



WARM HOMES PROSPEROUS LIVES

An Affordable Warmth Strategy for RCT



2025-2030

Delivering the priorities of the
Council's Housing Strategy

**PROSPEROUS HOMES,
PROSPEROUS LIVES**



RHONDDA CYNON TAF

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg
Mae croeso i chi gyfathrebu â ni yn y Gymraeg

This document is also available in Welsh
You are welcome to communicate with us in Welsh

FOREWORD

In Rhondda Cynon Taf, we recognise that a warm, energy-efficient home is not a luxury – it is a fundamental requirement for health, wellbeing, and human dignity. At a time when energy prices continue to rise and many of our homes face the challenges of outdated infrastructure, we are more committed than ever to ensuring that all residents can live in warm, safe, and affordable homes.



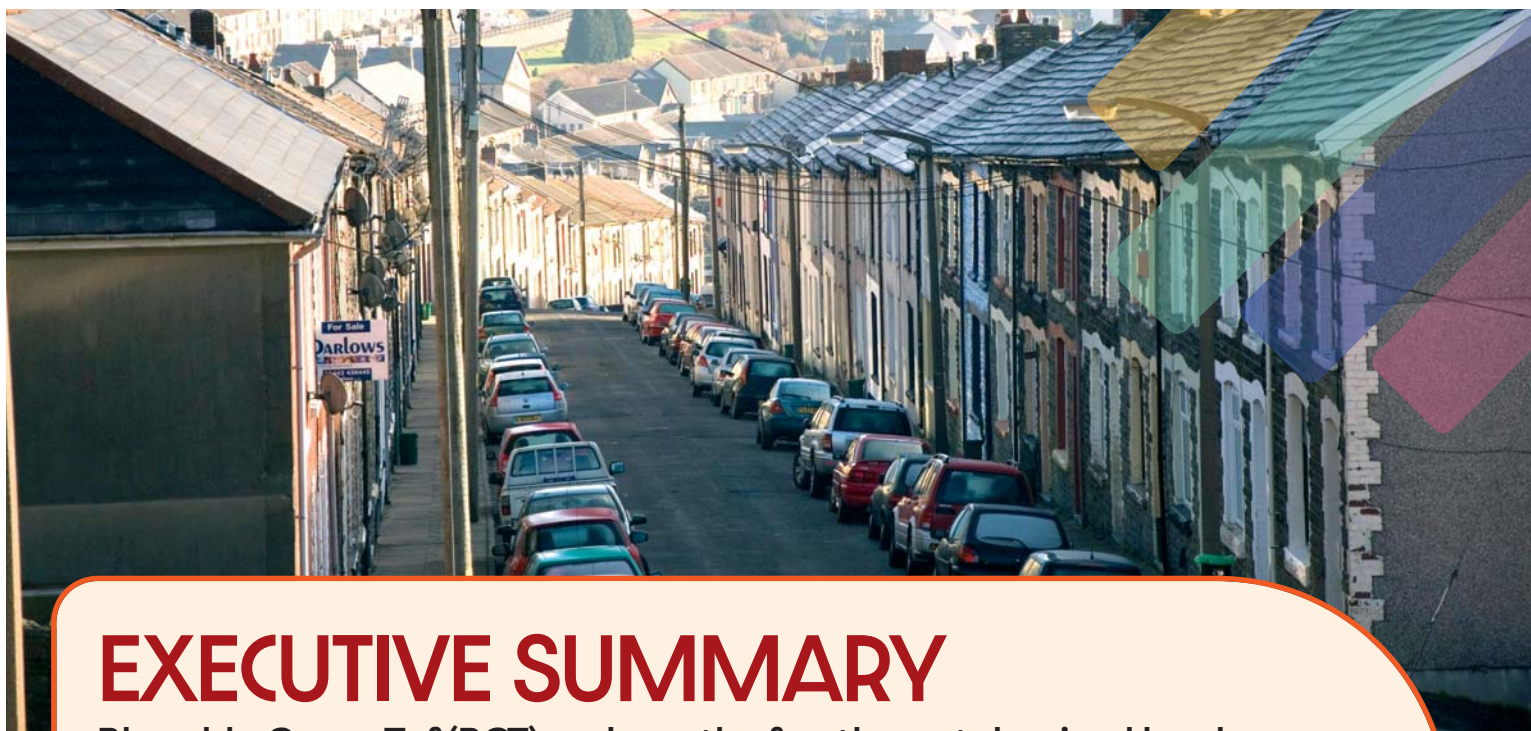
Our new Affordable Warmth Strategy builds on a strong foundation of collaborative action, innovation, and community engagement. The Council through its Heat & Save Service, along with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) has already delivered over 12,500 energy efficiency measures to more than 6,000 homes—ranging from insulation, heating upgrades to the installation of solar panels—helping households reduce energy costs, improve comfort, and lower carbon emissions.

