



Eastern Fuel Poverty Forum 12 July 2023



Action for Warm Homes

About NEA

National Energy Action (NEA) is the national fuel poverty and energy efficiency charity that has worked across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland for the last forty+ years, to ensure that everyone in the UK can afford to live in a warm and safe home.

We work across both the energy and water sectors, with frontline practitioners, companies, regulators and Government, to make positive change for customers in vulnerable circumstances.



Action for Warm Homes

Time	Agenda
9:30am	Welcome Molly Chambers, Project Development Manager, NEA
9:45am	Updates, collaboration and networking opportunities NEA will chair this session and invite participating speakers to share brief updates
10:20am	Policy update Matt Copeland, Head of Policy and Public Affairs, NEA
10:50am	Comfort break
11:00am	Supporting customers in vulnerable circumstances Stacey Otter, Partnership Co-ordinator, Anglian Water
11:20am	The Trials and Tribulations of Setting up a Climate Emergency Centre Peter Chisnall, Trustee, En-form
11:40am	Lessons Learnt – Thermal Imaging Loan Project, Suffolk Claire Ling, Community Support Officer, Suffolk Climate Change Partnership
11:55am	Round up Forum concludes at 12 noon.

NEA is grateful to National Grid for supporting this round of Fuel Poverty Forums



Action for Warm Homes

How NEA has helped tackle the energy crisis (2022-23)

Our Warm and Safe Homes (WASH) Advice line operates across England and Wales, supporting thousands of people each year with energy and income maximisation advice and information.



Over **16,000 calls** answered through our phone lines
465 webchat conversations
Over **3,000** online referrals



1,872 clients have been supported with Benefit Entitlement Checks, of which **1,088 claims** were made resulting in over **£3.5 million** expected financial gains



Over 60% of clients supported had one or more health condition



11,151 clients helped with energy advice and support



Over £734,700 of crisis fund, hardship, bill support or debt relief payments administered by NEA



“Thank you so much, honestly, that has been keeping me up at night worrying so it’s a huge relief.” Single working mum, 34, who had £1,200 of fuel debt written off through the NEA support fund

“I couldn’t have got this sorted without you,” a client said after one of our advisers sorted out billing errors with her supplier to see her account move from debt to credit.

“Thank you so much for all your support,” a client who had been rationing her energy use said, after our adviser solved her complex metering and debt issues.

A 50-year-old mother of five, dependent on a ventilator and a wheelchair, had £1,204.13 of fuel debt wiped off, and her direct debit set to a more affordable amount, all thanks to one of NEA’s advisers.

A 62-year-old woman who had been selling her grandmother’s jewellery and borrowing money from friends to get by was helped by one of our advisers with both her energy and water bills. Our adviser got the woman onto a social tariff for her water bills and topped up her gas prepayment meter with a £147 voucher.



NEA's operational work programme 2023/24

- Communities of interest / supporting under-represented groups
- Smart meter rollout
- Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)



Communities of interest / supporting under-represented groups

Warm Welcome

- Providing vital energy advice and support to new and expectant parents in England and Wales
- Aiming to support families with managing their fuel bills and to achieve affordable warmth
- Community advice sessions and targeted support with professionals.

Building Community Resilience

- NEA and National Grid
- A greater focus on in-community work and direct support through partnership
- Working with partners who have been marginalised and face intersecting barriers in the energy market
- Tailored, local work to understand community needs and respond proactively
- Increase capacity across the advice giving sector.

Empowered by Energy

- NEA will continue to offer a unique energy awareness project to empower newly recognised refugees to the UK to overcome language barriers, understand new energy systems and save money.
- Interactive and in-depth workshops supported by translators covering a range of energy related topics and advice
- Delivered online and F2F
- Attendees become confident energy champions who can share tips and information with their peers and community networks.





Smart meter rollout

- Smart Energy GB in Communities is a grants and training programme established by NEA and Smart Energy GB in 2016
- Designed to reach and support people who might experience a barrier in benefiting from the smart meter rollout
- Provide funding to charities, local authorities and housing associations across Great Britain
- Promote the benefits of smart meters and bust myths
- Funding in 2023 is aiming to benefit people in fuel poverty; people who lack digital skills; and people who are carers.
- Free resources including a joint NEA/Smart Energy GB advice guide available on the Smart Energy GB website.

For more information: smartgrants@nea.org.uk

NEA and the Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

- Funding allowance for all Gas Distribution Networks (GDNs) allocated and managed by Ofgem
- To be used to support customers in vulnerable situations and to reduce the risks related to Carbon Monoxide
- Allocated according to the size of each GDN's customer base
- NEA is working in partnership with Cadent, Wales & West Utilities (WWU) and SGN to deliver VCMA funded programmes
- Programmes include gas appliance repairs/replacement and servicing, energy and water advice, benefits advice, fuel debt relief and emergency fuel vouchers.

