

**Tackling Fuel Poverty:  
a Local Well Being Issue  
Report for Leicester 2000**

## **SECTION 1 - Leicester's Statement & Assessment**

### **1.0 Fuel Poverty Strategy**

**Objective**  
**A decent home within the reach of every citizen of Leicester**

**Key Objective 7**  
**To enable all households in the city to have access to affordable warmth and a healthy living environment.**

### **1.1 Definition of Fuel Poverty**

For the purposes of this report the following definition has been added to the definition provided by DETR in the Tackling Fuel Poverty guidance notes (page 4):

Fuel Poverty arises when people have insufficient income to heat their homes to a standard required for comfort. Factors influencing this are the condition of the home, its state of repair, the type of heating, the cost of energy and household income. Government figures estimate that 36% of households suffer some degree of fuel poverty with 20% households experiencing severe fuel poverty.

### **1.2 Assessing the Extent of Fuel Poverty – see also Appendix 1**

Fuel Poverty in Leicester has been assessed by referencing the GIS information available, which profiles the following characteristics:

- Income levels
- Location
- Older people (60+)
- Location + Ethnic Minority populations

Location has been allied with demographic information as it provides a profile of older people and ethnic minority populations where house types are such that achieving affordable warmth is problematic due to the age, built form and condition of the homes.

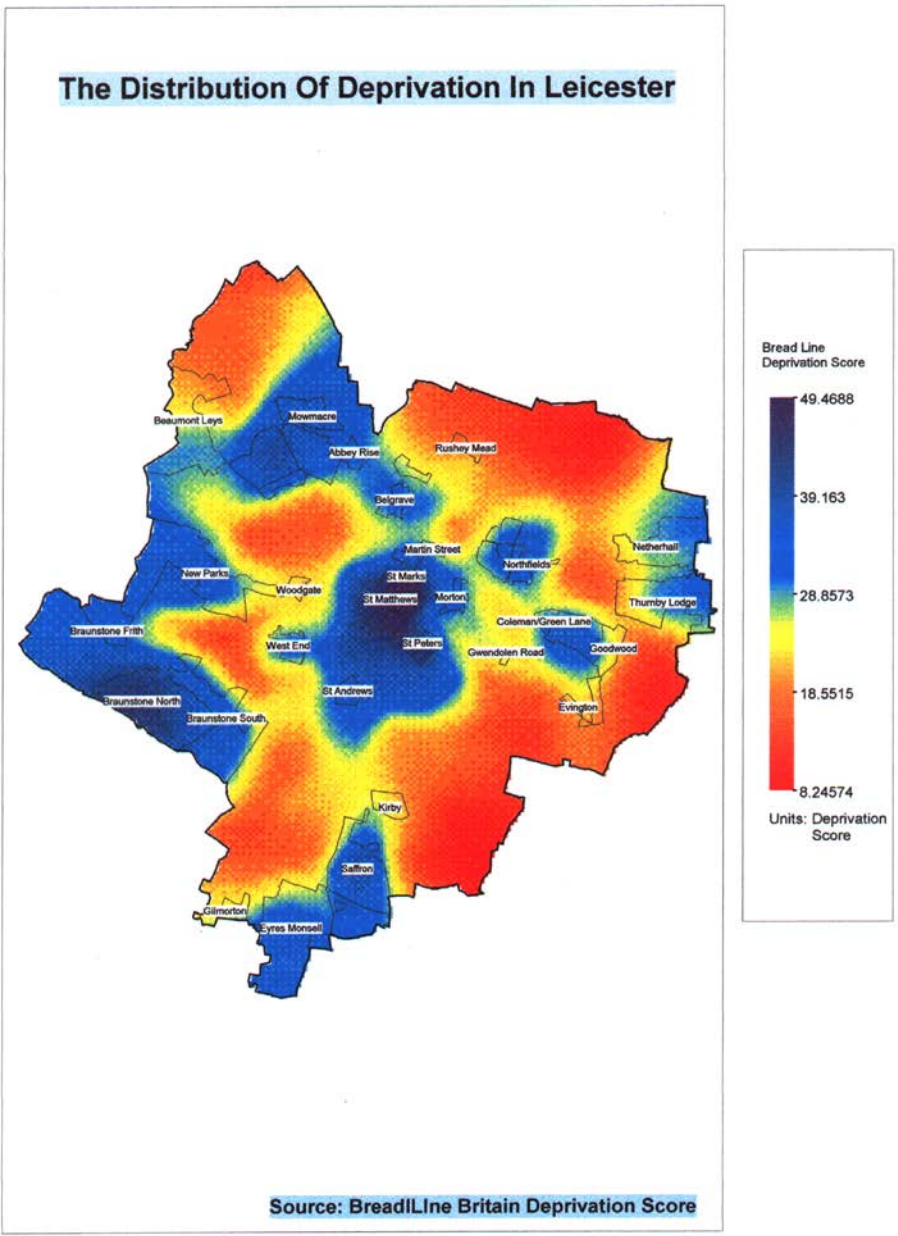
Older people, disabled people, households where some or all those resident are not employed outside the home and some ethnic minority communities, for cultural