This strategy outlines our forward direction through our four key strategic objectives and a clear vision going beyond bricks and mortar.

This strategy is a commitment to tackling the root causes of fuel poverty, supporting residents in vulnerable circumstances, and creating a future where no one has to choose between heating their home and meeting other essential needs.

Together, through shared purpose and sustained action, we can ensure that every household in Rhondda Cynon Taf has access to a warm, affordable, and sustainable home—now and for generations to come.

Councillor Mark Norris
Cabinet Member for
Prosperity and Development



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) ranks as the fourth most deprived local authority in Wales, with some of the most disadvantaged communities in the region. This situation poses a significant risk of fuel poverty for residents.

The type and construction of homes in RCT contribute to lower energy performance, with 65% of homes having Energy Performance Certificates rated as inefficient. Low-income or deprived households are unlikely to afford home improvements on their own, leading to poor conditions and energy inefficiency without intervention. Providing warm homes and helping households achieve affordable warmth mitigates fuel poverty and improves property conditions. Heat from homes contributes to 40% of Greenhouse Gas Emissions, impacting climate change. By delivering energy efficiency improvements to homes it will reduce carbon emissions and support the net zero agenda.

This Strategy outlines how the Council will work with partners over the next five years to deliver interventions that are required to remove households from fuel poverty and prevent households from falling into it.

Implementation of this Strategy relies upon robust collaborative working with partners, focusing on investing in the energy performance of existing housing stock and developing new energy efficient homes. The substantial investment needed will require innovation and creativity, utilising existing assets and attracting external investment from a range of sources such as UK Government's Energy Company Obligation, Welsh Government's Optimised Retrofit Programme and the Warm Homes Programme (Nest).

To achieve this, we have identified **four strategic objectives...**

- 1. SUPPORT RESIDENTS...**
to access free, impartial quality advice on all energy related matters.
- 2. IMPROVE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY...**
of homes across tenures to enhance thermal warmth and mitigate fuel poverty for residents.
- 3. FACILITATE THE TRANSITION...**
to decarbonised heating in homes as part of Government's Net Zero agenda, ensuring households are not adversely affected by fuel poverty.
- 4. WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A WIDE RANGE OF ORGANISATIONS...**
to ensure efforts to reduce fuel poverty are co-ordinated, holistic and responsive to the diverse needs of households.



INTRODUCTION

Fuel poverty remains a significant challenge in Wales, where many households struggle to afford adequate heating for their homes.

It is defined as the condition in which households need to spend more than 10% of their income (including housing benefit, income support for mortgage interest, or council tax benefits) to maintain a satisfactory heating regime.

Fuel poverty disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, including low-income households, people with disabilities, elderly individuals, and those living in poorly insulated or energy-inefficient homes. It is also estimated that 98% of lower income households in Wales were likely to be in fuel poverty, with 41% being in severe fuel poverty.

→ **Fuel Poverty in Wales - National Energy Action (NEA)**

www.nea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/NEAImpactReport2023-2024.pdf

In Wales, fuel poverty is driven by a combination of factors, including rising energy costs, inadequate household incomes, and the condition of housing stock. These factors are particularly pronounced in rural and isolated areas, where homes tend to be older and more difficult to heat. The consequences of fuel poverty are not just economic but also social and health-related, with impacts on physical and mental well-being, including increased risk of respiratory illnesses and stress related to financial insecurity.

OUR VISION...

To enable Residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) to live in warm, healthy homes that foster prosperous futures.

We aim to achieve this by supporting households that are in or at risk of fuel poverty, enhancing the thermal comfort and energy efficiency of their homes. The RCT Affordable Warmth Strategy outlines a plan for the Council to collaborate with partners at local, regional, and national levels to address the needs of RCT's residents and realise our vision over the next five years.



