

The role of an advice infrastructure in the co-ordination and delivery of energy efficiency activity

Colin Timmins and Philip Ivey
The Energy Saving Trust
21 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BP
phillipi@est.co.uk and colint@est.co.uk

Keywords

local support, community, local authorities / government, Home Energy Conservation Act, partnerships, energy projects, local strategies, Energy Efficiency Advice Centres, network development

Abstract

This paper looks at the development and results of two Energy Saving Trust initiatives: the Energy Efficiency Advice Network and the Local Authority Support Programme.

In the UK local authorities have the responsibility to develop plans to reduce energy consumption in all homes and to eradicate fuel poverty under the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA). However, local authorities have no additional funding to help them, and many are struggling to achieve the government targets.

The Energy Efficiency Advice Network of the Energy Saving Trust has evolved into a network of 52 Advice Centres covering the whole of the United Kingdom. How it developed and expanded to deliver a cost-effective and efficient network is explored in this paper.

The Local Authority Support Programme was developed to see if local endorsement and delivery of energy efficiency makes a difference to the activity of local authorities, and their residents. The Local Authority Support Programme is a new initiative from Energy Saving Trust aimed at providing practical support to groups of local authorities, at a local level, to help them meet their Home Energy Conservation Act targets. Two dedicated members of staff are funded by the Energy Saving Trust to work in each of 23 Energy Efficiency Advice Centres (each Advice Centre covers approximately a county sized area, and around 500 000 households).

In total the Local Authority Support Programme now covers over 47% of the United Kingdom.

Ongoing research shows that local authorities appreciate the support they get from the local authority Support teams, but is this programme really making a difference to the level of activity undertaken by local authorities?

This paper looks at the lessons learnt so far, and discusses whether the programme goes far enough to help deliver UK targets, and looks at practise that could be applied in other European countries.

Introduction

Much of the United Kingdom housing stock is poorly insulated, as a result it is very inefficient to heat and keep warm, and almost 60 percent of energy used in homes is spent on space heating. With nearly 25 million households the domestic sector uses up to 30 percent of all energy used in the United Kingdom. In order to achieve significant reductions in energy consumption the domestic sector's energy efficiency needs to be dramatically improved.

Local authorities in the United Kingdom have the infrastructure and powers to influence changes in householder behaviour. Unfortunately due to budget constraints and other local priorities energy efficiency is not afforded the attention it deserves in order to achieve targets set by the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995.

The Energy Saving Trust set up a network of Energy Efficiency Advice Centres to give energy efficiency advice directly to domestic consumers. This network supports local authorities activities, not only by giving advice to customers in their areas, but also by running programmes and gather-

Table 1. Potential energy savings by measure in the domestic sector in the United Kingdom (EST, 1997).

Measure	Potential (000s h'holds)	Total Projected installations less 1998-2000 figures (000s h'holds)		Annual Energy Saved by 2010 (PJ)
Loft insulation	7 500	4 840	81.0%	26
Cavity wall insulation	9 000	4 699	87.1%	98
Double glazing	10 500	6 324	74.1%	36
Low emissivity glass	20 000	8 664	89.0%	16
Tank/pipe insulation	9 000	5 070	84.2%	20
Condensing boilers	15 700	4 156	94.4%	62
Lighting (CFLs)*	55 200	29 530	84.0%	15
Freezers	8 140	6 093	94.9%	8
Fridge-freezers	10 100	8 001	91.4%	11
Controls	7 000	2 662	90.1%	22
TOTAL				316

ing data for their annual reports to the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. This network has evolved since its inception in 1993 and is due to be reviewed and restructured during 2003 and 2004.

The Energy Efficiency Advice Centre network provided a useful platform from which to deliver the Local Authority Support Programme. In order to encourage local authorities to realise the synergies between energy efficiency and other priorities such as social services, health, housing and planning, the Energy Saving Trust has employed additional staff at the Advice Centres to develop, together with local authorities, energy efficiency and sustainable energy strategies. The success of this programme is reviewed and how to develop it further is explored.

Background

HOUSING IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Spring Census 2001 reported just over 25 million households in the United Kingdom and it was estimated that 92 percent of these had central heating (National Statistics). Of these dwellings 75 percent are occupied by the owner, 16 percent owned by local authorities, the remainder are either rented privately or belong to registered social landlords (DTI, 1997).

It was estimated that the domestic sector in the United Kingdom was responsible for use of 30 percent of the total energy (7 100 PJ) consumed in 1996 (DTI, 1997). The bulk of the energy used in the domestic sector is for space heating (57 percent of energy consumption), thus the scope for greatest improvement in energy efficiency is in improved insulation and efficient heating systems (DTI, 1997). The Energy Saving Trust identified potential savings of 316 PJ in the domestic sector through installation of cost-effective measures (see Table 1).