Cadent – One Number Programme

- Referrals generated by engineers attending emergency call outs and carrying out mains replacement works
- Customers in vulnerable situations are referred to NEA (Eastern and North London network areas) or Groundwork (North West and North East network areas)
- Householders are offered:
 - FREE gas appliance repair/replacement or a FREE gas appliance service (subject to eligibility criteria)
 - Energy and water advice
 - A Benefit Entitlement Check and support to make a claim where required

Healthy Homes, Healthy People

Partnership approach across Wales & West Utilities footprint

- Energy advice
- Water tariff advice and access to cheaper tariffs
- Heating upgrades, access to top-ups, full support throughout
- Home adaptations – information and referrals
- Priority Services Register
- Home Safety Measures – CO, locking cooker valves
- Income maximisation





Cadent / SGN Collaboration

- Energy and water advice for SGN and Cadent customers:
 - Energy Debt support
 - Support to access water social tariffs and debt relief schemes
 - Priority Services – registration to supplier and operator Priority Service Registers
- Emergency fuel top-up vouchers fund for customers using the NEA Warm & Safe Homes (WASH) service living in an SGN or Cadent postcode area.
- Linked support to internal and partner organisations:
 - NEAs' Benefits Team
 - Network Operators Carbon Monoxide Alarms
 - Referrals to local foodbanks
 - Measures projects for insulation, heating and controls



Updates, collaboration and networking

Chaired by Molly Chambers, Project
Development Manager, NEA



Action for Warm Homes



Policy update
Matt Copeland, Head of
Policy and Public
Affairs, NEA



Action for Warm Homes

NEA's Three Advocacy Priorities



People - Supporting fuel poor households through the energy crisis



Homes - Achieving a fair and affordable transition to net zero



Market Frameworks - Ensuring overarching market, policy and regulatory frameworks work in the interest of fuel poor households

People - Supporting fuel poor households through the energy crisis

Recent Developments

- Price cap now down to £2,070 but Government energy support now ended (EBSS and EPG). So prices no different to winter
- 20% of prepay EBSS vouchers have not been redeemed to date. This will be passed back to HMT.
- Income support continues for those in the social security system. But this is defrayed across different essentials.
- One third of fuel poor households are not in the social security system and so receive no support going forward.

Coming Up

- Continuing to make the case for more targeted support this winter, specifically for energy (i.e. bill rebates/price support)
- Campaigning for a social tariff to ensure that low income households can access an affordable price of energy.
- Consultation on a social tariff expected this summer.

Homes - Achieving a fair and affordable transition to net zero

Recent Developments

- UK Government announced a new energy efficiency scheme – “Great British Insulation Scheme”
- More money allocated to Local Authorities and Housing Associations to deliver HUG and SHDF
- Government announced that it would look to rebalance levies on energy bills.
- UK Government debating whether to tighten energy efficiency standards for landlords to meet.

Coming Up

- Making the case for fuel poverty schemes (including GBIS) to be targeted on fuel poor households. This includes our work with political parties on their manifestos.
- Working with UK Government officials to ensure that current schemes work as well as possible.
- Ensuring that the UK Government does not rebalance energy bills simply through transferring levies to gas bills.
- Building up case studies of private renters.

Market Frameworks - Ensuring overarching market, policy and regulatory frameworks work in the interest of fuel poor households

Recent Developments

- Ofgem have consulted on making some changes to energy pricing, including:
 - How debt allowances are calculated in the price cap
 - Pricing differentials for different payment types
- New voluntary agreements regarding the forced installation of prepayment meters.
- Ofgem consulting on how to improve customer service.

Coming Up

- Continuing to make the case that there should be no/limited price differentials between payment types in the energy market.
- Pushing Ofgem to take the PPM voluntary agreement into the licence.
- Ensuring that energy customers do not pay over the odds for the cost of debt in the price cap

Forced Prepay – Deep Dive

New Rules for Pre Installation

- Involuntary PPM as a last resort
- Multiple contact attempts by a range of methods and site welfare visit before Involuntary PPM
- Installs must be smart meters as default

Exemptions from the process

- High risk group completely exempt from installs, including elderly, very young, and certain medical conditions.
- Broader medium risk group exempt if likely they will self-disconnect

On site requirements


- Site welfare visit and installation teams to be appropriately trained, with clear expectations on their behaviour
- There is a need for bodycam or audio recording

New Rules for Post Installation

- New Involuntary PPM to come pre-loaded with credit
- Suppliers must provide aftercare including check ins and monitoring of top ups/consumption
- Households must be offered to be moved back to credit mode if debt is cleared

Forced installs will not re-commence until suppliers have shown to Ofgem that they can meet these requirements. This is not expected until mid-summer at the earliest.