BACKGROUND

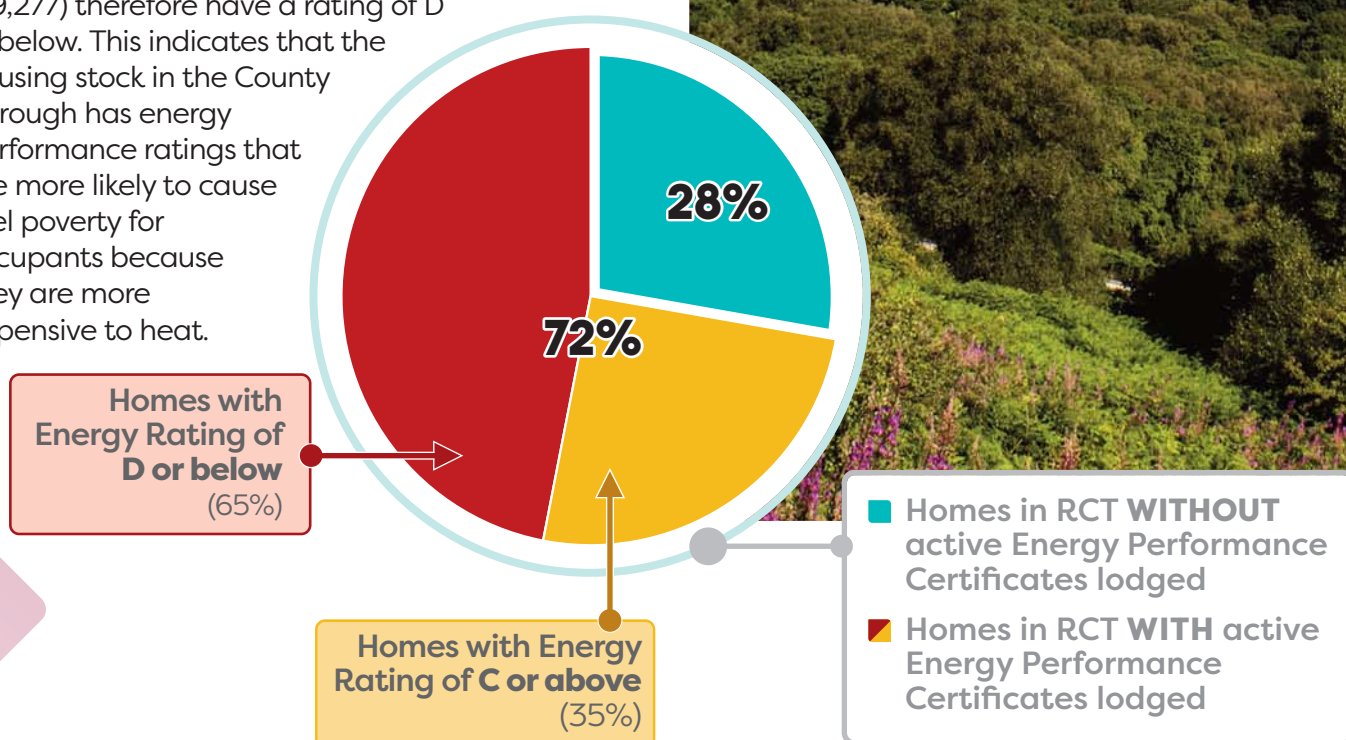
Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) is home to over 237,000 residents and spans an area of 424 square kilometres, extending from Bannau Brycheiniog in the north to the outskirts of Cardiff in the south.

The borough comprises 103,339 homes, with owner-occupied housing being the most prevalent tenure at 68% (70,271 homes), followed by private rentals at 18% (18,601 homes) and social rentals at 14% (14,467 homes) (Source: Census 2021). Although specific fuel poverty data for RCT is unavailable, the combination of housing types, deprivation levels, and energy performance of homes indicates a high risk of fuel poverty in many communities.

Energy Performance Certificates

Energy Performance Certificates provide a rating of A-G for homes and Government targets suggest that homes should reach a minimum of a C level. It is also generally accepted that homes with a C rating or higher pose a lower risk to fuel poverty for its occupants.

In RCT, there are a total of 74,744 active Energy Performance Certificates lodged (February 2025), approximately 72% of the total homes in the local authority. Of the 72%, only 35% of homes (25,467) have a rating of C or above, the remaining 65% (49,277) therefore have a rating of D or below. This indicates that the housing stock in the County Borough has energy performance ratings that are more likely to cause fuel poverty for occupants because they are more expensive to heat.



Air Source Heat Pumps

The Welsh Government's Heat Strategy 2024 emphasises that to achieve net zero by 2050, most homes in Wales will need to be heated by air source heat pumps. However, heat pumps are not always a viable solution due to various factors, such as the occupants' circumstances and suitability to the property itself.

For instance, some individuals may require higher indoor temperatures for health reasons or personal preference. Additionally, heat pumps operate more efficiently in well-insulated homes. In Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), the majority of homes are traditional stone-walled structures, making it challenging to provide technically suitable wall insulation without causing unintended consequences.

Heat pumps can be installed under Permitted Development Rights in Wales; however, this is not always feasible for terraced homes, which require full Planning Applications. This requirement, coupled with a lack of confidence in new energy measures, can deter the adoption of these technologies. Additionally, while electricity prices are higher than gas, switching a household's energy supply to electric, especially in an uninsulated home, can make the heat pump less efficient. This inefficiency can lead to higher energy bills, exacerbating or creating a risk of fuel poverty. Therefore, it is crucial that any heat decarbonisation approaches do not negatively impact fuel poverty. Affordable warmth is a necessity for general health and wellbeing, it is the ability to heat a home to an adequate level for comfort and health without leading to debt. A household that cannot achieve affordable warmth is fuel poor. Affordable warmth interventions aim to help people heat and power their homes efficiently and effectively, so they do not fall into fuel poverty and suffer from poor health that comes from a cold and damp home environment.