reasons, are likely to have higher energy needs than the population as a whole and these characteristics are also reflected in the strategy.

This information, combined with income level data, has enabled us to concentrate grant aided energy efficiency measures to areas of greatest need.

A constant programme of home energy surveys provides detailed quantitative assessments of levels of fuel poverty and this detailed data is added to broader demographic trends to create an evolving fuel poverty profile.

### The Distribution Of Deprivation In Leicester



The deprivation map shows the average distribution of the 'Bread Line Britain Score' for each of the districts within Leicester. Six variables are used to produce the score:

1. Unemployment
2. lack of owner occupied accommodation
3. lack of car ownership
4. limiting long-term illness
5. lone parent households
6. low social classes.

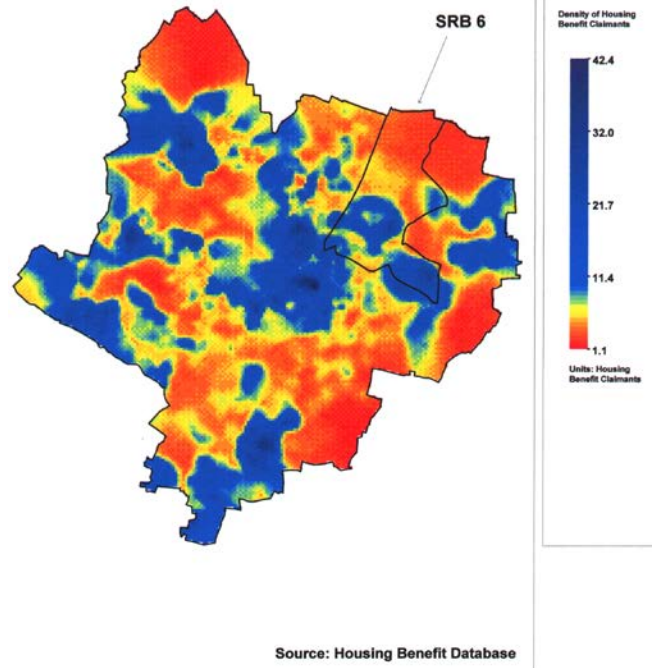
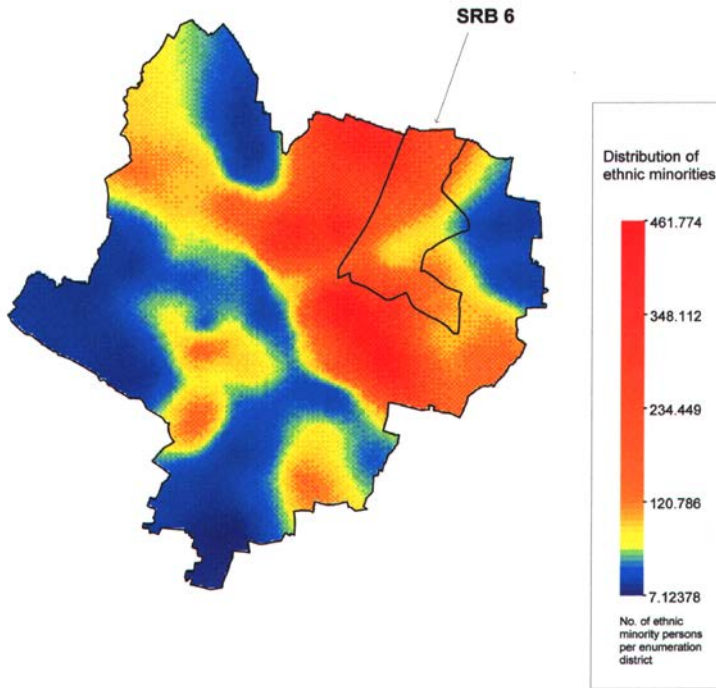
These six variables are then given individual weighting, and then totalled together to produce the index

