

Factsheet 10

Stay Warm and Cosy

What is the Stay Warm and Cosy Initiative?

The Council wants to reduce fuel poverty and CO² emissions and has therefore combined the expertise within its Housing and Sustainability Teams to deliver the Stay Warm and Cosy initiative.

The Council is offering households a free energy efficiency survey of their home. The survey will take about an hour and will look at the type of construction, the number of rooms, the type of heating and hot water system and when installed, the type of fuel used, the amount of insulation and the type of windows. This information will be used to produce a report which will tell the householder how energy efficient their home is and what they can do to improve its energy efficiency.

This information will be used alongside other information about the household including the number of people in the household, their ages and benefits received to provide personalised advice to help them improve the energy efficiency of their home and reduce their fuel bills. We will send this information to the householder or re-visit to talk through the actions that they can take.

What advice can we provide?

- Simple things that can be done to reduce fuel bills including switching off lights, switching off appliances when not in use, using energy saving light bulbs and using lower temperature settings to wash clothes
- How to use heating controls to achieve maximum efficiency
- How to read meters and fuel bills to know how much is being charged so that households can shop around for cheaper fuel and switch suppliers
- How much insulation is in place and how much is needed to maximize the energy efficiency of a property
- Grants available for insulation and new heating systems or boiler replacement
- Suppliers who provide insulation at a discount
- The latest Government initiatives including Feed in Tariff and Renewable Heat Incentive and the soon to come Green Deal
- How to get help with debt.

How will we get the message out to residents?

We are sending out a letter to residents across the district inviting them to have the free survey. We started in Stalham which has been identified as one of the areas with the

highest levels of fuel poverty, firstly we sent the letter to residents in receipt of income related benefits and secondly to residents in receipt of other benefits. We have recently moved on to repeat this exercise in Cromer another area with high levels of fuel poverty. We will continue to move around the district until we have covered all areas and then we will return to each of the areas and invite residents not on benefits to have the free survey.

The initial response rate from the letter has been low but we are finding that we are receiving requests for the free survey from residents who have heard about the initiative from other residents on recommendation. We also intend to send a letter out to all district councilors and parish councilors and other stakeholders and expect that we will receive referrals through these channels. We are also promoting the initiative through the Council's Outlook magazine.

What is fuel poverty?

Fuel poverty is when a household has to spend more than 10% of its disposable income to heat their property to an adequate standard of warmth (18-21°C). This will vary depending upon the income of the household, the cost of energy and the amount of energy needed to achieve an adequate standard of warmth and occupation of the property.

The Government uses the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP), the methodology for calculating energy performance of a property as a proxy measure of fuel poverty. The rating is expressed on a scale of 1 to 100 with the higher the number the greater the energy efficiency. Properties with a SAP rating of 65 are generally considered to be protected from fuel poverty. The average SAP rating in North Norfolk is 59

East of England Fuel Poverty Declaration

At the Full Council meeting on 14 December 2010, the leader of the council signed the East of England Fuel Poverty declaration on behalf of the council. This commits the council to:

- consider affordable warmth when developing policy and practice based interventions
- work in partnership to implement effective affordable warmth solutions for households
- support the development and adoption of practical actions that will assist households to achieve affordable warmth
- employ low carbon affordable warm solutions where these are advantageous to the household.

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