The majority of these cost-effective measures could be installed in either private owner occupied homes or in local authority owned homes. If all the measures listed in Table 1 were to be installed in all suitable homes across the United Kingdom this would result in a saving of 15 percent of all energy used in the domestic sector, a further 15 percent could be saved if less cost-effective measures were installed such as under-floor insulation and solid wall insulation.

The responsibility for installing these measures rests with the owner of the property. As the majority of homes are either privately owned or owned by local authorities, it makes good sense to focus efforts at a local level to encourage owners to improve the energy efficiency of their properties.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities in England and Wales are responsible for the delivery of a number of major services including amongst others: education, social services, planning, waste collection and disposal, housing and environmental health. They are responsible for spending around a quarter of the public budget (106 billion Euro). The social services departments in England and Wales have responsibility for supporting over 600 000 elderly people and this accounts for 18.2 billion Euro. Many of these elderly people would be worst affected by poor conditions of housing and the cold climate. The combined housing budget of local authorities in England and Wales amounts 18.2 billion Euro and includes some 3.5 million households (Local Government Association, undated).

There are 410 local authorities in England and Wales, 32 in Scotland and 26 in Northern Ireland. Of these local authorities 409 are classified as Energy Conservation Authorities. In Northern Ireland, local authorities do not have responsibility for housing and as such are not classified as Energy Conservation Authorities. The Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 obliged Energy Conservation Authorities to report on energy conservation measures to improve residential energy efficiency by 30% by 2010.

The significant drawback of this act is that all it requires is an annual report from each Energy Conservation Authority on their progress against their identified measures and does not enforce them to deliver on the plans. *'There is a widespread recognition that the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995 (HECA) is bureaucratic in nature and does not achieve its intended purpose. The annual reporting procedure has been particularly criticised in this respect, and considerable doubt has been cast upon its demands on local authority officer time, and the lack of comparability between authorities which is possible. This is a view shared widely, even by those who criticise councils for not achieving sufficiently within the terms of the legislation. The lack of adequate funding is widely accepted as a principal underlying reason'* (Local Government Association, 2001). Unfortunately there is

2. Energy conservation reports.

- (1) *It shall be the duty of every energy conservation authority to prepare a report in accordance with this section.*
 - (2) *The report shall set out energy conservation measures that the authority considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in its area.*
 - (3) *The report shall include—*
 - (a) *an assessment of the cost of the energy conservation measures set out in it;*
 - (b) *an assessment of the extent to which carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere would be decreased as a result of those measures; and*
 - (c) *a statement of any policy of the authority for taking into account, in deciding whether to exercise any power in connection with those measures, the personal circumstances of any person.*
- Nothing in this subsection shall be taken as requiring the authority to set out in the report energy conservation measures to be taken in relation to any particular dwelling or building.*
- (4) *The report may, if the energy conservation authority considers it desirable, include—*
 - (a) *an assessment of the extent of decreases in emissions into the atmosphere of oxides of nitrogen and sulphur dioxide which would result from the implementation of the measures set out in the report;*
 - (b) *an assessment of the number of jobs which would result from the implementation of those measures;*
 - (c) *an assessment of the average savings in fuel bills and in kilowatt hours of fuel used that might be expected to result from the measures by different types of household in different types of accommodation;*
 - (d) *such other matters as it considers appropriate.*
 - (5) *An energy conservation authority may in preparing the report consult such persons as it considers appropriate.*
 - (6) *When an energy conservation authority has prepared a report in accordance with this section, it shall publish it and send a copy to the Secretary of State*

not sufficient budget to allocate to local authorities in order that they can give energy efficiency high enough priority to achieve the targets. As a result many Energy Conservation Authorities who have extremely limited budget and other perceived priorities have done the barest minimum. The progress towards achieving the targets was slow after the introduction of the act in 1996, *'reports (from local authorities) point to an improvement of some 2 to 2½ percent over the two years to the end of March 1998. The Government is concerned that progress at this rate is insufficient if local authorities are to achieve the potential improvements identified ...'* (DEFRA, 1999). In 2001 some Energy Conservation Authorities reported significant improvements in domestic energy efficiency between 1996 and March 2001 for example; Weymouth and Portland reported a 22% improvement and Woking a 16.11% but at the opposite end of the scale Blackpool reported a mere 0.63% improvement (DEFRA, 2001).

The responsibilities of the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) are as seen in Table A.

The emphasis given to Home Energy Conservation by different local authorities can be assessed by the amount of staff resources that they are prepared to devote to the task of promoting energy efficiency. Some local authorities will have one or two staff members devoted to full time work on energy efficiency whilst others will manage to have two hours a week from a single officer. Unfortunately the responsibilities for Home Energy Conservation are often tagged on to a long list of other responsibilities that an over worked staff member may already have. As a result the Home Energy Conservation activities are not top of the staff member's priority list.