The ability to keeping a home “warm” is subject to a number of factors such as household income, energy prices, energy efficiency, quality and condition of the home, the occupant's energy demand needs and the comfort levels of the occupants (which vary due to health, age and other factors).

It is generally recognised that the following groups of people are at greatest risk of fuel poverty;

- **Low-income households**
- **Those living in homes built before 1964**
- **Those without access to main gas**
- **Those using pre-payment meters**
- **Homes with lower energy performance rating (particularly E rated and below)**
- **Elderly or disabled residents**
- **Young families**
- **People living with long term health problems particularly cardiovascular and respiratory conditions**
- **Anyone who spends a larger amount of their time at home and need to heat it for longer periods**

Within the definition of fuel poverty there are also households that either don't spend the required amount to meet the definition or stop their energy usage due to un-affordability which results in 'under heating' of homes to a comfortable standard. There are also households that under-heat due to large sums of energy debt and in worse cases also self-disconnect and are left with no energy supply at all.

In recent years, the scale of the challenge has intensified, with energy prices continuing to rise and the cost-of-living crisis putting additional strain on household budgets. Therefore, it is timely that a new Affordable Warmth Strategy is developed which sets out how, over the next 5 years, the Council will work with partners to reduce fuel poverty and support residents in RCT to live in warm, healthy and energy efficient homes. It is only by integrating affordable warmth issues with health and well-being that the desired outcomes can be achieved for our residents.

OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The previous strategy, 'Warmer Homes: A Fuel Poverty Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf 2019 – 2023,' was launched in 2019. Since its introduction, significant improvements have been made, as highlighted in the 'Key Achievements' section.



OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS TOGETHER, WE HAVE...

- Delivered over 12,500 energy efficiency improvement measures to more than 6,000 homes across RCT.
- Supported a total investment of approximately £36 million in homes through the Welsh Government's Arbed programme, RSL investment, and other external investments such as Optimised Retrofit Programmes, council capital grants, and SPF funding programmes.
- Provided potential financial savings for our residents totalling over £14 million.
- Achieved the highest number of referrals and actual installations for energy measures from the Welsh Government's Nest scheme across all local authorities, demonstrating a strong partnership approach to accessing external funding for residents.
- Continued to work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords to co-ordinate regional network meetings to share good practice and experience while also increasing collaboration opportunities for delivery of joint tenure, area-based schemes, which maximise funding opportunities.
- Delivered ECO 3 Flex and ECO 4 Flex Schemes, working with installers and approving over 150 homes to access external funding from energy suppliers under the UK Government's Energy Company Obligation.
- Delivered over 170 targeted energy efficiency grants, totalling approximately £800,000 of investment into Penrhiwceiber, by attracting funding from the Welsh Government's Arbed programme and the Council's Capital Grants Programme.
- Created and implemented an incentivised Solar PV grant to encourage RCT residents to install renewable technologies and improve their home's energy performance rating. This grant has delivered over 280 measures, including Solar PV and batteries, to homes while encouraging additional private investment from homeowners.
- Sourced £10,000 from Western Power's 'Community Matters' Fund and delivered a range of minor measures to homes, including draught-proofing through new doors, loft, and cavity wall insulation that would otherwise not have received assistance. This funding also provided training for staff on decarbonisation.

However, we recognise that there is always more to be achieved.



NATIONAL CONTEXT

UK GOVERNMENT

Energy Company Obligation (ECO)

The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is a government energy efficiency scheme designed to tackle fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions.

There have been four iterations of the scheme: ECO1; ECO2; ECO3 and currently ECO4.

The scheme imposes carbon reduction targets on energy suppliers, generating funding through marketplace installers to help households improve the energy performance of their homes. The current iteration of the scheme is divided into two parts, with overall targets split equally between them: 1) Home Heating Cost Reduction (HHCRO) and 2) Flexible Eligibility. HHCRO is delivered by installers in the marketplace and targets low-income households receiving means-tested benefits. Flexible Eligibility can be administered as Local Authority Flexible Eligibility (LA Flex) or Supplier Flexible Eligibility (Supplier Flex). This broader eligibility includes low-income households, health conditions, or other factors influencing fuel poverty. LA Flex is the most common form of delivery for this part of the scheme and is managed by local authorities under Ofgem guidance. Only local authorities delivering flex can attract funding into their areas.

Energy Performance Monitoring Reform

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) have been vital in promoting energy efficiency interventions.

They assess the values in financial cost savings that households could save through energy efficiency improvements and provides a rating of A (most efficient) to G (least efficient).

Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)

Government has made a commitment to consult on improving energy standards for private rented homes by 2030.