As well as using standard indices of poverty to target resources, other measures have been identified that can identify concentrations of specific target groups. These groups can then be provided with information and schemes specifically designed to help them.

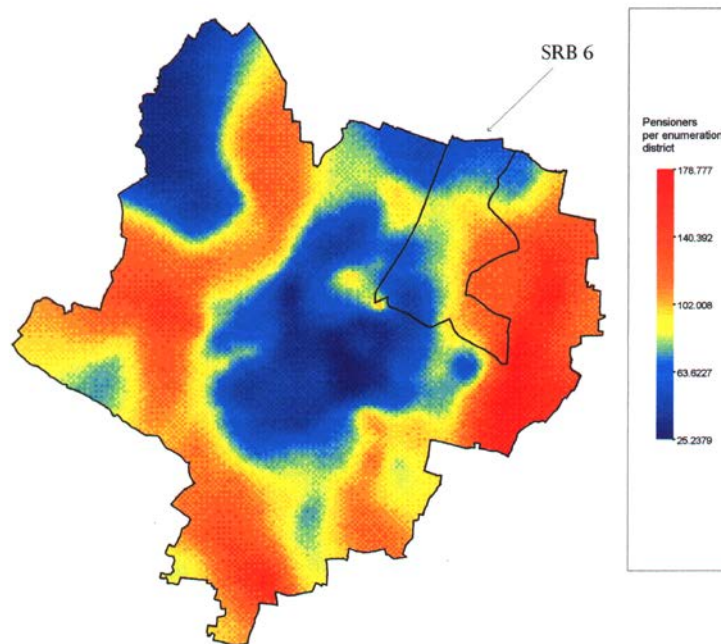
Examples of the area maps for such groups are shown below.

**The Distribution Of Ethnic Minorities In Leicester**

**The Density Of Housing Benefit Claimants In Leicester: 1999**



**Distribution of Persons Of Pensionable Age Across Leicester**



## **SECTION 2 – Approaches Used to Focus Assistance**

### **2.0. Fuel Poverty Strategy Work Programme**

#### **2.1. Home Energy Advice and Schedules**

##### **2.1.1. Housing Department**

A comprehensive Home Energy advice and information service is available to all households in the city and is marketed as "**Energy Sense**".

Energy Sense Discount Cards are made available to all households in the city and whilst fuel poor households are unable to invest in improvements the card acts as a gateway into a portfolio of grant aided schemes and home energy support services. (Please note: a demonstration card & the accompanying directory have been included with the HIP submission)



Home energy advice is offered to all fuel poor households, regardless of tenure, and is available in a number of formats including in homes, at customer service points, through community events and at a number of "open days" during the year.

The Home Energy Bus will be on the road in September 2000 and this will take a fully equipped mobile demonstration facility into neighbourhoods to provide locally relevant advice, information and access to grant aided improvements.

Information packs are available for all households and there are web sites that can be accessed through libraries with further information. The emphasis for the developing Home Energy Advice & Information Service has, and remains, to provide solution based services.

The local media continues to be supportive in raising awareness of the issues that impact on fuel poverty and promoting solutions - see Appendix 2.

