

Warm and Healthy Homes Project Annual Report 2015/16



## **Warm and Healthy Homes Project**

### **Annual Report 2015-16**

## Overview of Warm and Healthy Homes Project

The Warm and Healthy Homes project was introduced as a response to poor quality housing, low incomes and high energy costs resulting in households suffering negative effects on their health and wellbeing. DCC estimate that approximately 25% of households in rural off gas grid communities are in fuel poverty compared to 11.5% in the rest of County Durham. Fair Society, Healthy Lives<sup>1</sup> reiterated the link between poor quality housing, low incomes and high energy costs resulting in residents suffering negative effects on their health and wellbeing. The Public Health White Paper (2010) states that “we could prevent many of the yearly excess winter deaths through warmer housing”.<sup>2</sup>

The programme has been funded from Public Health up to March 2017 and is delivered by the Housing and Regeneration Team. This is the second year’s annual report.

Delivery is embedded into both the Affordable Warmth and Health and Wellbeing strategies. The former is co-ordinated by a multi-agency delivery partnership involving Public Health, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Housing Regeneration, Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service, Welfare Rights, AgeUK, National Energy Action and Warm up North British Gas. This reports to the Housing Forum of Altogether Wealthier while the latter reports into the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The project provides the following assistance:- .

- New central heating or energy efficient boiler replacements
- Central heating and boiler repairs
- Home insulation measures
- Energy saving advice
- Signposting to partner organisations and internal services for, Income maximisation assistance, fire safety checks and energy tariff and fuel switching advice

In line with NICE guidance,<sup>3</sup> the eligibility criteria for assistance is as follows:

- People with cardiovascular conditions
- People with respiratory conditions (COPD and childhood asthma)
- People with mental health conditions
- People with disabilities
- People aged 65 and older
- Households with young children (0-4 years)
- Pregnant women
- People on low income
- Families with children on a low income.

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<sup>1</sup> Fair Society, Healthy Lives: The Marmot Review, 2010, Institute of Health Equity.

<sup>2</sup> Healthy People, Healthy Lives, The Public Health White Paper, 2010, Department of Health

<sup>3</sup> Excess winter deaths and morbidity and the health risks associated with cold homes, 2015, NICE

The project consists of the following elements:-

### **Training**

Front line health and social care practitioners based in GP surgeries, hospitals, clinics and the community are informed of the scheme and the referral process using a range of mechanisms. These include health and social care team meetings, e-mail updates and outreach briefing sessions. This enables them to refer their clients with an underlying health condition related to living in a cold damp home to receive free domestic energy efficiency measures.

### **Referral Pathway**

The project provides a countywide referral process (see Appendix A) for front line health and social care practitioners enabling them to refer clients with a long term health condition living in a cold, damp home. All referral partners receive feedback on the assistance provided to the clients they have referred via e-mail updates.

A referral card system (see Appendix B) is used to allow referrals to be made as easily as possible by front line staff.

Once a referral is made by a health practitioner, it is followed up by a phone call/assessment undertaken by a Housing Officer and one or more interventions from a menu of options, offered.

### **SAP (Energy Efficiency) Ratings 2015/16**

The Warm and Healthy Homes project provides home energy efficiency measures in the homes of residents who have a cold related illness. The objective is to provide a warmer and healthier indoor environment which is sustainable in the long term as a result of lower energy bills. A total of 98 households were assisted during 2015/16, all properties received a pre and post SAP energy efficiency assessment using a scale of 0 (very poor) to 100 (excellent) to assess the improvement in the energy efficiency and warmth of the property.

The pre intervention average energy efficiency rating of the above properties was 58.7 and the post intervention average energy efficiency rating had increased on average to 67.5. The energy rating system is colour coded from green to red. The green end of the scale indicating a more energy efficient household combined with a higher numerical score.

This demonstrates that the energy efficiency of the dwelling had an average increased allowing a potential reduction in energy bills and a much warmer indoor environment.

### **Annual Progress**

During the second year of the project 156 front line staff received briefing/awareness sessions in order to refer their clients for assistance (see Appendix C). A total of 193 referrals for assistance were received resulting in 98 households in poor health receiving energy conservation measures at no cost to them in order to make their homes warmer and them healthier as shown in Table A below.

A peak number of referrals (71) were received between October and December 2015 with 42 households receiving heating measures. A full breakdown of clients assisted is included (see Appendix D).

