



# Action for Affordable Warmth

Annual report on progress April 2004 – March 2005

**“All homes should be warm homes by 2016”**

Action for Affordable Warmth was launched in October 2001 and was the first strategy of its kind - seven local Councils across District, County and Unitary boundaries developed the strategy as a joint initiative. This approach continues to bring unique strengths and challenges to the strategy implementation process.

Since the launch, the multi-agency strategy Partnership has been developing links with key agencies that have access to households in, or at risk of, fuel poverty. The Partnership continues to draw upon these links to achieve the strategy's objectives and implement the action plan.

The Partnership members have been working to raise awareness of affordable warmth issues through presentations to key agencies, public exhibitions, staff training sessions and press releases. This report provides a breakdown of key areas of activity and projects for 2004/05 across the Partnership area.

## Progress April 2004 March 2005

The Partnership has met regularly during the last year with attendance from Local Authorities, The Pension Service, Care & Repair, Severn Wye Energy Agency, Primary Care Trusts, Social Service, Citizens Advice Bureau, Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, and Age Concern. Presentations were given by external speakers from National Energy Action and Social Services.

## Focus for Partnership Activity March 2004 April 2005

During the year the Partnership identified the following areas as our main areas of action with regards to implementation of the strategy.

- Develop working links with Citizens Advice Bureau
- Work with private sector landlords
- Raise awareness of affordable warmth amongst registered social landlords
- Ensure advice is accessible to all
- Improve links with hospital discharge / admission prevention services

## Projects

- **Warm and Well** continues to deliver heating and insulation improvements to vulnerable households, giving people across the Partnership area access to energy efficiency advice and practical solutions to achieve affordable warmth. To date over twelve thousand people have been given advice and 6,867 properties have been improved by the scheme



- **Warmer Lets** provides grants to landlords for energy efficiency improvements in South Gloucestershire. The scheme successfully approved 521 grants across the consortium for a total of £356,370 in measures. The scheme ended in March 2005. South Gloucestershire is continuing to evaluate future programs and is keen to introduce new schemes that will specifically target private sector landlords.
- **Wise Homes** helps people in Cotswold and Stroud Districts improve homes that are difficult or expensive to heat because of solid walls, rooms in the roof or no mains gas supply. It is making a real difference with 130 individual advice visits / home energy action plans complete and installations of solar water heating panels, sloping ceiling insulation, a clean wood pellet-fuelled heating system, interior solid wall insulation and high efficiency oil boilers improving more than thirty homes to date. 
- **Rent Warm, Rent Well** focusing measures on the privately rented sector. National Energy Action provided funding to pilot a method of engaging landlords and installing insulation measures to their properties. As a result of the success of the pilot a proposal is in place to continue the work countywide.
- **Prison Energy Project** working with Gloucester Prison, staff, inmates and their families were advised on reducing energy use and grants available. This successful feasibility project is now being put forward as an implementation project to the Energy Savings Trust's Innovation fund.
- **Think BIG** – After a successful feasibility study an implementation project is being launched in spring 2005, targeting energy saving measures at people carrying out DIY in the South West.
- **Social Housing** - Service level agreements developed between the Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre and various Housing Associations to provide energy efficiency advice to tenants.
- **Money Matters** – promoted by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council in partnership with Age Concern. Series of free events across Gloucestershire to cover equity release and other money matters. Independent specialist speakers invited to cover a range of issues. Very successful events with 80-90 attendees.
- **Hospital Discharge** - as a result of Partnership meeting a project was set up with Age Concern distributing information and energy saving light bulbs through volunteers who provide hospital aftercare for the elderly.

## Training

- Active Warm & Well training session targeting health and social care professionals the training covers cold damp homes, healthy eating, active lifestyles and slips and falls.
- Single Assessment Process (SAP) training continues to be carried out in South Gloucestershire.



- Members training sessions carried out in two local authority area included information on affordable warmth.
- Social Housing Forum, three training session for social housing managers identifying needs of tenants and benefits of energy efficiency to housing providers.

**Advice and Awareness Raising**

- **Energy Efficiency Week 2004** - during the week a variety of events were held including joint event in B&Q Warehouse with Cheltenham CAB, training for Meals on Wheels volunteers from the WRVS, information stands and radio interviews.
- **Target Libraries** -Information stands have been situated in eleven libraries across Gloucestershire. These stands included posters, leaflets and Home Energy Check forms

- **Warm Homes Pledge**, working with National Energy Action, npower, Cheltenham Borough Council the event for the public and stakeholders to find out more about the issues around affordable warmth. Exhibition of twelve organisations tackling affordable warmth. Attendees “sign-up” and to join the Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire Affordable Warmth Partnership. Opened by the Mayor of Cheltenham and addressed by Nigel Jones MP, attended by over 100 people.



- **Gloucestershire Warm and Well briefing session** As an on-going project supported by the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, Gloucestershire Warm and Well provides an opportunity to engage health professionals, social care professionals and those at risk of cold related illness directly.
- **Flu Jab Clinics** – working with West Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust a large number of Warm and Well room thermometers carrying a Flu Jab message were produced. These were sent to doctors surgeries in the Gloucester and Forest of Dean areas. Energy Advisors attended eight Flu Jab Clinics, giving energy efficiency advice to patients before or after their jab.
- **Support Groups** – An example of this group: Dementia Trust, Gloucester; Visually Impaired Group, Tewkesbury; Carers Group, Lydney. Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre can offer home visits, advice and sign-posting to grants.

- **Warm & Well Seasons Greeting Card** promotion in partnership with organisations working with older people. Cards were distributed throughout the winter season. This received an excellent response including TV coverage promoting the Warm & Well scheme.



- **BBC Radio Gloucestershire Action Desk**, run by the CSV. On the first Friday of every month an Energy Advisor gives advice and tips on saving energy live on air. “free thermometer” offer responsible for an additional thirty calls to the Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (EEAC) in one week
- **Home Visits** Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre continues to offer home visits to vulnerable clients and clients needing help with things that can be best explained face to face such as heating controls or condensation.



**The Gloucestershire EEAC Team: Paul, Kaye, Sarah, Barbara, Alma & Rebecca**

### **Key Achievements 2004-2005**

- 34 training sessions held
- 347 people attending training
- 1,808 properties improved under Warm and Well
- 15,854 householders receiving advice on energy efficiency from the Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre
- 2,004 householders receiving grants from the Government's Warm Front scheme
- 190 home visits
- 4,905 calls to Gloucestershire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre advice lines

### **Focus for forthcoming year - March 2005- April 2006**

- Influencing key decision makers
- Training and referral
- Access to information
- Raise awareness of energy efficiency amongst tenants
- Plan 5 year review of Affordable Warmth Strategy for 2006

### **Partnership meeting dates for 2005 - 2006**

- **19<sup>th</sup> May 2005**
- **15<sup>th</sup> September 2005**
- **8<sup>th</sup> December 2005**
- **16<sup>th</sup> February 2006**

Ongoing areas of work include influencing decision makers, training and supporting voluntary sector workers, identifying opportunities for targeting and keeping abreast of changes to pensions and benefits.

***This report is a brief summary of some initial achievements. If you require further information, more detailed reports on practical projects and strategy tasks are available. Please see below for a contact list.***

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