Although local authorities are the appropriate level of government to promote energy efficiency and deliver on sustainable energy targets there are a number of reasons for the lack of delivery:

- The Home Energy Conservation Act does not offer any budget to local authorities to implement programmes neither does it impose any penalties on local authorities if they do not achieve their targets.
- Energy efficiency is not seen as a priority by local authorities who have to deal with higher profile social issues.
- Energy efficiency competes with other issues such as health, crime and education for attention.
- There is a lack of understanding about the value of energy efficiency programmes.
- There is a lack of budget and staff resources to implement energy efficiency programmes.
- Local politicians do not regard energy efficiency as a 'vote winner'.

Local authorities have a responsibility to report on progress towards a target of a 30 percent reduction in energy usage in the domestic sector in their areas but are not given any direct budget from Central Government to achieve these targets. There are funding sources available to enable local authorities to progress towards these targets and these include:

Capital grants to be spent on local authority housing stock:

- The Housing Improvement Programme and The Capital Receipts Initiative (funds from central government for investment in housing by local authorities), these combined totalled £1.4 billion in 1999/2000 (Impetus Consulting, 2001).
- Funds from the Single Regeneration Budget (funds from the Regional Development Agencies to be spent on a variety of programmes that may include: creation of local employment and improvement of regional environment).
- Local Health Authority funding.
- European funding such as SAVE and Thermie These programmes do not provide grants for investment.

Capital grants to be spent on Privately owned dwellings:

- Central Government funded programmes such as Warmfront and Warmdeal (initiatives designed to provide energy efficiency measures to low income houses, through central government grants).
- Utility funded programmes from the Energy Efficiency Commitment (electricity and gas suppliers are required to achieve goals for the improvement of energy efficiency of household customers). It is expected that energy suppliers will invest up to £500 million in energy efficiency between 2002 and 2005.

Energy Saving Trust

The Energy Saving Trust is a leading organisation in the fight against climate change. The United Kingdom Government set up the Trust in response to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. The Energy Saving Trust's vision is one of 'A world where sustainable energy is the choice of all individuals and organisations'.

To achieve this vision the Trust has a number of aims. The aim of: 'Stimulating energy efficiency in UK households and achieving social, environmental and economic benefits', is supported by the work of both the Energy Efficiency Advice Centres and the Local Authority Support Programme. The strategic aims of the Trust for working with local authorities include: assisting local authorities to make visible progress towards their Home Energy Conservation Act duties (business plan 2002-2005).

The 'Advice Infrastructure'

The network of Energy Efficiency Advice Centres (EEACs) has been in place since 1993. Government (through Energy Saving Trust) provides part funding to a number of local organisations to become an EEAC and provide a defined energy efficiency advice service to householders within the territory they cover. EEACs get additional funding up to the level required from a range of local partners who, traditionally, have primarily been local authorities.

In a structural sense, the network has gone through three distinct phases in its development:

INITIAL SET UP AND ROLL OUT

The initial aim was to establish a network of centres providing advice on energy efficiency. In the first instance the programme effectively supported existing or developing advice providing organisations, allowing them to become more established and increasing their status and, hence, their potential to draw in additional funding.

To get the programme up and running in a relatively short space of time, the approach taken was to identify suitable and enthusiastic organisations rather than to identify locations where it would be appropriate to set up an advice centre. Because these organisations had some stake in the area that they covered, either because they were already established or because their proposed remit applied to a specific geography, they were allowed to define the territory that they covered. As a consequence the EEACs were spread unevenly across the UK with some areas having no access to a centre, some having more than one in close proximity, and there being a great variation in scale of territory covered by individual EEACs.

The result of this approach was that the EEAC network consisted of a small number of disparate organisations with a clear, and in some cases narrow, local focus but no real sense of a national network and with patchy coverage.

PROPOSED MOVE TOWARD FRANCHISING

While initially a 'pilot,' the EEAC programme had passed this phase after the first two years by demonstrating that advice could specifically encourage the take up of measures. It was therefore seen as desirable to increase the number of EEACs and to expand the reach of the programme into new areas.

The driving philosophy at this time however was that the EEACs could become self-funding after a number of years and that EST funding would therefore reduce. This philosophy meant that a process of 'franchising' was adopted whereby new organisations could pay a fee to enter the network and use the name and marks of being an EEAC but without receiving any EST funding. This approach, while successful in attracting further organisations to become EEACs, continued to rely on attracting organisations with the desire to become EEACs rather than determining a planned geographical distribution of EEACs. This was exacerbated by the reduction in funding from EST, and the subsequent increased relative importance of local funding, making it more difficult to centrally control the growth of the network.

Because there were no centrally defined territories, and the need for local funding was ever more important, this resulted in some cases in EEACs competing against each other for funding from local organisations. In addition, the existence of two types of EEACs (funded and franchise) made the network as a whole even more disparate.

As a result of this approach the network increased in size (in terms of numbers of EEACs) but there remained problems of distribution of the service across the UK and enhanced problems through the large variation in scale of EEACs and appreciable problems through the variation in capacity and performance of EEACs across the network. This was exacerbated as EEACs struggled to identify enough funding to provide the defined service to a suitable standard.