What else is happening?

- **New Select Committee Established for DESNZ** – Angus MacNeil will chair the committee. NEA is engaged with helping the committee shape their initial agenda.
 - **Review of Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA)** – UK Government is looking at changing how the wholesale market works. Some of this will directly impact fuel poor households, so NEA will remain engaged.
- 

Indicative Policy Timeline

Summer 23/24

- Consultations on a social tariff and rebalancing energy bills
- GBIS goes live

Spring 24/25

- Implementation of a social tariff
- Preparation for election (possible May 2024)

Autumn 23/24


- Winter price cap announced with decisions on debt/levelisation
- Prepay agreement into the licence?
- Party conferences – focus on manifesto commitments

A large graphic on the left side of the slide features a red semi-circle at the bottom left, with three yellow-to-orange gradient rays extending upwards and to the right from its top edge. The word "Break" is centered in the white space to the right of these rays.

Break



Action for Warm Homes



**Supporting customers in
vulnerable circumstances**
Stacey Otter, Partnership
Co-ordinator, Anglian Water



Action for Warm Homes

Supporting our customers in vulnerable circumstances



Working in partnership

Stacey Otter – Partnership Coordinator

July 2023



How many customers are benefitting from our support?



We have been able to help provide financial assistance to **320,000** customers.

Over **300,000** customers are receiving a range of free practical support through our Priority Services Register

Finding it hard to pay the bills?



We have lots of ways to help you and your loved ones.

If you're finding it difficult to pay, we offer:

Discounted tariffs

Assistance schemes

Affordable payment plans

What are we doing about the Cost of Living?

With the rising cost of fuel, food and just about everything else, earlier this year we launched a huge £135 million customer support package throughout 2023 for those struggling with the cost of living.

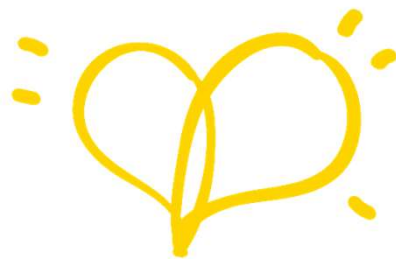
Extra Care Support – financial assistance

- Discounted tariffs, (including a tariff which can provide upto 50% discount)
- Debt forgiveness schemes
- Affordable and flexible payment plans
- Conducting in house income maximisation; to help signpost additional financial assistance the customer might be entitled to

Supporting customers

Priority Services Register – practical support

- The Priority Services Register helps a wide range of customers with varying needs
- By signing up, we can provide additional support services
- Free to register and once signed up, someone can stay on the PSR for as long as they need
- Inclusive and accessible service for all



Need a little extra support?



Our Priority Services Register can help lots of people with different needs. By signing up we can:



Let you know about upcoming work

We can call or text you to let you know planned work in advance.

Help you nominate someone to manage your account

This means they will be able to speak directly to us.

Send bills in different formats

We can send bills in braille, large print and audio.

Help if your water goes off

We may be able to deliver bottled water if you need it.

Help protect you against bogus callers

You can add a password to your account.

Communicate in different languages

We can communicate in your preferred language, including BSL.

Working in Partnership



Collaboration is key - working together to make a difference.

- Sharing the range of support to ensure the most vulnerable receive the right support
- We currently work with over **150** partners from varying sectors, including charities, local authorities, public health and utility companies – if you're
- Supporting customers
- Learning from our partners and making positive change
- Making it easy for you to engage with us
- Reducing customers effort to receive our support

How do I assist someone to benefit from Anglian Water's support?



Ask questions like;

- Are you finding it difficult to pay your water bill at the moment?
- Are you worried about the cost of living going up?
- Would it cause you a problem if your water supply was interrupted?
- Do you have any issues reading or understanding your water bill?
- Do you feel like you would benefit from having some extra time to get to the door?

If the answer is yes to any of the above questions, please help them get in touch!

- Refer or signpost into our specialist team by calling; 0800 232 1951 (PSR) or 0800 011 3774 (ECS)
- Share our website link for more information; anglianwater.co.uk/WaterCare
- Refer into our vulnerability team by emailing; PriorityServices@anglianwater.co.uk

If you'd like me to send you over some information, you can contact me directly:

bKennedy2@anglianwater.co.uk

Thank you!



The Trials and Tribulations of Setting up a Climate Emergency Centre

Peter Chisnall, Trustee,
En-form



Action for Warm Homes



**Lessons Learnt – Thermal
Imaging Loan Project, Suffolk**
Claire Ling, Community
Support Officer, Suffolk Climate
Change Partnership



Action for Warm Homes

Suffolk Climate Change Partnership



Claire Ling - Community Support Officer

12/07/2023



Who is the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership?

