



Join us on Fuel Poverty Awareness Day, Friday 17 February, the national day to raise awareness of fuel poverty and cold homes

Taking place at the end of our Warm Homes Campaign, it is a chance to highlight the problems faced by those struggling to keep warm in their homes as well as the excellent work being undertaken to tackle the issues.

You can support Fuel Poverty Awareness Day by signing up to our [Twitter Thunderclap](#). We'd love your support, whether as an individual or an organisation, and need to get up to our target of 100 supporters for this to work! By tweeting out at the same time we're hoping to make a big impact and for our collective voice to be heard.

If you'd like to do more you can also:

- Hold your own events and activities to raise awareness of the issue and the help available. For instance, organising an energy efficiency advice day, or holding a bake sale for our **Nations' Biggest Housewarming** event.
- Issuing messages of support on your website, social media channels or other communications channels.

To help with your work to tackle fuel poverty we have launched a new advice page on our website, which includes a range of free printed and online resources. [The Fuel Poverty Awareness Day logo can be downloaded here](#).

We will be tweeting on the day using [#fuelpovertyawarenessday](#), and in the meantime you can continue to follow us and all of our work on the Warm Homes Campaign at [@NEA_UKCharity](#). Don't forget to keep us updated on any of your plans by contacting [Sahdia Hassen](#).

As part of NEA's ongoing partnership with the Malcolm Wicks Memorial Fund we are seeking summer work opportunities for six, Yorkshire-based, second year university students.

The students were awarded bursaries to support their living expenses whilst at university following a competitive process in 2015/16 and successfully completed work placements during the summer of 2016.

NEA is now seeking work placements for summer 2017 that provide the students with an opportunity to understand how organisations operate and the range of potential areas of work they may choose to pursue on graduation. Placements can involve shadowing opportunities in different business areas or focus on a core business area or activity.

For further information [click here](#) or to discuss potential work place opportunities please contact [Lesley Tudor-Snodin](#), Project Development Co-ordinator (and Malcolm Wicks Memorial Fund (Yorkshire) support) on call 0191 269 2924.



Beyond 2018: Policy, Programmes & New Approaches is the title of the NEA Cymru fuel poverty conference, sponsored by E.ON, being held on 16 February 2017 at Cardiff City Hall.

Session topics include "How can we ensure the energy market works for all consumers, particularly the most vulnerable?" and "The impact of energy efficiency programmes and new approaches" and a choice of afternoon seminars: "Delivering energy advice in the home" and "Tackling fuel poverty in the rented sector".

Along with Q&A sessions and roundtable discussions, there will also be networking opportunities throughout the day and a chance to browse the exhibition area.

[To view the full programme click here.](#)

[To book your place click here.](#)

If you are interested in exhibiting at the conference please contact [Brian Hart](#).

MEMBERS NEWS

Footprint Trust supports Warm Homes Campaign

The Footprint Trust is backing NEA's Warm Homes Campaign by highlighting fuel poverty on the Isle of Wight.

People will be able to get guidance on energy efficiency at an event on 9 February, with practical hints and tips on insulating their homes as well as switching their energy supplier, these measures saving households hundreds of pounds per year. In the meantime islanders can get information by calling the Trust on 01983 822282 or by emailing ray@footprint-trust.co.uk.

Ray Harrington Vail of the Footprint Trust said: "We help many people who ask for help with fuel issues and have helped over 1,000 people, during the last year. In the end we helped people save over £15,000, with savings of up to £200 per year."

Maria Wardrobe, Director of Communications and External Relations at NEA said:
"Fuel poverty is a serious and growing concern, with around 15,000 households on the Isle of Wight were unable to afford to heat their homes. Through the Warm Homes Campaign we hope to improve the life chances of residents who are struggling with their fuel bills and ensure they can stay warm and healthy in their homes this winter."

Maggie* was helped by the Trust last winter, she told us:

"I thought I was doing okay and that it was my washing machine that was the problem, as I know they use a lot of electricity, but I have to use it with two kids. So when you pointed out the cost of running the shower for baths, I was staggered. I was also so worried about the bills, it was doing my head in. Now I feel that things are back on track - I'm paying my way for my bills as I get them, I've got the electricity use right down by doing weekly meter readings, and I feel so much better. Amazing! - I didn't even know they were there as I'm new to the town."

The event takes place at Newport Parish Centre, Town Lane, Newport from 11am-3pm on Thursday 9 February 2017. Free admission, cake and tea available! For more information contact [Ray Harrington-Vail](#) or call 01983 822282.

Dudley Winter Warmth 2016-17

Change Agents UK and Dudley Council have teamed up again for winter 2016/17 as part of Dudley's Winter Warmth programme with the objective of tackling the issues of fuel poverty - and specifically the impacts of cold homes on health and wellbeing in a continuation of practices from previous years. These visits have been an attempt to improve the living standards of those choosing whether to heat or to eat. The Dudley borough is particularly hard hit in regard to fuel poverty, based on its statistical comparison on several factors of deprivation such as poor housing stock, low incomes and health indicators.

Two months into the 2016/17 iteration of the Winter Warmth programme, over 250 home visits have been made since November and the weather is getting colder. These visits have tackled a wide range of issues including large amounts of energy debt, a high level of disengagement from energy matters and a lack of awareness on available help for those who need it.