Currently, under the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES), all privately rented homes in England and Wales must have a minimum EPC rating of E.

WELSH GOVERNMENT

Welsh Government Fuel Poverty Plan 2021 – 2035

This plan sets targets for tackling fuel poverty, together with ten short term actions, to be delivered by the Welsh Government in partnership with key stakeholders.

→ www.gov.wales/tackling-fuel-poverty-2021-2035

Welsh Government's Heat Strategy for Wales 2024: The path to net zero heat in Wales by 2025 across all sectors

This Strategy sets out Welsh Government's approach to decarbonising space heating and hot water for buildings in Wales and high demand industrial heat. It sets a vision for clean, affordable heat and the path WG will need to take in the short to medium-long term to enable the vision with the main outcome being the installation of heat pumps to homes in Wales.

→ www.gov.wales/heat-strategy-wales

Warm Homes Programme

This programme is Welsh Government's key delivery mechanism to tackle fuel poverty in private rented and owner-occupied homes.

It provides free advice and energy efficiency measures to eligible households. A recent change to the programme has led to the introduction of a 'crisis' boiler grant for certain eligible households through the winter months, but the general package of measures is aimed at low carbon heating such as heat pumps.

Housing & Health Safety Rating System 2006 (HHSRS)

Both social and private landlords have a legislative responsibility to their tenants to provide a safe and warm home that is free from hazards such as excess cold, excess heat and/or damp and mould under the HHSRS.

Welsh Housing Quality Standard 2023 (WHQS)

The new WHQS standard 2023 applies to social rented homes, a new standard was implemented from 1st April 2024 and replaces the previous standard from 2002.

In the new standard there is more emphasis on energy performance of homes with a requirement of a minimum EPC A rating, with an interim standard of EPC C. It also specifies that carbon emissions from homes must be minimised to an Environmental Impact Rating (EIR) of 92 and the environmental impact of homes.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Tackling fuel poverty contributes to all of the 7 wellbeing goals of this Act.

Delivery of high quality advice services and energy efficiency schemes provides an opportunity to contribute to building prosperous and resilient communities, improving health and well-being of residents, regenerating communities and improving property conditions while reducing carbon emissions.

It requires an holistic approach from a range of partners and success cannot be achieved in isolation so collaboration of services is integral to mitigating fuel poverty and improving the well-being of the current population but also by improving property conditions and reducing carbon emissions will help future proof homes for the next generations.

LOCAL POLICY

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Corporate Plan **Working with our Communities 2024 – 2030**

This is the Council's key strategic document. It has four well-being objectives to help improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

These are:



PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

Supporting and empowering RCT residents and communities to live safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.



WORK & BUSINESS

Helping to strengthen and grow RCT's Economy.



NATURE & THE ENVIRONMENT

A green and clean RCT that improves and protects RCT's environment and nature.



CULTURE, HERITAGE & WELSH LANGUAGE

Recognising and celebrating RCT's past, present and future.

Whilst Housing cuts across all four of these strategic priorities, it contributes particularly to the 'People and Communities' objective by delivering the priority 'residents will have access to affordable good quality and energy efficient homes'.

→ www.rctcbc.gov.uk/councilcorporateplan

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council Housing Strategy

Prosperous Homes, Prosperous Lives 2024 – 2030

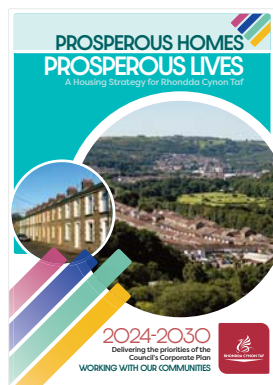
This strategy sets out how, over the next 5 years, the Council will work with partners to shape and deliver safe, quality, affordable housing and housing services.

Four objectives have been established within the Strategy. These are:

- 1. TO ENABLE...**
a functional housing market that meets the needs of our communities.
- 2. TO PROMOTE...**
sustainable communities and create homes that are safe, warm and healthy by improving housing conditions and investing in community regeneration.
- 3. TO ENABLE...**
access to all types of suitable and affordable housing that meets the needs of residents.
- 4. TO CREATE...**
prosperous communities by ensuring residents have access to housing advice and support that meets their needs.

This Affordable Warmth Strategy contributes particularly to objectives two and four.

→ www.rctcbc.gov.uk/HousingStrategies



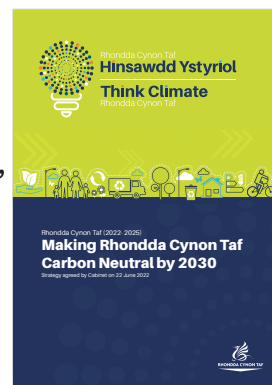
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Making RCT Carbon Neutral by 2030 (2022-2025)

This sets out the Council's ambition to use RCT's resources to generate green energy for use in local buildings, homes and to power electric vehicles.