**Table A**

<b>Warm and Health Homes 2015-16</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Increase Decrease</b>
Referrals made by health practitioners , social care staff and partner organisations	193	+48%
Numbers of referrals who received energy advice	193	+50%
Number of households who received energy efficiency measures funded by DCC Public Health Service	98	+88%
Number of homes insulated funded by Warm Up North	3	No change
Numbers of benefit checks	43	+87%
Number of fire safety checks	37	+105%
Articles of media coverage generated	2	
User satisfaction surveys completed	118	-25%
SAP energy assessment	100%	No change

### **Media Coverage**

A number of articles have appeared in a range of newsletters, for example National Energy Action (NEA) editorial. NEA are the national fuel poverty charity, they featured a key editorial regarding the Warm and Healthy Homes project in the NEA's national journal "NEA Focus" this assisted with raising the profile of the project (see appendix F)

### **Additionality**

The project has been able to demonstrate additionality in a variety of ways. By working as part of the Warm up North (WuN) consortia, DCC was able to negotiate with British Gas, the provider, for a five day installation of measures period. It was also able to ensure that WuN funding was used to pay for any measures installed to those eligible. Public Health funds are then used as a final resort so enabling the latter to be utilised more effectively.

Additionality is further demonstrated through the revenue support from the Housing and Regeneration Team whose staff coordinate and oversee the project as part of their day to day work programme.

Finally, DCC was successful in obtaining £100,000 via the Department of Energy and Climate Change Health Booster Fund. This provided additional funding during 2015/16. The impact is being evaluated by Sheffield Hallam University and full results will be provided in 2017/18.

### **Case study**

See appendix E

### **Joint working with Partner Organisations**

- **County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service**

Joint working with the Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service has resulted in 37 households receiving a free home fire safety check and smoke alarm which was a 105% increase from the previous year.

- **Northern Gas Networks**

Under the Ofgem fuel poor gas network extension scheme fuel poor and vulnerable households receive a free connection to the gas network funded by Northern Gas Networks (NGN). Joint working with NGN has enabled 6 clients referred to the project to receive a free gas connection.

### **Benefit Entitlement Check**

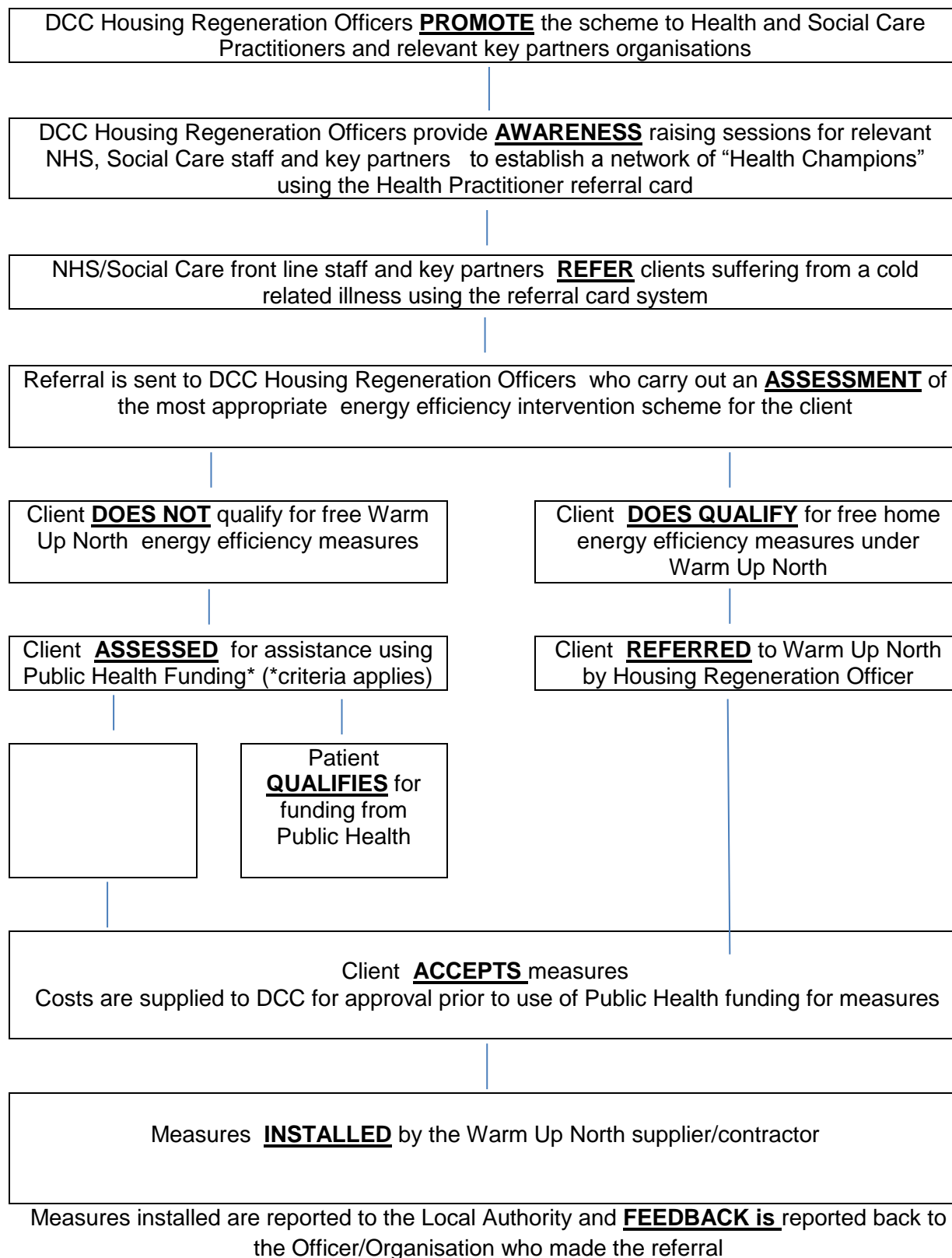
Joint working with the Revenues and Benefits Service has resulted in 43 households receiving a Benefit Entitlement Check providing advice in order to ensure that the clients referred are fully claiming their benefit entitlements. This was a 104% increase from the previous year.

