



FUEL POVERTY APPROACH

2023

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Mid Devon Housing (MDH) is part of Mid Devon District Council (the Council). It is responsible for the Council's housing stock and is committed that everyone has the right to lawfully enjoy their home and local neighbourhood. It is committed to developing sustainable communities and helping tenants to retain safe and secure tenancies.
- 1.2 The government measurement of fuel poverty is the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator, which considers a household to be fuel poor if:
 - It has required fuel costs that are above the national median level;
 - Were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 This approach outlines the provisions that MDH will take to tackle fuel poverty affecting its customers
- 2.2 The Council, through the Housing Strategy 2021-2025, has committed to seek funding opportunities to improve energy efficiency of homes of all tenures in the borough and supporting landlords to meet minimum energy efficiency standards

3 Negative impacts of Fuel Poverty

- 3.1 There is a significant amount of evidence that shows a correlation between fuel poverty and consequences for physical, mental and social wellbeing and increasing demands on the NHS.
- 3.2 Living in excess cold leads to a higher risk of poor health outcomes, as well as increased morbidity and mortality. Reports suggest children living in cold homes are more than twice as likely to suffer from a range of respiratory problems compared to those living in warm homes and can suffer indirect negative effects on their educational attainment, emotional wellbeing and resilience.

4 Action MDH will take

- 4.1 MDH will maintain a register of its housing portfolio and identify those properties most at risk of fuel poverty
- 4.2 Eliminate E, F and G EPC rated social homes occupied by fuel poor households by 2025 and ensure all of its housing stock reaches an EPC rating of C by 2030, where practical, cost effective and affordable in line with national objectives (The Clean Growth Strategy)
- 4.3 Encourage the retrofit, refurbishment and update our existing private sector stock to a low carbon standard
- 4.4 Ensure 15% of our existing stock (2021 baseline) meets zero carbon standard by 2030 and all stock by 2050

- 4.5 100% of all new build Council homes to be net-carbon zero by 2025 and meet a defined comfort and energy use standard
- 4.6 Introduce targeted planned maintenance programmes to minimise fuel poverty
- 4.7 Raise awareness with staff and partners to identify those most at risk and provide targeted training so that issues can be raised with the appropriate bodies
- 4.8 If tenants disclose to Housing Management staff that they are experiencing financial issues and/ or fuel poverty, we will try to work collaboratively with them to signpost and refer to other agencies, as appropriate, and to help them to increase their income as much as possible by ensuring that they are claiming everything to which they are entitled
- 4.9 Signpost tenants to additional help and support available to them including but not limited to:
 - Energy Suppliers
 - Debt Advice providers
 - Energy Trusts and Charitable Sources
 - Exeter Community Energy

5 How will this be measured

- 5.1 MDH will monitor % of properties that meet defined zero-carbon and other standards (e.g. Passivhaus). 100% of all new build Council homes to be net-carbon zero by 2025 and meet a defined comfort and energy use standard
- 5.2 Retrofit, refurbish and update our existing stock to a zero carbon standard to ensure 15% of our existing stock (2021 baseline) meets zero carbon standard by 2030 and all stock by 2050. This can be delivered through capital works investment via the rolling 30-year Housing Revenue Account maintenance fund and through successful bids into national grant schemes (e.g. Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund) with off-setting if required
- 5.3 Encourage the retrofit, refurbishment and update our existing private sector stock to a low carbon standard. Support the delivery of the Energy Company Obligation – Flexibility Eligibility (ECO-Flex) scheme 2021-22 with a target of 250 Local Authority Declarations (LADs) annually. Support for/bids into other national schemes including; Home Upgrade (HUG) Schemes, Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) compliance and enforcement funding, as well as the Devon County Council Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme Local Authority Delivery Scheme round 3 (LAD 3)

6 Review and version control

- 6.1 MDH will review this approach every 5 years and as required to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues.
- 6.2 This approach was produced in 2023 and is version 1