STRATEGIC RESTRUCTURE

By 1999 it was apparent that a UK wide EEAC network would not be able to survive without centralised funding, and that, in order to overcome the problems of variable performance that were evident, the level of centralised funding should be increased. EST put a proposal to Government to increase funding to the network but also to undertake a strategic restructure of the network and to thereby enhance performance and numbers of customers dealt with so that the increased funding would result in a better performance in terms of carbon savings.

The strategic restructure had an overall objective to achieve a reasonable level of parity in both coverage and funding for all EEACs. Specifically it aimed to:

- Ensure that every household in the UK had access to the advice service.
- Define territories for each EEAC to cover consistent with local, regional and national boundaries.
- Achieve consistency in the contracts that EEACs were working to and also in the service that they actually provided.

This move toward greater consistency was also a key requirement in order to facilitate the delivery of other EST programmes through the network.

These stages of development of the EEAC network have resulted in a far greater performance and impact but, importantly, have defined a shift in thinking in terms of what the network is and what it can do. Initially, the network was thought of largely as a collection of shop front units (although it has never been the case that all EEACs were shop fronts) dealing exclusively with the public, advising them about energy efficiency. Now the network is seen as a UK wide infrastructure of organisations working within defined sub-regional territories, and with whom EST has an established contractual relationship, that EST can utilise to deliver a number of energy efficiency programmes in addition to advice. The Local Authority Support Programme is an example of a programme delivered through this infrastructure.

THE FUTURE

Having established the EEAC network as an energy efficiency infrastructure, it is obvious that EST should develop and optimise EST's use of this infrastructure. There is currently a pilot project on advice on renewable technologies to householders and community groups, and the expansion of the EEAC network into a network dealing with a much wider range of sustainable energy activities is currently under consideration.

One of the major drawbacks to the expanding role of the EEAC network has been a perceived negative impact on the provision of impartial advice. This being on the basis that EEACs involvement in a range of activities (which includes management of energy efficiency initiatives) could impinge on their impartiality, or certainly their perceived impartiality. The future structure of EEACs will therefore need to more clearly define these roles and, ideally, functionally split the advice role from other activities while still retaining the emphasis on advice as the key consumer facing activity of the network.

Local Authority Support Programme

RATIONALE

In 1999 the work of the Energy Efficiency Advice Centres was primarily focused on the domestic energy consumer and not necessarily on encouraging local authorities to develop programmes of their own. The Energy Saving Trust reviewed the suite of programmes that it was offering to encourage local authority involvement in promotion of energy efficiency. As a result of this review the Trust decided that it was worth piloting a programme that would work closely in partnership with local authorities and other organisations to develop clear strategies to achieve energy efficiency targets locally. Once strategies had been developed then the programme could begin to implement projects that would lead to the achievement of the Home Energy Conservation Act target of a 30 percent reduction (on 1996 levels) in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010.

The pilot programme placed additional staff members at each Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, a project manager and project assistant. Each project manager was expected to work closely with the relevant officer of the local authorities in their area to develop strategies to deliver Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) targets.

NUMBER OF ADVICE CENTRES INVOLVED, PROGRESS AND COST

The success of the pilot programmes of 2000-2001 managed initially through three Energy Efficiency Advice Centres encouraged the Energy Saving Trust to request further funding from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to expand the programme in 2001-2002. The programme was again expanded in 2002-2003. 23 Energy Efficiency Advice Centres now host the Local Authority Support Programme. Of these 23, three work across two Advice Centre territories and thus the programme covers 26 of the 52 Advice Centres.

In 2000 when the programme was in its pilot phase three Energy Efficiency Advice Centres hosted the Local Authority Support Programme. Each Advice Centre was granted 98 800 Euro to pay staff, overheads, equipment and marketing costs. In addition to this a further grant of 15 200 Euro per Advice Centre were allocated to be spent on consultants to work with the staff on issues identified by the Home Energy Conservation officers as relevant and important for development of energy efficiency strategies.

In 2001 the programme was expanded to ten further Advice Centres (Table 2) at a cost of 68 400 Euro per Centre for staff, overheads and management costs and an additional 10 640 Euro for consultancy costs. The amount paid to the 3 Advice Centres that joined the programme in 2000 was decreased so that all Advice Centres in the programme received the same funding. This amount of funding was not seen as sufficient to enable Advice Centres to employ the calibre of staff required to run the programme. This became particularly acute in areas with high living costs, such as the South East and London in particular.

In 2002 a further ten Energy Efficiency Advice Centres joined the programme. The programme now covers 47 percent of English and Welsh, 70 percent of Northern

Table 2. List of Advice Centres managing the programme, number of local authorities they service and year the programme was initiated.