The core aims of these visits are to raise awareness of the health impacts and introduce preventative measures, whether this is by simply providing a blanket and hot water bottle or by larger-scale means from home adaptations and energy efficiency installations such as insulation of the building fabric and heating system upgrades. They also seek to improve the financial situation of residents by looking at price comparison for energy companies and tariffs – wherein elderly residents have been reluctant due to perceived difficulty, anxiety or misguided loyalty – and to see what further support is available for those on benefits.

Many of those visited have expressed relief that answers to their problems and questions have been available and that certain aspects of ingrained behaviour that went unquestioned beforehand had also been highlighted, which could save money and energy. As such, behavioural advice to residents has also been a big success story with many being surprised at the running costs of their everyday appliances such as the difference between boiling a full kettle and just a cup's worth.

Increased awareness through the visits provided by energy officers has worked to improve Dudley's rates of excess winter deaths and fuel poverty, which have previously been some of the highest in the country. That said, there was a 30% increase in respiratory related excess winter deaths during winter 2015/16 compared to that of 2013/4 and that there are approximately 23% more cases of Dementia and Alzheimer's disease compared to non-winter months. This shows that despite the considerable improvements made by the Winter Warmth team at Dudley, this is still a work in progress. Fuel poverty officers hope to address these figures and make a positive impact on the ground and carry positive developments into the future.



St Helens Council and local partners undertake an annual Winter Warmer campaign to inform residents on the best ways to stay warm and well over winter, whilst saving money and becoming more energy efficient.

This year's well-attended exhibition in the town hall welcomed representatives from several key organisations, including St Helens Council's Home Improvement Agency, Age UK Mid Mersey, St Helens Healthy Living Team, St Helens Senior Voice Forum and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service, among others.

Hundreds of free winter warmer packs were handed out to event-goers each containing a hat, gloves, torch, thermal mug, soup and calendar with essential information and more. The packs are available to St Helens' more vulnerable residents and form part of a St.Helens Council Public Health Funded scheme.

The St Helens 'Winter Warmer' project focuses on reaching vulnerable households and identifying those at risk of fuel poverty to target assistance to reduce the health impacts of cold homes. The housing and health partnership has been in place since November 2013 and is committed to improving local health outcomes related to housing.

The Public Health funding also supports Affordable Warmth Outreach Officers who provide face to face advice on ways to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel bills and to offer a number of further interventions such as financial support from heating and insulation schemes on offer, handyperson service, falls prevention, equipment such as cold alarms and carbon monoxide detectors and more.

Referrals to the Affordable Warmth Service are received from a broad range of local partners including local health partners. The main health referral partner is IASH (Integrated Access St Helens) a single access point for all social care referrals for those 18+, the remit of IASH operated by St Helens Council, includes working with those requiring signposting, advice and information through to those with very complex needs. As an onward referral point for health partners IASH is able to identify and target those individuals who are at risk of, or living in fuel poverty, with long term conditions that may be affected by cold and damp and ensure the appropriate referrals are made.



Recycle Solar

New NEA member, Recycle Solar Technologies is a not-for-profit company established in 2015 and based in Lincolnshire. Recycle Solar recycles broken or unwanted solar technology and is looking to reinvest the profits back into community energy saving schemes.

Recycle Solar is the first UK company to recycle solar technology. Previously end of life panels were exported abroad for processing which can be expensive and increase the technology's carbon footprint, due to transportation emissions.

Broken solar technology can be recycled to generate funds while working panels and electrical components that are still productive can be reused for community projects. The company plans to work with organisations such as NEA to use the profits generated by the recycling to fund smart energy projects and other cost-saving devices

If you have unwanted or broken solar technology that needs disposing of you can contact [Recycle Solar](#) via their website.



Suffolk project embedded in local hospital to help unblock beds

[Suffolk's Warm Homes Healthy People](#) has recently made substantial progress in the fight to keep those at risk of cold, out of hospital. Working through the Suffolk Health & Wellbeing board Ipswich hospital offered to pilot hosting a member of staff. Working together a clear process has evolved that doesn't add extra bureaucracy to an already overstretched NHS and enables the project to offer direct help to those patients who can't go home because of a risk to their health through cold or disrepair.

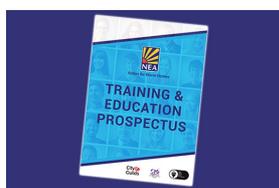
The delayed discharge of elderly patients alone is estimated to cost the NHS £820 million (National Audit Office).

The project's health liaison officer has been welcomed, to work within the hospital operation centre alongside the complex discharge planning team. Delayed discharge due to faulty/inadequate heating is reasonably common this time of year and project intervention has already managed to speed up discharge for a handful of patients, freeing up valuable beds.

The hospital has modified patient forms to include checking the patient has adequate heating on arrival and before discharge to catch any issues as early as possible. Our health liaison officer now also attends ward rounds and can be seen talking to patients on a number of the wards about their conditions at home.

The project hopes to replicate this success with the two other hospitals that serve Suffolk in the near future.

TRAINING FROM NEA



Have your staff been trained to be able to identify low income and vulnerable households living in cold damp homes?

Do they have the skills to signpost them into available assistance?

NEA has developed a range of innovative training courses to meet the needs of organisations working in the housing, environmental health, health, advice and

energy efficiency fields keen to address the broader consequences of fuel poverty and cold damp homes for local communities.

[You can download our new 2016-17 training prospectus here.](#)

[Open access dates for the Level 3 Award in Energy Awareness 6281-01 can be viewed here.](#)

Don't forget that members receive a discount on training fees.

For more information contact **[Lynsey Thompson](#)** or telephone 0191 269 2931.

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