### **Area Action Partnerships**

The Area Action Partnership Statistical Profiles provide a comprehensive data profile on the people that live in County Durham. The priority themes shown below have been used in order to form linkages with the AAPs to raise awareness of the Warm and Healthy Homes project:

- Altogether Better for Children and Young People - Child Poverty
- Altogether Healthier - Healthy Lifestyles, Adult Referrals
- Altogether Greener - Domestic Energy Consumption and Household Energy Efficiency

## APPENDIX A – Warm and Healthy Homes Referral Path



**APPENDIX B – Application form/promotional leaflet**

# Warm and Healthy Homes

Supported by Durham County Council, Warm up North, DAWN and County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

Durham County Council has launched the Warm and Healthy Homes Project; our aim is to help vulnerable private sector residents access, energy advice, efficient heating and insulation measures. The project will help clients who have a health condition resulting from living in a cold damp home.

We will also offer referrals for a benefit entitlement check and a home fire safety check which will be carried out by County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service.

Please return this Freepost card with your client details and you and your client will be contacted very soon by an Energy Officer from Durham County Council.



**Please complete the form below:**

Consent of Client for their name and contact details to be referred to Warm Up North, County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Services



Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Tel. No: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
I am a:  Homeowner  Private Sector Tenant  
Health Issue(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Please fold here

**Health Professional referring client**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 I believe that the health of my client could be improved through the installation of energy efficiency measures  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX C – Numbers of staff benefitting from briefing sessions in 2015/16**

<b>Job Role</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Total</b>
Housing Solutions	60				60
Welfare Rights		13			13
Durham Community Action		5			5
DCC Social Workers			13		13
Four Housing Handy Person Team			11		11
Easington Patient Reference Group			10		10
Patient Reference Group			12		12
Wellbeing for Life Hub			15		15
Patient Reference Group			14		14
Stonham Housing				3	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>156</b>