##### **2.1.2. Leicester Energy Efficiency Advice Centre - LEEAC**

The energy efficiency centre relocated to new city centre shop front premises in February 1998.

Leicester's EEAC is the main EEAC for the East Midlands and now has 25 satellite EEACs across the region working with them. A synergy has developed between Leicester and the other local authorities which has resulted in sharing of work and ideas, which has resulted in increased productivity for all concerned.

Although the centre remains primarily an advice centre it now has a range of energy efficient products for sale at discounted prices to the public. The LEEAC also provides a referral point for fuel poor households into grant aided schemes operated internally to the local authority and externally.

The centre continues to promote national schemes such as the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (for insulation and heating works for low income households), the Fridge Savers scheme (for replacement fridges for low income households) and Energy Saving Trust cashbacks for insulation and heating

## **2.2 Health Action Zone - HAZ Innovation Fund**

### **Prescription for Healthy Homes Project - PPHP 3**

**Warm, Safe & Sound Project:** to provide a home energy, home security & hazard identification survey for referred households with access to grant aided, subsidised implementation of measures where appropriate. This project will be developed in partnership with private sector companies using existing best practice. The technical support officer will be trained to deliver surveys on all three aspects of the project at one visit to maximise the efficient use of resources and provide the most comprehensive service for customers.

**Warm Homes:** many people suffering from ill health have additional energy costs due to the need to stay warm, additional bathing requirements, running equipment and the simple additional expense of being confined to their homes for long periods of time. It is well known that many of these people will not be able to afford the cost of this additional energy and often lack effective heating systems.

This project will provide people with the technical advice and information that they need to achieve affordable warmth, use energy with maximum efficiency, select the best energy supplier for their needs and access high quality goods and services if they need to carry out any improvement work.

The project team will also give advice on creating a healthy internal air quality and will help low-income households identify available grant aid if improvements are required.

A referral mechanism will be established whereby health and social care providers can make direct referrals for this project through the HAZ Housing Team. Priority will be given to emergency cases in accordance with an agreed methodology.

## **2.3 Sure Start – project targeted at households with children under 5**

### **Safe and Healthy Homes**

Following the establishment of a partnership with Health professionals, Social Services and voluntary sector groups, which include the NSPCC and Home Start, a project has been approved to identify households with children under five who are experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, fuel poverty. A marketing strategy to raise

awareness of the issue will be launched in the Autumn and will focus on front line workers in the designated area and on vulnerable households.

Following a referral a full energy audit of the home will be carried out, a costed schedule of measures drawn up and sources of grant aid identified and secured.

Work to achieve an improvement in the energy efficiency of the home will be accompanied by personal energy advice, including advice on suppliers and payment methods, and this will be repeated at the onset of each subsequent heating season until the expiry of the project. The exit strategy for the project will seek to ensure that advice and support is sustained where households remain vulnerable.

## **2.4 Fuel Poverty amongst Ethnic Minority Communities**

### **2.4.1. Warm & Healthy Homes Project - see also Appendix 3 (NEA & Powergen)**

This project continues to work to identify and raise awareness of the issues that cause fuel poverty amongst ethnic minority communities. A comprehensive marketing strategy has involved publicity campaigns with the local media, including Asian radio and cable TV channels, and a calendar of events which includes open days, seminars, City & Guilds training courses, drop in clinics and attendance at community groups, clubs, area fora etc.

Work is also being carried out to ensure that ethnic minorities are not disadvantaged in accessing available sources of grant aid and other incentives to facilitate the provision of affordable warmth. Negotiations have been opened with the HEES managing agent and the new installers to ensure that information, advice and measures are promoted and carried out in an accessible, appropriate and sensitive manner.

## **2.5 Training & Awareness Raising**

### **2.5.1 Internal & External Training**

The Energy Awareness training, modules 1 & 2, are now part of the Housing Department's Training Programme for all staff. Fuel poverty is given particular priority within this training with support mechanisms available for front line staff. Additional work is required to market these courses outside the department and so contribute to raising awareness of the issues across the city.