- The Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP) consists of all of Suffolk's Local Authorities, and since 2009 have been working with other organisations locally including:
 - Groundwork East
 - Environment Agency
 - University of Suffolk

Community Thermal Imaging Project



July 2022 Expression of Interest

116 submissions

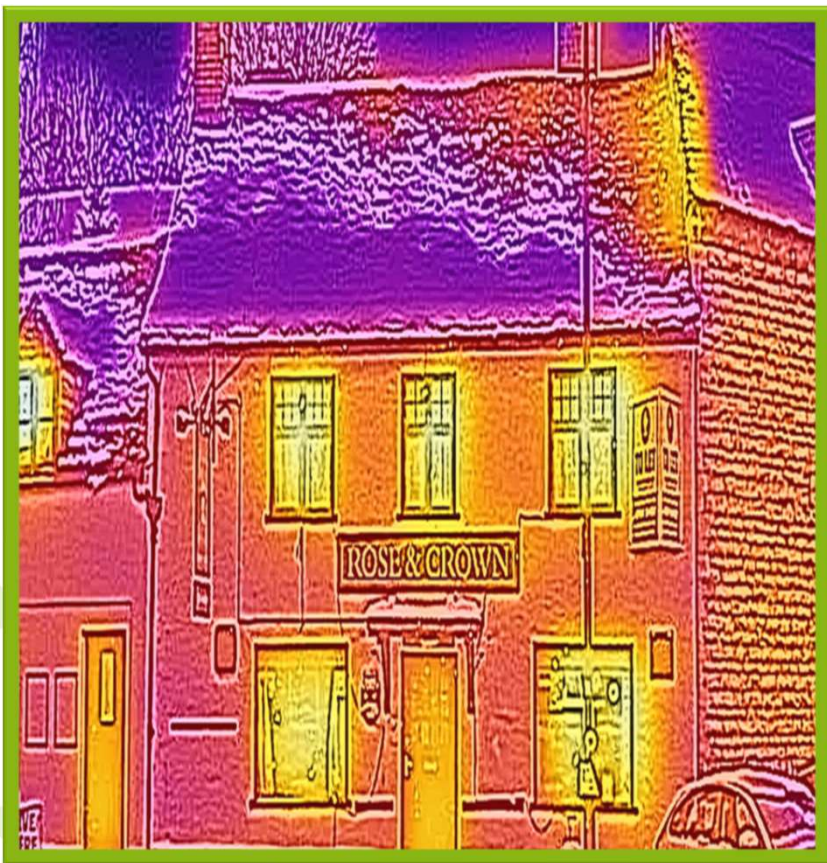
50 informed us they were local authorities (town and parish councils)

63 community groups or similar

3 individuals

11 did not provide sufficient information e.g contact details

Community Thermal Imaging Project



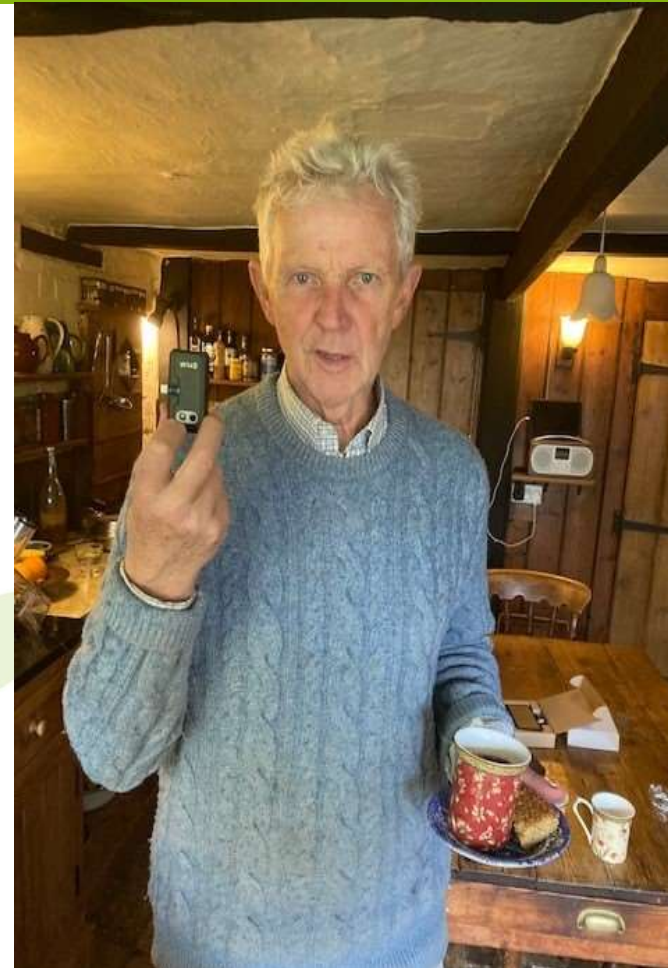
Camera hosts

6 camera hosts

Accessible to clusters identified in EOI

Role

- Safe keeping of equipment.
- Equipment checker
- Liaison with SCCP regarding issues
- Collection and drop off point.