## APPENDIX D – Listing of Referrals/Households Assisted

### Performance of Warm and Healthy Homes Project 2015/2016

	Description	Reporting Requirement	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1	Total number of referrals made by health practitioners and social care staff	Referrals made	30	35	17	75	193
1A	Total number of referrals	Male/aged under 60	4	8	9	7	28
1B	Total number of referrals	Female /aged under 60	11	7	12	14	44
1C	Total number of referrals	Male/aged 60-84	2	2	3	4	11
1D	Total number of referrals	Female /aged 60-84	5	9	10	16	40
1E	Total number of referrals	Male/aged 85+	17	10	18	15	60
1F	Total number of referrals	Female/aged 85+	3	2	3	2	10
2	Numbers of referrals who have received energy advice	Quarterly Report	100%	100%	98%	100%	99.5%
3	Numbers of referrals who have accessed the Free Warm up North energy efficiency measures	Quarterly Report	3	0	0	0	3
4	Number of homes insulated	Quarterly Report	3	0	0	0	3
5	Numbers of referrals who have received a benefit check	Quarterly Report	4	5	22	12	43
6	Number of referrals who have received a fire safety check	Quarterly Report	3	4	19	11	37



## Appendix E - Warm and Healthy Homes Case Study

### **Mrs Saunders and her two children**

Social Care Direct referred a young family with ill health and reoccurring chest problems to the Warm and Healthy Homes project for assistance. The Saunders family live in a three bedroom end terrace house, the old electric central heating system was broken and the only heating came from a solid fuel fire. The hot water was provided via an electric emersion heater and there was no gas in the property.

Social Care Direct were very concerned about the health and wellbeing of the family as the property was very cold and had damp issues due to a leaking roof. The family were using portable electric heaters to create some warmth and to heat their hot water which was a potential health and safety issue and resulted in large electricity bills which they were struggling to pay while providing sufficient heat to keep warm.

Durham County Council carried out a Warm and Health Homes home visit and assessed that the family qualified for assistance using funding from the Public Health under the project. Following a technical survey by Warm up North a new high efficiency gas boiler was installed along with new radiators in every room and a free gas connection to the property through Community Energy Solutions at no cost to the family.

The project also referred the Saunders family to partner organisations for assistance including a fire safety check and free smoke alarms from the Fire and Rescue Service, Welfare Rights provided an increase in the household's income and the Managing Money Better Scheme gave energy tariff advice to reduce on their gas and electric bills.

Durham County Council's Decent Homes Assistance scheme was able to provide a grant to help repair the leaking roof and also the Handy Person Service to assist with various small jobs that needed doing around the house that the family were unable to pay for themselves. The Saunders family now have a warm and safe family home with lower energy bills. The Warm and Healthy Homes project shows that partnership working is a key factor to improving the health, wellbeing of vulnerable residents by making their homes warm and safe.

Anna Lynch - Director of Public Health commented:

*"The Warm and Healthy Homes programme has provided some excellent returns for County Durham residents living with a health condition in a cold damp home. In its two and a half years existence the programme has identified over 200 vulnerable people through referrals from health and social care professionals. It has delivered a range of benefits including physical improvements to people's housing such as new central heating or boiler replacements resulting in improved thermal comfort. In addition, it has assisted people with debt issues and through links with the Fire and Rescue Service. This has had an impact to improve resident's wellbeing. The partnership work with British Gas through the Warm up North programme has meant that additional benefits have been secured such as access to utility company funding for some of the measures implemented and a more rapid access to home improvement."*

## Appendix F –Media coverage

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Durham County Council website. The address bar shows the URL: <http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/7344/Warm-and-Healthy-Homes-award>. The page title is "Warm and Healthy Homes award". The article is dated "Published February 24, 2016 3.57pm". The main text states: "Our Warm and Healthy Homes project has received an award from National Energy Action (NEA) the national fuel poverty charity." Below the text is a photograph of a group of people, including Cllr Jan Blakey, Chairman of Durham County Council, and partners involved in the project. The photo caption reads: "Cllr Jan Blakey, Chairman of Durham County Council, and partners involved in the Warm and Healthy Homes project." To the right of the main text, there is a "Related information" box with the text "Warmer, energy efficient and environmentally friendly housing" and a "Website feedback" button.

<http://www.durham.gov.uk/article/7344/Warm-and-Healthy-Homes-award>

<https://www.ddfire.gov.uk/news/warm-and-healthy-homes-success>

[http://ddhf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHC\\_Newsletter\\_2016.pdf](http://ddhf.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/WHC_Newsletter_2016.pdf)

Association for Public Service Excellence

NEA Fuel Poverty Focus magazine

Carbon Action Network: Bringing together two worlds: health and fuel poverty conference

Children and Adult Services Newsletter

Durham Dales and Easington CCG newsletter and web site

North Durham Doctors Federation