Home Energy, which encompasses fuel poverty, is included as a module in the Introduction to Housing course attended by all City Council new starters, with priority afforded to Housing and Social Services employees. Additional training has been carried out with front line staff in Social Services, amongst health professionals and with voluntary sector groups.

City & Guilds Energy Awareness courses are offered across the city and are particularly targeted to members of ethnic minority groups.

Presentations, displays and practical assignments have been carried out in local schools and colleges targeted at particular age ranges.

Particular emphasis has been given in recent months to ensuring a wide dissemination of information and advice on the new HEES grants.

### **2.3.2 Partnership Working**

Progress has been made with health professionals in securing a wider acceptance of the role of the Home Energy Strategy in contributing to wider Social Care agendas. Work has begun to have the provision of a warm, well ventilated home included in a number of health initiatives including Hospital at Home Schemes. This work continues to be pursued with internal and external partners.

The Health & Housing Task Group, which is chaired by the HECA lead officer, has a number of representatives from voluntary sector groups and considerable progress has been made in raising awareness of fuel poverty issues. Work will continue to ensure that the most vulnerable can easily access advice, information and grant aid.

The School of Clinical Sciences at Leicester University has invited speakers to present to post graduate and undergraduate Medical Science students on housing and health issues and emphasis has been placed on fuel poverty. This work is likely to continue. Negotiations are in progress to extend the same service to Social Work and Health Service trainees at both the universities. It is hoped that this element of the fuel poverty strategy will result in a new generation of health and social care professionals with an awareness of fuel poverty as a contributor to poor health and social exclusion.

Work continues to engage the interest and support of private sector companies to enable grant monies for the fuel poor to be maximised through generous discounts for energy goods and services.

Home Energy Strategy officers continue to negotiate with energy suppliers to improve services to fuel poor households. This work is carried out in a local, regional and national context.

**Better Care: Higher Standards** documents highlight issues of fuel poverty and give clear guidance on how to access help and support. Please note a copy of this documentation is included with the HIP submission.

## **SECTION 3 - Fuel Poverty Activity Undertaken by the Authority**

### **3.1. Grant Aided Programmes**

#### **3.1.1. Housing Department Fuel Poverty Programmes**

The Housing Committee has continued to support schemes designed to alleviate fuel poverty amongst all households across all tenures. Work has been carried out



under the following initiatives since the introduction of HECA and all the programmes have been carried out with contributions from the Housing Investment Programme.

Unless indicated all these fuel poverty programmes remain in progress

- ◆ Housing Partnership Fund (1996-1997)
- ◆ Capital Receipts Initiative
- ◆ Capital Programme:
  - District Heating Programme (*55 homes in 1999-00*)
  - Boiler Replacement Programme (*1414 in 1999-00*)
  - Window Replacement Programme (*1198 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ Challenge Home Energy Efficiency Scheme Single Regeneration Budget (1997-2002) please note : includes grants to other RSLs (*151 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ Disabled Facility Grants - Home Energy Supplement (*123 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ Discretionary House Renovation Grants - Home Energy Supplement (*43 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ Home Repair Assistance - Home Energy Supplement (*190 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ Energy Saving Trust - Pensioners Energy Plan (*7 in 1999-00*)
- ◆ HECA Action - Energetic Homes Project (1998-99)
- ◆ European Union : SAVE 2 Domestic Energy Efficiency Project (1997-2000)
- ◆ European Union : ERDF Article 10 Project - Healthy Homes (1998-2000)
- ◆ Powergen & NEA : Warm & Healthy Homes Project (1999 - 2002)

### **3.2. New Housing Department Led Projects for 2000 +**

- ❖ Health Action Zone Innovation Fund –  
Warm, Safe & Healthy Homes Project (2000 - 2003)  
Total = £270,000 **see 2.2**
- ❖ Sure Start -  
Warm, Safe & Healthy Homes Project (1999 - 2002)  
Total = £115,000 **see 2.3**
- ❖ European Union : Altener 2/Cure Project - Solar Energy for Low Income Households - Pilot Project
- ❖ Transco Affordable Warmth Programme (under negotiation)

### **3.3 Standards of Performance (EeSoP)**

Free low energy lightbulbs have been widely distributed over the past three years through East Midlands Electricity (now Powergen) SoP schemes.