Camera equipment



FLIR One Pro - Equipment Checklist

- FLIR One Pro iOS (x1)
- FLIR One Pro Android (x1)
- USB Camera Cable (x2)
- Black Camera Case (x2)
- Battery Power Bank (x1)
- USB Power Bank Cable (x1)
- Hi-Vis Jackets (x2)
- Lanyards (x2)
- Instruction Booklet (x1)

Contact Information

Henry.Stothard@suffolk.gov.uk

OR

Claire.Ling@suffolk.gov.uk

Instructions & Help Sheet

For Thermal Imaging
Help Videos.
Scan this QR Code:



Scan the QR Code by opening the Camera up
on your device. Hover you camera over the
Code and you will be taken to the link

For the Users Manual
and more Instructions.
Scan this QR Code:



Camera allocation



- <10 household/properties – 1 week
- 11-29 Households/properties - 2 weeks
- 30-49 Households/ properties - 3 weeks
- >50 Households/properties – 4 weeks

Information supplied



Thank you for booking a Thermal Imaging Camera on behalf of your community.

You have been allocated the cameras from: **TUESDAY XXXXX to MONDAY XXXXX**. Can you please confirm these dates work for you? We are very over subscribed for cameras, so we are limited on available dates.

1. Please ensure you have completed the [Borrowing Agreement](#) and watch the [training videos](#) and guidance on interpreting the images.
2. You will need to download the **FLIR ONE app** on either the Apple Store or Android to help you carry out successful surveys, and ensure the app works on your phone.
3. We also recommend downloading the **Home Inspect app** which offers guidance and tips on taking thermal images.
4. We have attached a template poster and article to help promote your project.
5. Cameras are intended for use by community groups rather than individuals, and surveys are best scheduled in groupings to make the most of the time available during your booking slot.
6. Please let us know and arrange with the host to return your cameras early if you have conducted all the surveys that are possible so we can rebook with another group.



The contact details for your nearest Thermal Imaging Host, where the camera are held is:

NAME:

CONTACT NO:

EMAIL:

ADDRESS:

Please contact them directly to arrange convenient collection and return times for the dates offered.

After you have carried out your surveys, we ask that your group follows up with homeowners and help signpost them to further help by either:

1. Signposting suitable people to [Warm Homes Suffolk](#)
2. Encourage & help deliver easy DIY fixes and encourage positive changes in behaviour through our [Next Steps](#) or visit the [Energy Saving Trust](#)
3. Look to run a Community Bulk Buy scheme for insulation & draught fixes (see guidance in [Next Steps](#).)





By carrying out community thermal imaging surveys you are not only helping your local community save money and stay warm and healthy this winter, but you are also helping Suffolk reach its target of Net Zero by 2030.

Thank you!

Need some inspiration? Check out these links to community groups who have run similar projects elsewhere in the country!

1. www.sustainablewallingford.org/thermal-imaging/
2. <http://blewbury.co.uk/energy/BEI.htm>
3. www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/11016857.residents-put-picture-thermal-imaging-campaign/
4. <http://sustainablecharlbury.org/how-we-can-help/thermal-imaging-2/>
5. <http://sustainablewitney.org.uk/tag/thermalimaging/>

ATTACH FILES: COMMUNITY TOOLKIT (ZIPPED FOLDER)

1. Template Community Article
2. Template Community Poster
3. Example Risk Assessment (please adapt to your own circumstances)