This Strategy contributes to these objectives by providing advice and interventions to residents that help reduce energy use and improve energy performance within the domestic housing sector.

→ www.rctcbc.gov.uk/ClimateChangeRCT

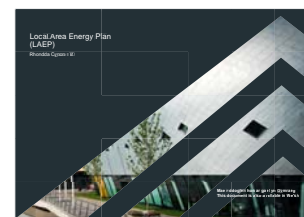


Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP)

This plan provides a regional vision for the ten local authorities that are part of Cardiff Capital Region, including RCTCBC outlining the transition to a zero carbon energy system by 2050.

The plan is a 'whole systems approach' considering the most effective solutions to the energy system primarily focusing on the built environment, including domestic housing along with non-domestic, commercial and industrial buildings, transportation and local energy networks needed to support this usage. This Strategy supports the delivery of these actions to the domestic housing sector in RCT.

→ www.rctcbc.gov.uk/LAEP



THE STRATEGY

The new Affordable Warmth Strategy outlines the Council's plan to collaborate with partners over the next five years to reduce fuel poverty and support residents of Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) in living in warm, healthy, and energy-efficient homes. By integrating affordable warmth initiatives with health and well-being efforts, we can achieve the desired outcomes for our residents.

To achieve our vision, four objectives have been established within the Strategy. These are:

1 SUPPORT RESIDENTS...

to access free, impartial quality advice on all energy related matters.

2 IMPROVE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY...

of homes across tenures to enhance thermal warmth and mitigate fuel poverty for residents.

3 FACILITATE THE TRANSITION...

to decarbonised heating in homes as part of Government's Net Zero agenda, ensuring households are not adversely affected by fuel poverty.

4 WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH A WIDE RANGE OF ORGANISATIONS...

to ensure efforts to reduce fuel poverty are co-ordinated, holistic and responsive to the diverse needs of households.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:

Support residents to access free, impartial, quality advice on all energy related matters.

Understanding all the factors that affect households in or at risk of fuel poverty is crucial for identifying and addressing the root causes. This approach helps to ‘future-proof’ households, making them more resilient to energy bill increases or changes in personal circumstances.

Providing advice and directing residents to other sources of assistance are key elements of a holistic approach to tackling fuel poverty. Accessing a variety of information enables households to make informed decisions about suitable options to reduce energy bills and demand by improving energy usage within homes. Consumer advice and advocacy play a crucial role in equipping residents to ensure the support they receive is appropriate and that they receive a fair and just service.

The manner in which advice and information are provided is crucial for helping people access available services and financial assistance. It is recognised that the terminology and complexities of schemes in the energy sector can be extremely convoluted and confusing for residents seeking help from grant-funded programs. A recent Tenant Participation Advisory Service report (Tenant Pulse on Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth, May 2024) highlighted that marketing and advertising terminology within the energy sector needs to be presented in a format that is relatable and understandable to the general public.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS...

- Continue to provide free, impartial, quality advice through the Councils Heat & Save Service, including signposting for residents for consumer advice on all energy related matters.
- Continue to provide advice and signposting on grant funding schemes, renewable/low carbon heating and other private investment i.e. Home Improvement Loans.
- Continue to provide advice and signposting to households for housing condition issues including potential hazards in the home.
- Provide targeted community engagement events offering advice for residents and where required make referrals to other agencies such as Social Services, Private Sector Housing Grants, Care & Repair and Citizens Advice.
- Signpost residents to other related services such as warm hubs, fuel vouchers and food banks in their communities.
- Deliver a wide range of advertising campaigns that foster community engagement to improve education of fuel poverty, utilising community-based platforms and channels to compliment digital or social media methods of advertising.
- Ensure that all marketing and promotional materials are easy to read and understandable to all.
- Provide advice to private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their rented homes and signpost to financial assistance available.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:

2 Improve the energy efficiency of homes across tenures to enhance thermal warmth and mitigate fuel poverty for residents.

Heat accounts for over 40% of energy consumption in homes. Making homes more energy efficient and cheaper to heat increases disposable income for the occupants.

Although private and public grant funding, along with loans, can be sourced for certain energy measures, gaps in eligibility and funding still leave many homes unable to afford these improvements. Therefore, a strategic approach to delivery is essential to secure the best deals, combine funding streams, and prioritise the order in which schemes are accessed to maximise outcomes and meet local needs.

Enhancing the energy performance of homes contributes to the broader decarbonisation and net zero agendas while also improving housing conditions in the area. Financial assistance through grants and loans will continue to be sought to help households afford energy measures for their homes. Additionally, further opportunities will be explored for blending funding and seeking other sources of assistance to support enabling works and improve property conditions, promoting suitable installations in homes across the County Borough.