A number of Agencies received low energy light bulbs and these were distributed to low-income households, elderly people and disabled people in and around Leicester. A total of approximately 12,000 bulbs were distributed to over 6,000 households.

There has been a reluctance on the part of local energy suppliers to engage in more imaginative schemes, despite submissions from the local authority, and it is hoped that the new EESoP proposals, combined with the Social Action Plan, will facilitate more comprehensive solutions to the issues that impact on the fuel poor.

The Home Energy Office will continue to look at working on improving energy efficiency in Leicester using EESoP schemes as opportunities arise.

## **SECTION 4 - Integrating the New Home Energy Efficiency Scheme**

### **4.1. New HEES & HEES +**

Early contact has been made with Eastern HEES, the managing agent for the area, to ensure an appropriate marketing strategy and smooth referral mechanisms for Leicester's fuel-poor households.

Two members of Leicester's Home Energy Team have joined the HEES teams for the region.

A fast track referral system is being negotiated for emergency cases particularly where the existing housing conditions present a serious risk to the health of the household.

### **4.2 Specific projects - please see 2.2, 2.3, & 2.4.**

**Housing Benefit** recipients & new applicants in private sector accommodation will be targeted with a mail shot explaining the new schemes and encouraging them to contact the Home Energy Team for further information.

**Environmental Health Officers** are also being targeted for specific training.

### **4.3 Training & Awareness Raising - please see 2.3.1.**

Priority will continue to be given to promoting information about new HEES as widely as possible. **Service providers** will be accessed through workplace publications, items at team briefings and through the intranet.

A **Health & Housing Seminar** is planned for September 2000 as part of the programme of events leading up to the next heating season and a specific workshop outlining new HEES will be included. The regional managing agents and contractors have been invited to attend.

The marketing strategy under negotiation with Eastern will identify opportunities for direct household contacts in formats that will be universally accessible.

Information on new HEES is sign-posted in the recent **Better Care: Higher Standards** documents.

#### 4.4 Best Value Implications

Future work carried out to improve the energy efficiency of the local authority owned stock will contribute to the service delivery outcomes under BVP163 and BVP170.

Local performance indicators are being developed and strategies exist which acknowledge the need to alleviate fuel poverty, these include the City Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy (see appendix 4) and the issues that impact on the fuel poor will be included in the final draft of the Community Plan.

#### 5.0 Description of Appendices:

<b>Appendix 1</b>	SAP Values by Ward Case Studies x4
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Media coverage
<b>Appendix 3</b>	Warm & Healthy Homes Project (NEA/Powergen) further details
<b>Appendix 4</b>	Extract from L.C.C. Anti Poverty Strategy

For further information about this report, please contact:

[REDACTED]  
Community Services Manager  
Leicester City Council  
0116 [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]@leicester.gov.uk

## Appendix 1

Table of SAP values for households both before and after suggested energy efficiency improvements

Ward	Average SAP	
	Before Works	After Works
Abbey	46	
Aylestone	54*	77
Beaumont Leys	61	65
Belgrave	42	49
Castle	39	
Charnwood	45	47
Coleman	46	
Crown Hills	41	
East Knighton	36	
Evington	51	
Eyres Monsell	55	
Latimer	44	51
Mowmacre	51	
New Parks	45	
North Braunstone	52	
Rowley Fields	38	72
Rushey Mead	60	
Saffron	42	59
Spinney Hill	49	68
St. Augustine's	33	53
Stoneygate	42	
Thurncote	46	
West Humberstone	33	
West Knighton	46	52
Westcotes	51	71
Western Park	42	56
Wycliffe	48	63
<b>Total for Leicester</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>65</b>



\* Figures in dark green indicate insufficient numbers of surveys to be confident of an accurate average figure.

# Appendix 1

## Case Study 1

- Two adults and two children in the household.
- The heating was on for 5 hours during the week and 8 hours per day at the weekend during the winter.
- Heating set to 21°C and all rooms are normally heated.
- Estimated fuel costs per year: £715.

