

**HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION ACT (HECA)  
EIGHTH PROGRESS REPORT (2004)  
Report by the Head of Environmental Health Services**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the content of the eighth annual progress report on Home Energy Efficiency.

**2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The annual report, attached as an annex, has to be submitted on a prescribed template to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), as part of the annual Housing Investment Programme (HIP) Returns via the Government Office for the East of England. The report charts the home energy efficiency improvements made during the 12-month period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 and also the overall improvements since 1 April 1996 when the HECA requirements became effective.
- 2.2 DEFRA originally required this report by 30 September 2004 and subsequently changed the reporting deadline to 30 October 2004.
- 2.3 In reviewing last year's report, the Secretary of State noted that the Council has made good progress towards the HECA targets and emphasised that he attaches great importance to the work and commitment made by the local authority in achieving its HECA strategy and demonstrated in the progress reports.

**3. EIGHTH PROGRESS REPORT**

- 3.1 This, the eighth HECA progress report covers the Council's activities and the partnership links established to promote energy efficiency. This report also addresses the actions in relation to affordable warmth from April 2003 to March 2004.
- 3.2 The methodology used to monitor our progress is set out in the report together with a description of the promotions, presentations and partnership work carried out during the year. An indication of the activities already planned up to the end of March 2005 are also included.
- 3.3 In the year 2000 the Secretary of State required a Fuel Poverty Report to be attached to the HECA report. An update to this Fuel Poverty Report is required annually. The update is presented as an appendix to the main report and describes our achievements, particularly:-
- The development of a partnership with the Cambridgeshire Constabulary's 'Bogus Callers Crime Prevention scheme so we can provide advice, grant information and low energy lamps to the public attending the roadshows.

- A partnership project with Enact Energy Management to provide easier access to energy efficiency grants via London Electric.
- Developing new links with Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust, as a key partner in tackling fuel poverty. For example providing an energy advice clinic in conjunction with the flu vaccination clinic.
- Maintaining strong links with the Powergen Warm Front Team, who manage the Government's Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, which gives us access to national publicity materials. The Powergen Warm Front Team assisted the Council with a mail shot to all recipients of council tax and/or housing benefit, which resulted in a significant increase in the number of households applying for and receiving assistance.
- Both Powergen and London Electricity have Energy Efficiency Commitment grant schemes, which we have accessed extensively for homeowners in the District.

3.4 The annual improvement in energy efficiency achieved in 2003/04 is 2.66%. The overall improvement in energy efficiency from April 1996 to March 2004 is 15.81%. Huntingdonshire District Council has been in the top 50% of the energy conservation authorities in the Eastern Region for the last two years. The results being reported this year should keep the authority in the top half.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is RECOMMENDED that:

- 4.1 the content of the attached report be approved by Cabinet; and
- 4.2 the Chief Executive be authorised to sign the report on behalf of the Council prior to its submission to DEFRA.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Previous annual HECA returns

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