Advice Centre	Country	Number of Local Authorities	Year Programme Initiated
Surrey and East Sussex	England	17	2001
Solent	England	14	2000
Kent	England	13	2002
Tees & Durham	England	12	2000
Warwickshire	England	12	2001
Northumbria	England	11	2002
Central Midlands	England	10	2001
Devon	England	10	2002
Bristol and Somerset	England	9	2001
Thames Valley	England	9	2001
York	England	9	2002
Cheshire	England	8	2002
Cornwall	England	7	2000
South West London	England	7	2001
North East London	England	6	2002
Merseyside	England	5	2001
Gloucestershire	England	5	2002
Kirklees, Calderdale and Wakefield	England	3	2001
South East Wales	Wales	11	2001
Belfast	Northern Ireland	18	2002
Strathclyde and Central	Scotland	12	2002
Aberdeen and North East	Scotland	6	2002
South West Scotland	Scotland	4	2001

	Number of Energy Conservation Authorities in Programme	Total Number of Energy Conservation Authorities	Percent cover of Energy Conservation Authorities
England and Wales	178	376	47
NI	0.69	1	69
Scotland	22	32	69

Irish and 67 percent of Scottish local authorities (see Table 2). To rectify the problems caused by insufficient funding the amount paid to the Advice Centres for running the programme was increased to the level of 2000-2001 of 98 800 Euro. The funds available for consultancy was reduced to 7 600 Euro for existing programmes but retained at 10 640 for those that began in 2002-2003. The need for further consultancy budget identified as important as it enabled programme managers to lever in significant amounts of additional funding, this may be addressed in the 2003-2004 budget.

The overall cost of the programme during 2002-2003 was just under 2.7 million Euro as follows:

1. Energy Saving Trust management costs	114 000 Euro
2. Managing agent costs	258 400 Euro
3. Programme costs to Advice Centres	2 101 400 Euro
4. Consultancy costs to Advice Centres	176 320 Euro
5. Evaluation costs	46 640 Euro

RESPONSIBILITIES

Initially the pilot programme allowed flexibility to develop local strategies and action plans so that the Energy Saving Trust could investigate what could be achieved without restriction. As the programme expanded, 'good practice' was developed and the tasks for each Advice Centre involved were refined as follows:

Objective 1: To work with consortia of local authorities to develop strategic partnerships with a range of stakeholders.

Task A. Produce a baseline report on each local authority in their area outlining the number of staff hours and annual budget devoted to home energy conservation or energy efficiency activities, and the improvement in energy efficiency over the last year reported in the Home Energy Conservation Act returns (Core Target).

Task B. Organise strategic partnership-building events and foster strategic partnership building between local authorities and other relevant partners.

- Task C. Organise information, public relations and marketing activities aimed at decision-makers and policy-makers.
- Task D. Encourage social housing providers to improve the energy efficiency of their housing stock. Particularly, encourage activities such as development of housing energy strategies and influence housing refurbishment programmes.
- Task E. Influence, where appropriate, the inclusion of improved energy efficiency in Large Scale Voluntary Transfers (of housing stock) or retention plans. Establish a dialogue on the subject of energy efficiency within stock transfers with every local authority in the Advice Centre area (Core Target).
- Task F. Facilitate establishment of internal partnerships within local authorities to enable cross-departmental approaches on subjects such as: sustainable energy, home energy conservation and affordable warmth.
- Task G. Organise awareness-raising events aimed at decision makers and policy makers around issues such as: The Home Energy Conservation Act, Local Agenda 21 and Affordable Warmth.
- Task H. Ensure that local authorities include sustainable energy, energy efficiency or affordable warmth in one or more of:
- Community Plans, and the work of other local strategic partnerships
 - Public Service Agreements
 - Regional Strategies or Plans
- Ensure active engagement in the Community Planning process in each of the local authorities in the Advice Centre area (Core Target).
- Task I. Encourage local authorities to develop strategies, for example, sustainable energy and Affordable Warmth.
- Task J. Encourage investment in energy efficiency, energy advice and other relevant measures to alleviate fuel poverty.
- Objective 2: To develop a framework of strategic support for local authorities, so as to increase the impact local authorities have in delivering energy efficiency locally.**
- Task K. Set up, revive or assist local home energy conservation officer forum.
- Task L. Set up, revive or assist other relevant forums.
- Objective 3: To ensure that the service provided by the programme is valued by local authorities.**
- Task M. To provide service that local authorities value.
- Objective 4: To establish and develop the role of Energy Efficiency Advice Centres as appropriate and capable providers of extended services to local authorities.**
- Objective 5: To maximise the links between local authorities and other relevant programmes,**

for example: Energy Saving Trust programmes (Innovation, Community Energy), WarmFront, and Energy Efficiency Commitment schemes run by utility companies.

- Task N. Encourage operational partnership building and work with consortia of local authorities and fuel supply companies to design and develop Energy Efficiency Commitment schemes to assist local authorities to meet their energy conservation targets and broader energy responsibilities, and to engage other sectors (such as health and voluntary sector). Establish at least one Energy Efficiency Commitment scheme that actively involves at least two local authorities and at least one partner from the voluntary or health sector (Core Target).
- Task O. Establish other local projects such as scheme funded from the Energy Saving Trust's innovation fund.