### Survey

- Pre 1900 mid-terrace owner-occupied house with a post 1990 extension.
- The original walls are solid – 225mm thick and the extension walls are 275mm thick with 50mm insulation.
- Double-glazed uPVC windows in the extension, original windows are wooden framed, single glazed with adequate draught proofing.
- There are some CFLs already in the house.
- The doors and loft hatch are draught proofed.
- Existing boiler (Glow Warm swift flow Combi) in good condition and working properly, with a programmer.
- Gas fires as a secondary heating system.
- 150mm insulation in the loft.

### Schedule of Works

Room Thermostat

5 TRVs

Heat Recovery Ventilation Fan to Kitchen

Heat Recovery Ventilation Fan to bathroom

4 Low Energy Light Bulbs

Owners Contribution

£237.43

Grant Amount

£712.28

**Total Cost of Works**

**£949.71**



	NHER	BEP Index	SAP	CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions
<b>Before</b>	4.6	58	44	7.3 tonnes / yr. (88.1 kg / sq. m. / yr.)
<b>After</b>	5.4	58	54	6.4 tonnes / yr. (77.2 kg / sq. m. / yr.)

**Fuel costs were down to £650 - a reduction of £65 per year**

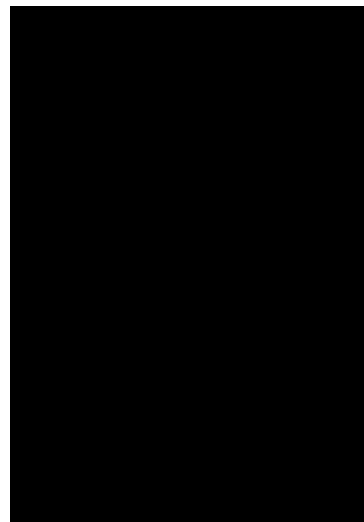
# Appendix 1

## Case Study 2

- Two householders over 60 years old
- Householders on means tested benefit and in poor health
- The heating is on for 12 hours a day during the winter at 20°C.
- Estimated fuel bills per year: £380 gas, and £240 electricity.

### Survey of house

- Owner occupied pre 1900, mid terrace house with an extension dating from 1982 – 1990.
- Original walls are 225mm thick solid construction and the extension walls are 275mm thick with 50mm of insulation.
- 125mm of insulation in the main roof and 300mm in the extension
- External doors and loft hatch are both draught proofed.
- Windows are wooden framed single glazed units with adequate draught proofing.
- Secondary heating is two gas fires (one located in the living room and the other in bedroom 1).
- The existing boiler (Myson Midas Combi) is approximately 12 years old.



### Schedule of Works

- One wireless room thermostat
- Gas Condensing Combi Boiler
- 7-day electronic programmer
- Installation of 5 TRVs
- Heat Recovery Ventilation Fan to kitchen
- Heat Recovery Ventilation Fan to bathroom
- Four Low Energy Light Bulbs



Owners Contribution	£814.37
Grant	£2231.61
<b>TOTAL COST OF WORKS</b>	<b>£3045.98</b>

	NHER	BEP Index	SAP	CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions
<b>Before</b>	4.3	55	43	7.6 tonnes/year (83.7 kg /sq.m. /yr.)
<b>After</b>	5.7	55	54	5.9 tonnes/year (65.0 kg /sq.m. /yr.)