HOW WILL WE DO THIS...

- Strategically plan and deliver energy efficiency grant funded schemes that mitigate fuel poverty and promote warmer homes.
- Support homeowners to meet costs of minor repairs or enabling works to their home to maintain or improve warmth and/or energy efficiency by offering grants such as the Minor Heat and Save Assistance grant.
- Deliver, monitor and evaluate the RCT Heating grant in order to make homes more energy efficient and reduce bills for residents.
- Deliver, monitor, and evaluate the RCT Solar Panel grant in order to make homes more energy efficient and reduce bills for residents.
- Continue to enable the delivery of external grant funded schemes (i.e. WG Warm Homes Programme, ECO 4 Flex).
- Ensure that council funded grant schemes help to promote whole house retrofitting that supports a 'fabric first' approach (where possible), particularly for those wishing to install heat pumps.
- Provide signposting for residents to access advice and financial assistance to install renewable energy technologies within homes.
- Support partners to deliver community engagement events and marketing campaigns to encourage residents to access financial assistance for energy efficiency improvements in their homes i.e. Welsh Government's Nest Scheme.
- Identify options to support households that are unable to receive heat pumps due to property or occupant unsuitability or where they may cause a greater risk of fuel poverty.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

Facilitate the transition to decarbonisation heating in homes as part of Government's Net Zero agenda, ensuring households are not adversely affected by fuel poverty.

Delivering services and interventions that help households reduce energy demand and improve the energy performance of homes also supports the achievement of net zero objectives by reducing carbon emissions. Additionally, it promotes the decarbonisation of home heating by encouraging the installation of renewable heating sources, such as air source heat pumps, instead of traditional fossil fuel options like gas boilers.

However, heat pumps may not be suitable for all homes due to various factors, including the occupants' circumstances, current Permitted Development Rights, and whether the property is insulated. During this interim transition period, it is important to explore other options that continue to support households affected by fuel poverty on their journey to net zero. These options may include gas boiler upgrades until external factors, such as the higher cost of electricity compared to gas, are addressed.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS...

- Provide advice and signposting to promote heat decarbonisation options for households to reduce their carbon footprint at home.
- Continue to review external research such as Nesta on use of low carbon technologies to ensure that measures offered through funded or enabled schemes are fit for purpose and meet resident's needs.
- Seek funding opportunities to deliver grant schemes for decarbonised heating options and other renewable energy technologies.
- Explore opportunities for affordability and security of energy supply including community-based energy supply models and/or renewable energy sources by working collaboratively with partners through delivery of the Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP).



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

4 Work in partnership with a wide range of organisations to ensure efforts to reduce fuel poverty are coordinated, holistic and responsive to the diverse needs of households in poverty.

Tackling fuel poverty requires a holistic approach, considering co-morbidity factors such as health issues, energy debts, and lack of access to other services and support.

To mitigate the risk of persistent or recurring fuel poverty, households need access to appropriate financial assistance, along with proper advice and signposting. This necessitates a collaborative effort from various organisations.

HOW WILL WE DO THIS...

- Work with the Local Health Board to ensure vulnerable residents with critical health illnesses are referred to the Councils' Heat & Save team so that they can be supported to access funding to make their home more energy efficient and save money on bills.
- Continue to facilitate the Registered Social Landlord housing energy group to ensure joint working and sharing of good practice such as exploring innovative ways of decarbonising housing stock.
- Continue to engage with Private Landlords through the RCT's Landlord Forum by providing advice and signposting to grant assistance that helps improve the energy performance of their rented homes.
- Continue to work with the Third Sector to provide energy related support and grants.
- Establish an RCT Technical panel of Housing Strategy/Heat & Save, Grants and Building Control officers to review and determine appropriate interventions suitable to the housing stock in RCT.



MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Delivering on the 4 objectives, we aim to achieve the following outcomes:



1

By supporting residents to access free, impartial, quality advice on all energy related matters.

We aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- More residents receiving financial assistance to help make their homes more energy efficient.
- Increase support for residents to access other services that help reduce energy debt.
- That the information and advice provided will be fit for purpose using user friendly terminology that simplifies how energy matters are currently communicated.

2

By improving the energy efficiency of homes across tenures to enhance thermal warmth, and mitigate fuel poverty for residents.

We aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Reduce energy bills for residents.
- Increase the number of warmer and more energy efficiency homes.
- Improve the standards of existing housing stock.
- Attract external investment into the County Borough by enabling delivery of externally funded energy schemes to maximise investment into the housing stock in RCT.

3

By supporting the transition to Net Zero / decarbonising heat.

We aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Increase awareness of renewable energy technologies available so that residents can make an informed choice.
- Increase the number of low carbon heating installations within homes.
- Reduce carbon emissions from domestic homes.

4

By working in partnership.

We aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Develop and deliver collaborative interventions with health services (Local Health Board) to reduce numbers of residents with health conditions living in cold homes.
- Increase awareness, and work collaboratively with Registered Social Landlords creating opportunities for cross tenure area based projects/programmes.
- Increase the delivery of area-based, cross tenure interventions by working with both private and social landlords.



MAKING IT HAPPEN!

This Strategy outlines the Council's Housing Strategy, 'Prosperous Homes, Prosperous Lives 2024-2030,' focusing on achieving objectives two and four:

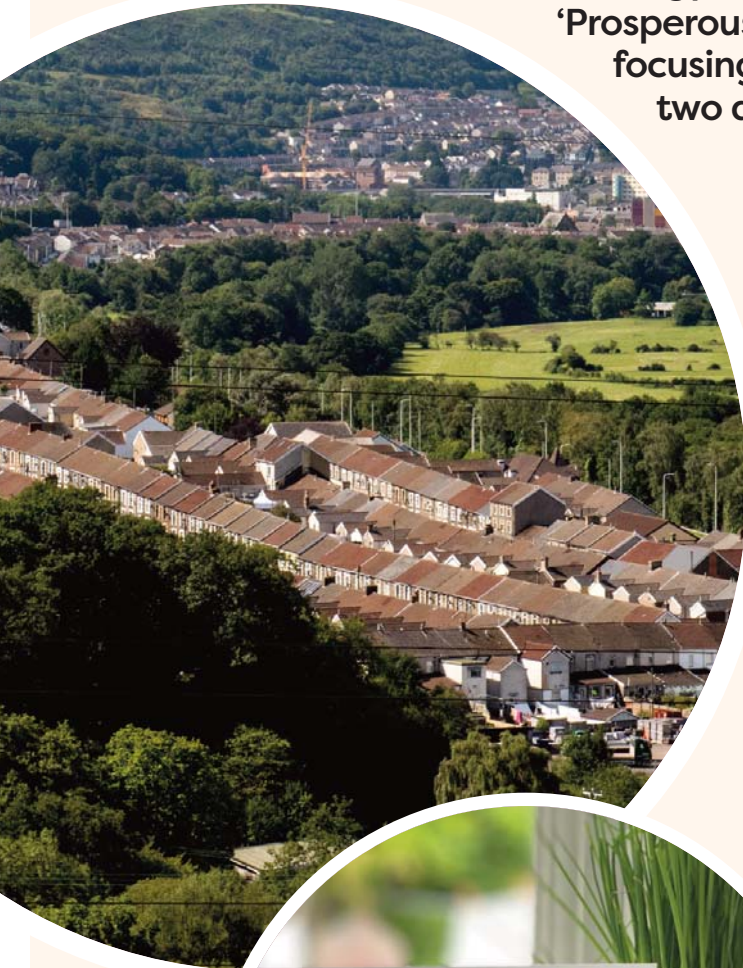
PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES...

by creating homes that are safe, warm, and healthy through improved housing conditions and community regeneration.

CREATE PROSPEROUS COMMUNITIES...

by ensuring residents have access to housing advice and support tailored to their needs.

Achieving these objectives requires substantial resources for both advisory services and direct investment in housing stock. The Council will leverage its leadership and coordination roles to work with partners, bringing together funding options and programmes to maximise investment in RCT.



The Strategy aligns with the Welsh Government's Sustainable Development approach, incorporating the 'five ways of working':

1. INVOLVEMENT:

Tackling fuel poverty necessitates diverse services and interventions. The Strategy will coordinate these services to ensure collaborative delivery, enhancing success rates. Partners will monitor the Strategy to ensure key objectives and milestones are met.

2. LONG-TERM:

The Strategy outlines a five-year plan to mitigate the impacts of fuel poverty, detailing how strategic objectives will be achieved. It also supports long-term planning towards net zero by facilitating the transition to decarbonised heating.

3. PREVENTION:

The Strategy aims to prevent fuel poverty by enhancing household resilience to future energy bill increases and improving home energy performance and conditions. It provides a framework for targeted future investments to address current and future challenges.

4. INTEGRATION:

The Strategy aligns with both corporate and national priorities to improve home conditions and mitigate fuel poverty risks. It offers a framework to achieve these priorities at a local level.

5. COLLABORATION:

The Strategy promotes a collaborative approach, reflecting the Council's commitment to working with public, private, and third-sector partners.

Monitoring reports will capture quarterly and annual performance, contributing to national performance indicators and delivery plans.

Evaluations of interventions will measure their impact on residents' lives, informing and shaping future interventions to ensure they remain effective and meet residents' needs.

The Strategy and how we deliver it will be reviewed in line with the work of the RCT Health Determinants Research Collaboration (HDRC), that supports the Council to use the best available evidence to make decisions about its services.

