



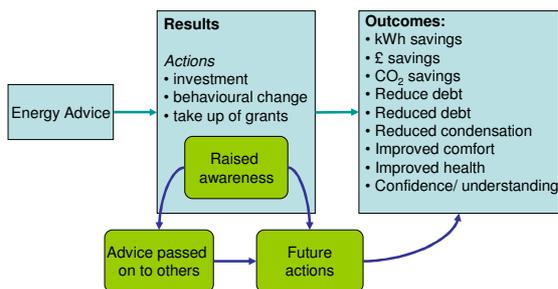
Energy Advice in Social Housing

Severn Wye Energy Agency

Aims of energy advice

- Reduction in carbon dioxide emissions
- Alleviation of fuel poverty
- Reduction in overall energy demand

Energy Advice – results and outcomes



Action by owners and occupiers

Owner:

- Thermal insulation
- Central heating installation
- Boiler replacement
- Installing ventilation
- Solar thermal hot water

Occupier:

- Best use of heating controls
- Supplementary heating
- Buying efficient appliances
- Best use of appliances
- Using controllable ventilation
- Radiator panels and shelves
- Low energy light bulbs
- Turning off unused lights
- Closing curtains at dusk

What use is energy advice to tenants?

- To identify and prioritise measures that can be taken by tenant
- To enable tenant to adjust and make best use of new heating/ventilation/insulation
- To enable tenants to make best of existing circumstances

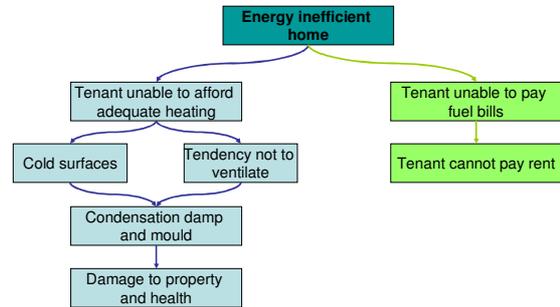
Benefits of energy efficiency: to the tenants

- Lower fuel bills
- Improved comfort
- Reduced risk of condensation damp
- Healthier indoor environment

Benefits of energy efficiency: to the landlord

- Improved quality of service
- Less complaints
- Reduced risk of damage from condensation damp
- Better environmental performance of housing stock
- Achievement of affordable warmth aims

The importance of energy efficiency to landlords



Fuel poor households in England (millions)

	1996	2002
Total fuel poor	5.3	2.0
Private housing	3.1	1.3
Social housing	2.2	0.7

Source: DTI 2003, figures including housing costs

What can be achieved by energy advice?

- 10% savings on fuel bills achieved by client-led schemes
- 10% savings on fuel bills achieved by opportunistic advice to help maximise benefits of new heating
- 8% savings on fuel bills per average EEAC client household

Source: Advice into Action, Boardman, Green & Maby, Eaga Charitable Trust 1998

Methods of advice delivery

- questionnaire and computer generated report
- telephone
- home visit
- advice surgery
- integration with other front-line services

Steps to effective energy advice

- reaching clients
- motivating action
- enabling action

Steps to effective energy advice: motivating action

- interest
- credibility
- trust
- relevance

The Case of the 24 Hour Heating

The problem

- Pensioner had gas c.h. installed after flood damage to storage heaters
- Upset to find bills higher than before

The Case of the 24 Hour Heating

Action by adviser

- Home visit to look at bills and control settings
- Found timer on constant, pensioner unable to set it – helped to set for daytime only and showed how to override to off if going out
- Found thermostats on maximum – showed how to set room `stat to 21° C, and choose different settings for each TRV

The Case of the Confused Thermostats

The problem

- Family with new gas c.h. – report that it switches off automatically about an hour after switching on, and stays off
- Heating installer had re-visited and advised to turn all TRVs to maximum – this had not solved the problem

The Case of the Confused Thermostats

Action by adviser

- Visited home and looked at settings and position of thermostats
- Identified likely cause to be room `stat close to kitchen where much home cooking done
- Advised to close kitchen door (and ventilate by open window), and if necessary turn up room `stat to compensate
- Advised on appropriate (different) settings for TRVs in each room to maximise efficiency and comfort

The Case of the Closed Trickle Vents

The problem

- Tenant complained to landlord about damp in lower corner of kitchen, behind curtain in living room, and upper corners of bathroom and bedroom
- Landlord reported that other tenants with similar complaints

The Case of the Closed Trickle Vents

Action by adviser

- Identified symptoms of condensation damp in living room, bathroom and bedroom
- Noted that all trickle vents closed, and advised tenant that designed to be open all time except most severe weather
- Advised tenant to ventilate bathroom by opening window and closing inner door

The Case of the Closed Trickle Vents

Action by adviser

- Suggested to landlord awareness-raising/training for staff and tenants about condensation
- Reported possible rising damp in kitchen to landlord for further investigation

The Case of the Wrong Tariff

The problem

- Elderly lady with storage heaters and off-peak electric immersion heater, has very high electricity bill and debt of £250
- Changed supplier a year ago, in hope of saving money

The Case of the Wrong Tariff

Action by adviser

- Checked actual readings against bill, and found that although a two-rate meter, had gone onto single rate tariff when changed supplier
- Helped to change back to Economy 7 tariff, and negotiate repayments for debt

The Mystery of the High Electricity Bill

The problem

- Single parent family with gas c.h. has very high electricity bills and can't understand why
- Suspicious of supplier and not willing to pay, so dispute is developing
- Phone conversation did not identify likely cause of high bills

The Mystery of the High Electricity Bill

Action by adviser

- Checked with supplier that tariff information correct
- Home visit, showed tenant how to read meter and check that estimates on bill reasonably accurate
- Advised on efficient use of main electrical appliances
- Advised tenant on taking weekly readings and calculating cost so can monitor effect of attempted savings and anticipate next bill

The Case of the Cold Storage Heaters

The problem

- Family with 2 children, one asthmatic, electric night storage heaters and Economy 7 hot water
- Complain that cold in evenings, and storage heaters feel cold and can't 'turn them up'
- Feel aggrieved that electric bills are high and they are still uncomfortable

The Case of the Cold Storage Heaters

Action by adviser

- Home visit, looked at storage heater and hot water controls with tenants
- Found that storage heater dials set to maximum, and advised to turn 'output' dial down overnight (and during day if possible) and turn up when start to get cold in evenings

The Case of the Cold Storage Heaters

Action by adviser

- Explained that this will keep heat in storage heaters for evening when most needed, and minimise need for expensive supplementary heating
- Found hot water thermostat on 80°C, and advised to turn down to 60



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