SUCCESS

Progress towards achieving these five key objectives has varied from Advice Centre to Advice Centre, but overall progress has been good. One of the major problems of assessing the success of the programme has been getting consistent reports from each and every programme manager. A system of monthly reporting on progress has been instituted and progress against a list of quantifiable outcomes is measured. Unfortunately some programme managers are too busy implementing the projects they have initiated to methodically report on their progress. This requires greater enforcement. The managing agent for the programme, Lothian and Edinburgh Environmental Partnership, has become more rigorous in enforcing regular and accurate reporting. To give a set of quantifiable outcomes to a programme that relies heavily on the qualitative relationship building between programme manager and the home energy conservation officers, senior officers and councillors in their area of work is rather artificial but it gives some indication of the progress made.

Quantifiable outcomes

Progress has been most significant in those Advice Centres that have been running the programme since 2000. Nonetheless the Advice Centres that began the programme in 2001 have also made significant progress in certain areas. Those Advice Centres that joined the programme in 2002 have only just begun to develop relationships and gain an understanding of the situation in their area.

Table 3 gives an outline of the key results of the programme thus far against the tasks that each Advice Centre needed to execute.

For an investment of 2.7 million Euro over the last year the programme has managed to lever into the local authorities an investment of well over 8.47 million Euro to spend on energy efficiency. Although these funds may have been spent in these local authorities as a result of Utility Company activities, the fact that there were co-ordinated and effective programmes in these areas would have encouraged funding to be spent here.

Table 3 - Progress recorded against the tasks set for the Local Authority Support Programme.

Task	Task Description	Progress by Advice Centres
A.	Baseline report on HECA activities	All 23 Advice Centres have completed this task. The information gathered is essential for planning a logical strategy to overcome energy inefficiency, fuel poverty and to achieve reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.
B.	Organise strategic partnership-building events	Thus far 27 events have been held reaching 45 Chief Executive officers, 88 Politicians, 206 Senior Officers and 239 Key Decision Makers. In addition the programme managers have attended 81 strategic partnership building events organised by other potential partners
C.	Organise marketing activities for decision-makers	Thus far the programme managers between them have been on 8 radio programmes, 3 television broadcasts, had 22 articles published in local press and have reached an estimate of 2.7 million people through this media coverage. Advice Centres have published their own newsletters and 15 editions in total have been distributed to over 8,000 officers and councillors. A total of 49 presentations to groups of decision makers have been made and were attended by 103 key decision makers in total.
D.	Encourage social housing providers to improve the energy efficiency	Programme managers have influenced at least 16 housing departments to incorporate energy efficiency into their strategies. Six local authority and six Registered Social Landlords have introduced energy efficiency into their refurbishment programmes as a direct result of the programme. Thus far a conservative estimate of the investment in energy efficiency as a result of these programmes is well over 500 000 Euro.
E.	Influence the inclusion of energy efficiency in Stock Transfers	The Local Authority Support Programme has influenced the inclusion of energy efficiency provision into 12 Large Scale Voluntary Stock Transfers. In addition to this over 134 meetings have been held with local authorities to discuss the inclusion of energy efficiency provision when housing stock is transferred to registered social landlords.
F.	Internal partnerships	28 internal partnerships have been established to promote energy efficiency. These include 84 different departments from various local authorities including departments such as, strategic and corporate services, housing, health and environment.
G.	Awareness-raising events	A total of 30 awareness-raising events have been held. Over 170 politicians attended these events.
H.	Include sustainable energy in local authority plans	98 Plans that could include energy efficiency have been identified thus far. Of these only 39 include energy efficiency and 21 include affordable warmth. The Local Authority Support Programme is actively involved in the strategy development process of 25 plans.
I.	Develop strategies for energy efficiency	A further 93 relevant strategies were identified, 74 of these included energy efficiency and 44 included affordable warmth. Programme managers were involved in the development of 30 of these strategies.
J.	Investment in energy efficiency	Thus far the Local Authority Support Programme has influenced just over 1.6 million Euro worth of investment in energy efficiency that has helped to alleviate fuel poverty.
K.	Local HECA officer forum	The programme has set up 14 and revived 6 local HECA officer forums. Staff members provide the secretariat for 23 HECA forums.
L.	Other relevant forums	The programme has set up an additional 16 new forums and revived a further 7 forums that are relevant to promote energy efficiency.
M.	To provide service that local authorities value	Many Advice Centres already have service level agreements with local authorities. The Support Programme has given the Advice Centres an additional support role and the likelihood of agreements supported by funding has been increased.
N.	Operational partnership building and development Energy Efficiency Commitment schemes	A total of 37 new partnerships have been established involving 64 different local authorities. This has led to the establishment of 30 referral mechanisms that guide homeowners to instal energy efficiency measures. A total of 16 new Energy Efficiency Commitment schemes have been either established by the programme or with significant programme input. The current value of these programmes is just over 6 million Euro.
O.	Set up other local projects	A total of 33 new projects have been either established by the programme or with significant programme input. 28 of these targeted fuel poor communities and 25 were focused on fuel rich communities. These have resulted in investment of 370 000 Euro cash and over 1.1 million Euro in kind.