**Fuel costs go down to £520 - a reduction of £100 per year**

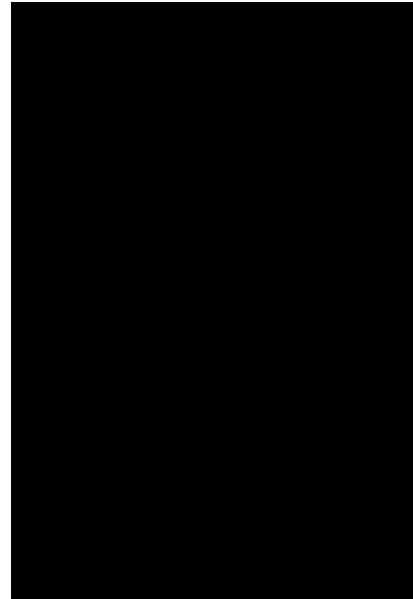
# Appendix 1

## Case Study 3

- Owner occupier
- Householder over 60 years old, lives alone
- Heat is set to 21°C for 12 hours every day during the winter.
- Annual fuel bills are: Gas £240, Electricity £84 (Should be a total of £490 to achieve full warmth)
- 'Much less than average' use of hot water, cooking and general appliances

### Survey of the House

- Pre 1900 mid terrace house
- Solid walls and floor are not insulated
- Pitched roof with 100mm insulation
- Doors and loft hatch are insulated
- Main heating system – gas fires in 2 rooms
- Secondary heating system – 2 fixed on-peak electric room heaters
- Hot Water supply from on-peak single immersion and a gas multi-point instantaneous heater.
- Hot Water Cylinder with independent programming and 50mm insulation
- Single glazed wooden framed louvered windows throughout.



### Schedule of Works

- Heat Recovery Fan to Kitchen
- Heat Recovery Fan to bathroom
- 100mm Loft Insulation
- Condensing Boiler
- New radiators with TRVs
- 7 Day programmer and room thermostat
- New pre-insulated hot water cylinder with thermostat
- Remove existing hot water heater and gas fire
- Low Energy Light Bulbs



Owners Contribution      £924.06  
 Grant Amount              £2772.18  
**Total Cost of Works      £3696.24**

	NHER	BEP Index	SAP	CO <sub>2</sub> Emissions
<b>Before</b>	5.7	64	47	5.6 tonnes/yr. (85.7 kg / sq. m. /yr.)
<b>After</b>	7.6	66	63	4.5 tonnes/yr. (68.6 kg / sq. m. /yr.)

**Fuel costs to achieve full warmth after works £340 - a reduction of £150 per year but a slight increase on current spending levels.**

The main difficulty is that as there is only a single pensioner living in the 3-bedroom pre-1919 property, it is unlikely that affordable warmth will ever be achieved, due to the limited income combined with the maximum energy efficiency improvements possible due to the design and age of the house.

# Appendix 1

## Case Study 4

- Owner occupiers
- 4 adults normally resident in the house
- Householders are not aged over 60 or on means tested benefit
- Heating is set to 21°C for 14 hours every day during the winter
- Annual fuel bills: Gas £870, Electricity £290
- 'More than average' use of hot water, cooking and general appliances

### Survey of House

- Pre 1900 End terrace house
- Solid walls, external doors and loft hatch are not insulated
- Pitched roof has 100mm insulation
- Suspended floor is not insulated
- Gas floor mounted boiler with programmer is over 25 years old
- Hot water is supplied from the main heating
- Hot water tank is not insulated and has no independent programmer or thermostat
- Single glazed timber framed windows throughout, with no draught proofing

### Schedule of Works

- Heat Recovery Fan to bathroom
- Heat Recovery Fan to Kitchen
- Draught proofing to doors and windows
- Loft Insulation
- Gas Condensing Boiler
- 9 New Radiators with TRVs
- 7 day programmer
- Pre-insulated cylinder.
- 4 Low Energy Light Bulbs



Occupiers contribution (25%)	£1110.12
Grant Aid (75%)	£3330.37
<b>Total Amount</b>	<b>£4440.49</b>

	<b>NHER</b>	<b>BEP Index</b>	<b>SAP</b>	<b>CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions</b>
<b>Before</b>	2.8	53	29	12.2 tonnes / yr. (121.6 kg / sq. m/yr.)
<b>After</b>	5.5	54	55	7.0 tonnes / yr. (69.8 kg / sq. m/yr.)

**Fuel costs after works after works £759 - a reduction of £400**

The reason for the unusually low NHER values and high fuel costs are due to the fact that the property is an end-terrace, and therefore has a much higher proportion of external walls.