Survey Evaluation Form



Data



61 groups borrowed the cameras

Equivalent of 151 weeks of surveying

Most households surveyed by one group – 63

Least surveyed by one group – 3

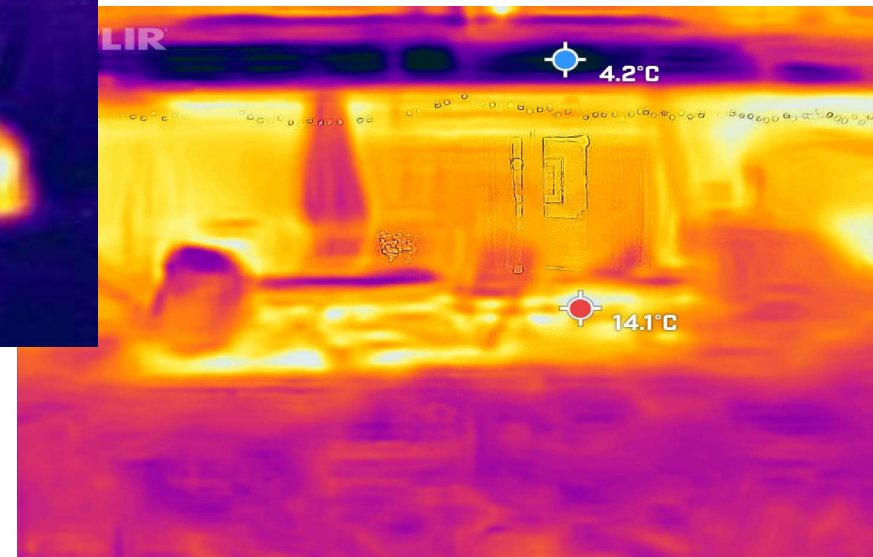
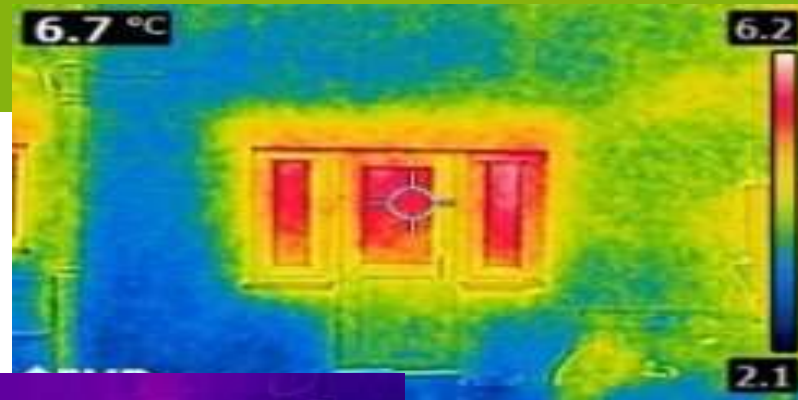
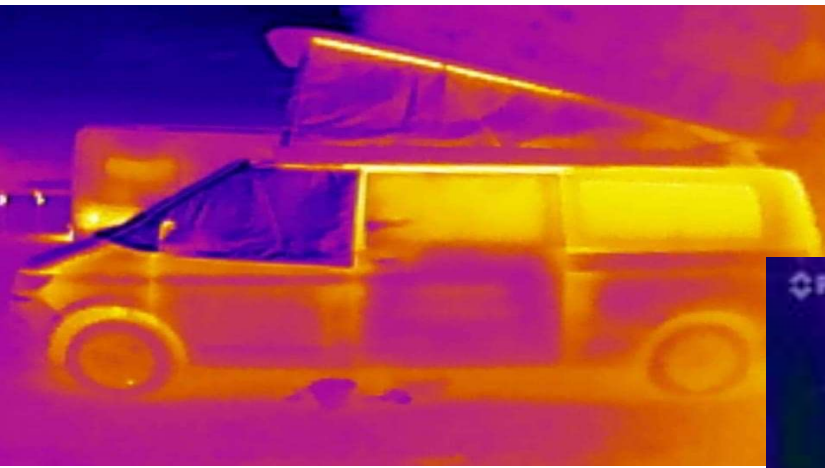
In excess of 700 homes surveyed

8 Community buildings surveyed

A community of houseboats surveyed

Referrals to Warm Homes Suffolk

What did we survey!




Where were the borrowing groups located?



Name of Local Authority

[More Details](#)