Qualitative outcomes

The qualitative progress of the programme is reported every six months by the Advice Centre staff. These anecdotal reports give a good indication of how the programme is perceived by the local authorities who receive the benefit of this support.

Task Groups

A number of programme managers have made use of task groups to focus on topics of particular concern identified by the Home Energy Conservation officers and other partnership organisations. For example, Cornwall Advice Centre has six such groups focusing on Strategy, Domestic Energy

and Health, Business, Public Sector, Renewable Energy and Education. Each of these task groups is chaired by a high profile member of the community, which gives the group both independence and significance as a relevant community player. The Strategy task group is planning the Cornwall County Council's energy target for their public service agreement that could attract 1.14 million Euro in reward funding to be spent on energy efficiency.

In Merseyside, a steering group made up of officers from the five local authorities, staff from public, private and voluntary organisations developed the Merseyside Affordable Warmth Strategy. One of the key aims of this is *'to increase collaboration of organisations toward the formation and develop-*

ment of partnerships to achieve affordable warmth' (Merseyside Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, 2002).

Support for Energy Efficiency Advice Centre activity

One of the key activities of the Energy Efficiency Advice Centres is to encourage householders in their area to complete home energy checks. Householders receive an information pack recommending energy efficiency measures for their homes based on their completed home energy checks. It is estimated that between 40 and 60 percent of householders who complete a check invest in energy efficiency measures.

The completed home energy checks serve another purpose as they are a valuable source of data to enable local authorities to report on their progress towards targets and to plan future strategies to deliver these targets. A significant amount of data is required to make accurate planning decisions. To gather this amount of data many Advice Centres have encouraged local authorities to use their annual mailings to residents as a means of distributing home energy checks. This has proved a cost effective and efficient way of gathering large amounts of data. Thames Valley Energy Efficiency Advice Centre has facilitated its first large scale home energy check mail out through Bracknell Forest Borough Council. This has allowed a significant amount of data to be gathered and for the council to import this into its own energy profile database. As a result of this activity other local authorities in the area are interested in following suit.

Similarly, South West London, motivated the London Borough of Sutton to mail out home energy checks to all 75 000 residents in their electoral registration mailing. The information gathered from this survey will contribute significantly to the planning for the achievement of targets set by the Public Service Agreement for Sutton.

The Energy Saving Trust reimburses the Advice Centres for each completed home energy check received. This is an additional incentive to gather them in the most cost effective fashion.

Staff retention

Many local authorities are currently engaged in major reorganisation and rationalisation of their workforce. As budgetary pressures force chief executives to make hard choices, staff posts that are not clearly justified may be merged with other posts or done away with completely, creation of new posts to carry out work previously not covered by the local authorities is extremely rare. The programme managers in Kent successfully motivated for the retention of a Home Energy Conservation Officer post in the Dover District Council. Likewise in Southampton and the Isle of Wight the number of full time Home Energy Conservation officers has doubled from three to six in the time the Support Programme has been operating in this area. This is a direct result of the programme increasing the profile of energy efficiency and capitalising on Energy Efficiency Commitment funding.

Support for other Energy Saving Trust programmes

Local Authority Support Programme co-ordinators are encouraged to submit joint applications with their local authorities for funds from other Energy Saving Trust programmes.

The increase in applications for the Innovation Programme from 16 in September 2002 to 32 in December 2002 can be attributed, in part, to the work of the Local Authority Support Programme. Likewise staff members of the Local Authority Support Programme have supported applications for the Community Energy Programme and the Photo-Voltaic Programme. This flurry of applications for additional funding satisfies both the local authorities that benefit from increased funding and the Energy Saving Trust's as the various programmes are able to achieve the stated targets.

Independent review

To verify that the programme is actually making progress towards its intended aims independent surveys were carried out. This independent verification has thus far been carried out in two years (2001 and 2002). The three Advice Centres who joined the programme in 2000 provide a wide range of support and are now succeeding in getting the message to senior council officials and elected councillors. There is room for improvement in the finding of additional funds for energy conservation activities and the development of new partnerships (New Perspectives, 2002). Further research in 2003 will reveal whether these programme managers have managed to deliver on this.

The 10 Advice Centres that joined the programme in 2001 are *'are making good progress and are valued by most of the local authorities they serve'* (New Perspectives, 2002). They have had relative success in delivering support for the local forums and provision of information. Again it will be interesting to see how these advice centres have progressed in the last year.

Room for improvement

The enthusiasm, experience and ability of the Programme Manager and their support staff is crucial in ensuring the success of the programme. Where Advice Centres have struggled to find and retain appropriately qualified staff the programme has struggled. This needs to be addressed in one or two of the Advice Centres to ensure that the programme delivers its targets.

