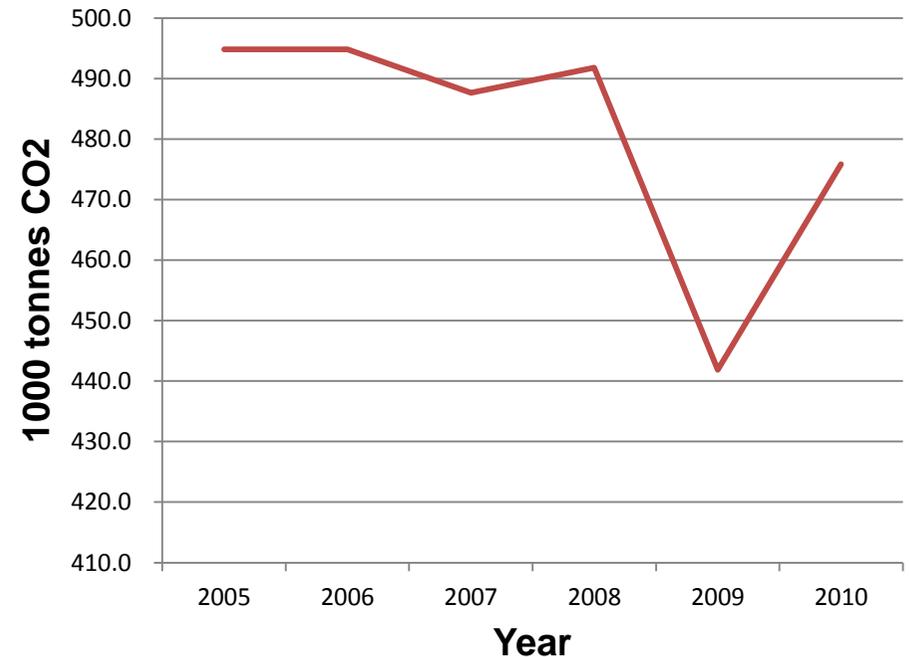
## Part 2: Our key objectives

### Our priorities

Our priority is to improve the energy efficiency of homes for low income, vulnerable households at risk of fuel poverty and ill health. We recognise the Council can play a positive role in advancing sustainability generally and we have a wider ambition to help reduce energy consumption across all homes in Hounslow.

The challenge moving forward is to introduce an energy efficiency programme through the government's Green Deal and ECO proposals that will secure investment to address some of the more difficult and costly to treat homes in the borough, which haven't benefited under previous energy efficiency programmes. Approximately 50% of homes in Hounslow have solid walls and are hard to treat. The current cost of solid wall insulation has prohibited large-scale roll out but subsidy from ECO offers a valuable opportunity to support more intensive delivery of this.

**Chart 2: Domestic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Hounslow 2005-2010**



Source: DECC, Local and regional CO<sub>2</sub> emissions estimates

## Part 3: Key investment opportunities and local initiatives

### Where do we go from here?

A range of drivers exist to help improve the energy efficiency of homes in Hounslow. This section sets out how the Council will take advantage of these drivers to stimulate retrofitting activity. The Green Deal and ECO offer new types of financial assistance for energy efficiency measures, making it easier and cheaper for householders to improve their homes. High uptake of these schemes will be important for achieving reductions in fuel poverty and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

### 3.1 Action Plan

Energy efficiency drivers	Actions	Timing
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Purchase EPC data</li><li>• Undertake a review of housing stock, using EPC data, to identify where significant opportunities lie across the borough for retrofitting activity.</li><li>• Use this information to liaise with ECO and potentially Green Deal funding providers to drive investment into the borough.</li></ul>	July 2013
Minimum standards in private rental accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the Green Deal and ECO through private rental schemes, landlord forums and enforcement action, using minimum standards to incentivise uptake.</li></ul>	2013 -2014

## Part 3: Key investment opportunities and local initiatives

Energy efficiency drivers	Actions	Timing
The Green Deal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure funding through the Department of Energy and Climate Change's local authority competition to deliver early actions to establish demand for the Green Deal. Use this scheme to trial area based promotion and identify Green Deal potential in typical housing types.</li> <li>• Create exemplar whole house retrofits to promote wider energy efficiency improvements linked to the Green Deal.</li> <li>• Identify long-term preferred approach to delivering the Green Deal in Hounslow.</li> <li>• Ensure that Council communication channels provide appropriate advice to householders on the Green Deal.</li> </ul>	May 2013 – March 2014
Energy Company Obligation (ECO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ECO eligible areas based on prevalence of solid wall properties and fuel poverty.</li> <li>• Engage an ECO delivery partner(s) to roll-out programmes in target areas.</li> <li>• Work closely with Hounslow Homes (ALMO) to identify and deliver maintenance and refurbishment measures to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Council's housing stock.</li> <li>• Enhance multi-agency referrals across Hounslow through the Better Homes, Better Health scheme making it easier for residents to obtain support through ECO affordable warmth.</li> </ul>	2013 - 2015
Zero Carbon Homes/ Carbon offset fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore establishing a framework for investing in CO<sub>2</sub> reduction projects from S106 contributions and allowable solutions by setting up a ring-fenced community energy fund.</li> </ul>	April 2014

## Part 3: Key investment opportunities and local initiatives

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify priorities for investment from the community energy fund.</li></ul>	
Smart Meters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with energy companies to identify opportunities for installation of Smart Meters and Smart Grids through ECO and other retrofitting programmes</li></ul>	2013 - 2014
Renewable Heat Incentive and Feed-in-Tariff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote Feed-in-Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive and other renewable energy schemes to households.</li><li>• Investigate opportunities for bulk PV/ renewable heat schemes for private and social housing</li></ul>	2013 - 2014

### 3.2 Monitoring

In order to ensure the effective delivery of the objectives and actions outlined in the table above, the Council will work with all relevant agencies and organisations to identify their contribution towards the progress of the actions.

Currently this report will be monitored annually. Given the pace of change within the wider social and economic context, the Further Report will be updated as necessary to reflect changing strategic priorities, and the Council will submit a progress report every two years in accordance with the DECC requirement, commencing 2015.

Signed off by Peter Matthew:



**Position: Assistant Director – Housing, Leisure and Public Health Services**

## Glossary of terms

Decent Homes	All property owned and managed by the council must meet the Decent Homes standard. To meet the standard, property must have reasonably modern facilities, be warm and weatherproof.
Energy Company Obligation (ECO)	The government recently introduced a new Energy Company Obligation (ECO) where it is possible to get financial help for energy efficiency improvements from national energy companies. ECO is aimed at funding measures for hard to treat properties and low income households for whom free energy improvements will help them heat their homes more affordably.
Green Deal	The Green Deal is a financing mechanism that lets people pay for energy-efficiency improvements through savings on their energy bills.
Fuel Poverty	A household is currently said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime (usually 21 degrees for the main living area, and 18 degrees for other occupied rooms).
Excess Winter Deaths	Excess winter deaths are defined as the difference between the number of deaths that occur in the winter months of December to March and the average number of deaths that occur in non-winter months.
Energy Performance Certificate	Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are needed whenever a property is built, sold or rented. An EPC contains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information about a property's energy use and typical energy costs</li> <li>• recommendations about how to reduce energy use and save money</li> </ul>