 Insights

 Babergh / Mid Suffolk

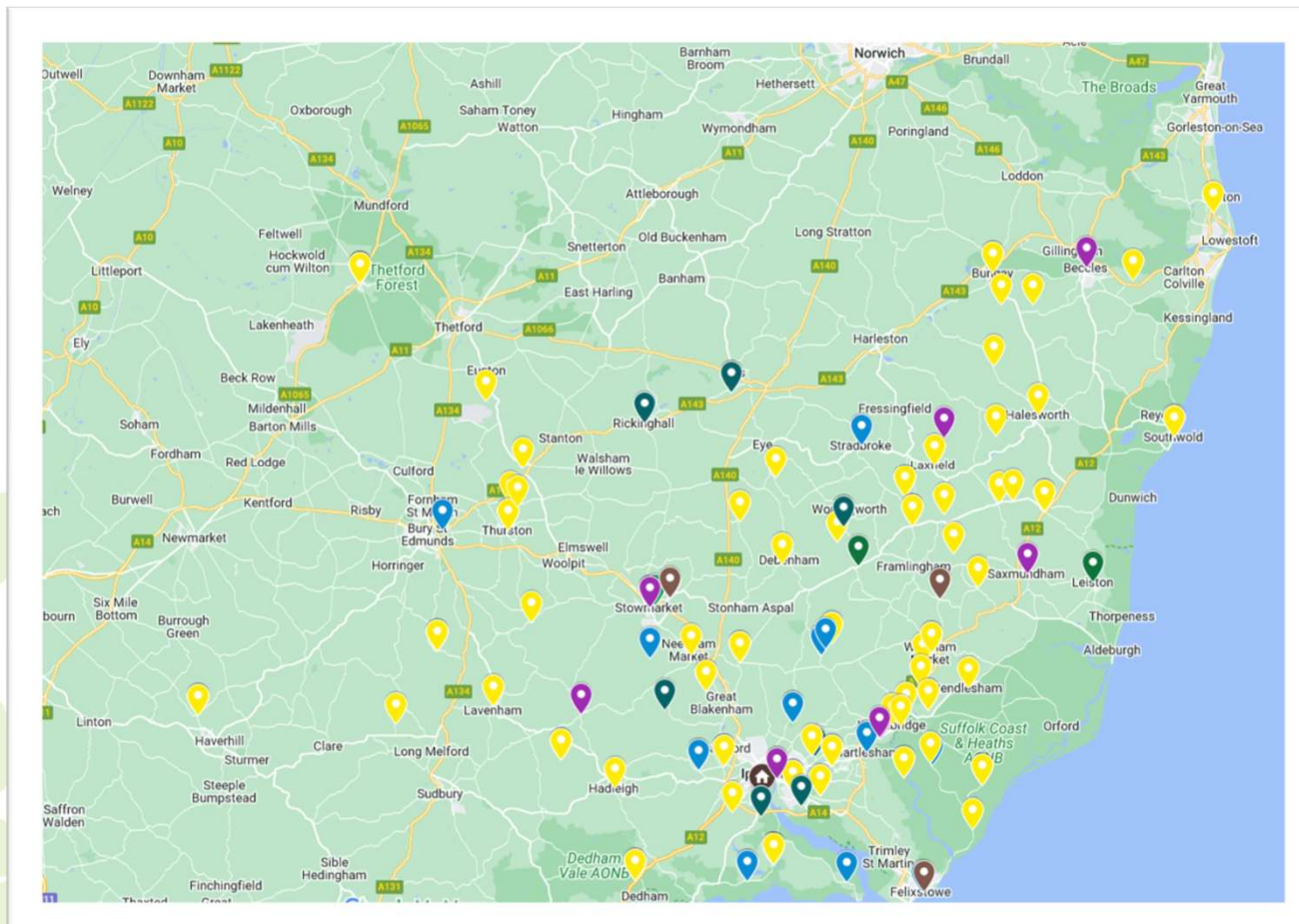
 East Suffolk

 Ipswich

 West Suffolk



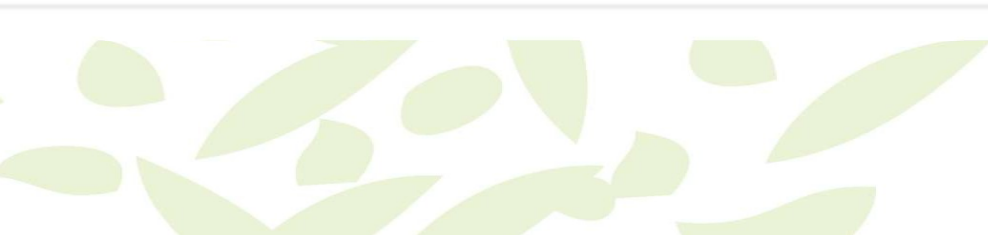
Thermal imaging locations



Would the group use the cameras again?



- Yes
- No
- Maybe



Recommend the scheme to others?



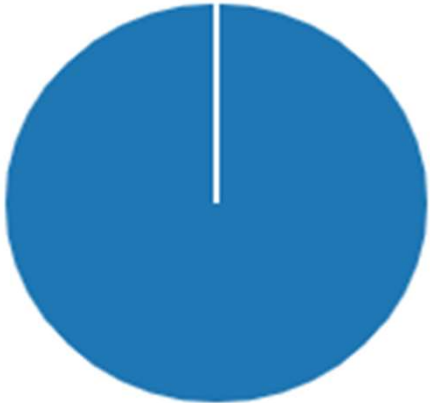
15. Would you recommend this scheme to other groups?

[More Details](#)

 Insights

 Yes

 No



As a result ...



- Bulk Buy scheme for insulation products
- Improved relationship with Warm Homes Suffolk campaign
- Linking groups to other insulation schemes
- [Suffolk Local Welfare Assistance Scheme - Suffolk County Council](#)
- Connecting with prepayment meter advisors



Grants and Funding



Retrofit Coordinator Bootcamp - Retrofit Academy



Fully Funded 4 half days or 2 full days



Groundwork East - Free Household Energy Advice

contact dominic.simpson@groundwork.org.uk
or call on 01473 350370.