Conclusions

ENERGY EFFICIENCY ADVICE CENTRES

It is clear from the development of the EEAC network that there have been significant benefits to the delivery of energy efficiency initiatives other than advice. The view of, and utilisation of, the network as an infrastructure rather than a collection of individual units has shown distinct benefits. In particular, it has demonstrated how taking a wider strategic view (when it would have been simpler to only focus on the advice provision) is a key dynamic in being able to successfully implement a wider range of energy efficiency activity and to have a greater overall impact.

LOCAL AUTHORITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Key successes

The Local Authority Support Programme has provided additional staff members to work in partnership with the local

authorities in their territories. These staff members have acted as a catalyst to stimulate energy efficiency and sustainable energy activity amongst the local authorities. The real successes of the programme have been:

- Local authorities are encouraged to work in partnership with one another, other organisations and the Energy Efficiency Advice Centres to deliver energy efficiency targets
- The development of strategies that review what has been achieved by the local authorities and develop programmes to build on these achievements
- Senior officers and councillors have a greater awareness of energy efficiency issues and now are prepared to devote additional staff and budget to home energy conservation
- The programme managers have gained the confidence of the local authority officers

Local Authority Support Programmes that have been implemented since 2000 have had the greatest impact as they have had the longest time to implement programmes that bring funds to the local authorities that then support further work on energy efficiency. Some of the Advice Centres that joined the Programme in 2001 struggled to recruit and retain the correct calibre of staff to inject the necessary enthusiasm and vision into the Programme. In 2002 the Managing Agent and the Energy Saving Trust took steps to rectify this by increasing the budget to Advice Centres and enforcing tighter control on the recruitment process.

The future

In an ideal world with unlimited budget the Energy Saving Trust would like to fund all 52 Advice Centres to employ additional staff to work with local authorities in their areas. The programme has proved that it can: develop strategies, deliver projects, enthuse senior officers and motivate inward investment into energy efficiency. As such it should be an integral part of Advice Centre activities. Unfortunately budgetary constraints will restrict the expansion of the programme to a handful of Advice Centres in 2003.

The Energy Saving Trust is currently reviewing the Advice Centre network and how it delivers on its programmes. A revised, ambitious and cohesive strategy for the network will be prepared for 2004. This strategy will incorporate the Local Authority Support Programme to ensure it receives significant support.

Learning points

Additional staff resources provide the catalyst

The local authorities in the United Kingdom have a great deal of responsibility for delivery of local services including housing and care of the aged. While they do not have a legal obligation to improve the energy efficiency of homes in their area, they do have to report on what progress is being made towards a target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions and improving energy efficiency. The Energy Efficiency Commitment is a source of large amounts of funding for improving energy efficiency in private homes. The need for clear local authority strategies to deliver the targets is essen-

tial. Local authorities have limited staff resources and these strategies were not developed nor the targets delivered. By funding additional staff at Advice Centres to work with local authorities at a strategic level, the Programme acted as a catalyst for strategy review and improvement, project identification and delivery and inward investment into energy efficiency.

Clear strategies attract funding

As a result of a number of initiatives the funding for energy efficiency is disparate: Utility Companies have to invest large amounts in energy efficiency, central government runs programmes to eliminate fuel poverty and local authorities have funding available for home improvements. A clear local authority strategy can make sure that these are co-ordinated in such a way as to make the most of all the programmes. In many cases the Advice Centres serve as a useful resource to co-ordinate these programmes.

To develop a clear strategy, accurate information is required. By gathering information using the Advice Centre and the Energy Saving Trust capabilities the local authorities can plan accurately as to which areas they should be targeting to get maximum energy savings in the most cost effective manner. Strategies to gather accurate and verifiable information need to be encouraged and improved.

Partnership working delivers

Many of the Advice Centres have worked in partnership with groups as diverse as Health Trust, Fire brigades and Social benefits offices. These have helped to engage a wider audience as well as make contact with marginalized members of the community who do not necessarily respond to the direct marketing campaigns to take up energy efficiency measures. Affordable warmth and fuel poverty strategies have been successful in nurturing these partnerships that deliver benefits in terms of health, social inclusion and energy savings.

References

- DTI, 1997, Energy Paper 66; Energy Consumption in the United Kingdom, The Stationery Office.
- Energy Saving Trust, 1997, Energy Efficiency and Environmental Benefits to 2010, EST, London.
- Impetus Consulting, 2001 (Unpublished), Energy Saving Trust's local authority Strategy Development, EST, London.
- DEFRA, 1999, Home Energy Conservation Act 1995: Report to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, London.
- Merseyside Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, 2002, Merseyside Affordable Warmth Strategy, Energy Projects Plus, Wallasey, Cheshire, England.
- New Perspectives, 2002, The local authority Support Pilot Programme 2000-2002: Final report on Phase 4 Evaluation, EST, London.
- Local Government Association, undated, local authority Services, London.
- Local Government Association, 2001, Policy Framework for local authority Energy Efficiency Activity, London.