- Do you want to improve your home and reduce energy bills? Are you considering renewable installations solar, heat pumps or improving insulation, glazing, heating controls and other changes. But want to make sure it's the best approach for your home?
- Free home energy audit survey Advice over the phone and/or email to suit your property.
- Case studies from real Suffolk homes
- Advice webinars

Images from green match, grantuk & B&Q

Warm Homes Suffolk



"Thanks to Warm Homes Suffolk my house is warmer, I am warmer, and I sleep better. I no longer have to wrap myself in socks, gloves, a hat and a blanket and I am so happy."

Warm
Homes
Suffolk

The warm feeling fund

Grants to help insulate and make your property more energy efficient are available **if you're a home owner or private tenant without gas central heating and the total gross income (from all sources) of everyone in the property is under £31,000.**

Landlords whose tenants qualify for support can receive up to two-thirds subsidy of costs for improvement work.

Off gas heating

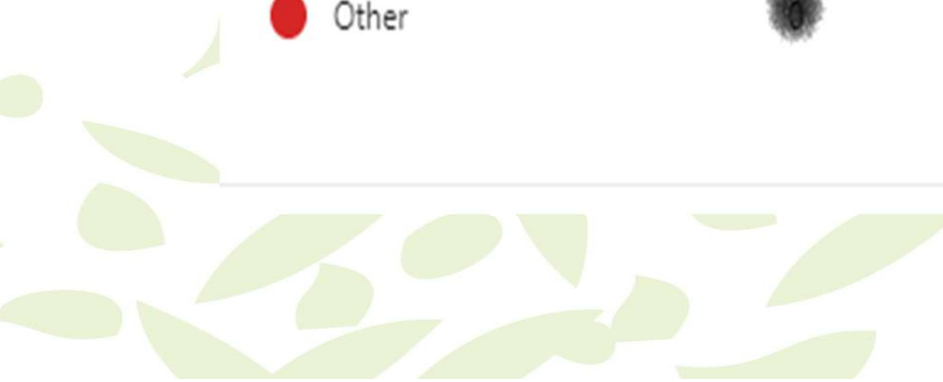
EPC rating of D, E, F or G

applications are still open for properties with oil, electric and solid fuel heating.

Did the scheme result in further conversations on different topics?



- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Other



What improvements did the users say?



What did we learn?



COMMUNICATE,
COMMUNICATE,
COMMUNICATE



Learning

Positive feedback

Team was responsive

Team easy to access and easy interactions

Cameras easy to use (for some) camera roll store

Building community cohesion, relationships, trust

Camera locations good

“Great customer service”

Full equipment resource “made it happen”

Further expressions of interest.

Providing further resources.

Tapping into skills and knowledge

To improve on

- Increased image interpretation skills
- Community led booking system
- Camera upgrade – android
- Floating camera availability
- Define role of camera hosts
- Avoid duplication – define team roles better
- More regular updates
- Group WhatsApp for connectivity
- Consider EDI community/west of county
- Weather and time of year

So what next for us?



- Purchase more cameras
- Go for camera upgrade
- More webinars before and during
- Offer cameras last years to faith communities/ groups in areas of multi deprivation
- Improve booking system – enable group agency and choice
- Recommend groups to target
- Offer training on targeting and communication

Training



Action for Warm Homes

Large suite of short courses or qualifications to help enhance knowledge and practical understanding about fuel poverty, fuel debt, decarbonisation and vulnerability.

Funded places available for frontline staff or volunteers (for non-commercial organisations)

www.nea.org.uk/training



NEA Membership



Action for Warm Homes

Everything we do, we do in partnership and our members are the heart of those partnerships.

- The **Business Supporters Group** has been in existence for over 20 years. A strong relationship with the business community is vital to ensure the fuel poor can benefit from current schemes and technological developments. NEA's campaigning activities would not be so effective without industry support.
- Our **Supporting and Enhanced Membership** include local authorities, housing associations, health agencies, charities, community groups and contracted installers through energy provider schemes. **Supporting membership is FREE!**

NEA relies on its members, both as a source of income and for support in achieving the charity's aims and objectives. More information about benefits and costs can be found on our website.

NEA Annual Conference and Exhibition

This year's conference will be taking place from
4 - 6 December 2023
at the **Leicester Tigers' Stadium** in Leicester.

To join the mailing list for updates and early-bird booking rates,
go to **www.nea.org.uk/annual-conference-2023/**



Action for Warm Homes



Thank you for attending and for your contributions.

An online evaluation form will be sent to you shortly – we'd be grateful for your feedback.



Action for Warm Homes