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better regional policies*



# BUILD2LC

## Interreg Europe



# Gloucestershire Action Plan Summary

# A

## Gloucestershire stakeholders will work in partnership to maximise efficiency and effectiveness of resources

### 1

#### Use Warm & Well to support the further development of social prescribing

'Social prescribing' makes links between patients in primary care and local community support. Gloucestershire is one of only a handful of areas which NHS England classifies as having 'fully embedded' social prescribing. The Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group launched a modified social prescribing service in October 2017, whereby those in need of additional community support can self-refer to a Community Wellbeing Agent for non-medical support; or be referred by medical professionals for direct support to address health and wellbeing needs such as Housing, Debt and Finance.

As part of this Action, we will develop clearly evaluated referral mechanisms to Warm & Well home energy support, and the Citizen's Advice Bureau directly from health professionals.

In addition, we will upskill Community Wellbeing Agents in energy poverty issues, ensuring that referrals are made regularly and that administrative barriers are minimised.

### 2

#### Enhance existing delivery partnerships with public sector services and ensure clear and evaluated referral processes to Warm & Well are in place

As part of Warm & Well, Severn Wye are developing partnerships with other community support organisations (including the Fire Service and Citizen's Advice) to provide comprehensive support to residents and activate demand for energy efficient retrofit.

These partnerships will reduce pressure on Community Connectors, and ensure that residents in the wider support system have access to all opportunities available to them.

### 3

#### Develop a higher profile of Warm & Well within existing county wide database platform

Even in 2010 the Building Research Establishment (BRE) calculated that poor housing costs the NHS at least £600 million per year (Nicol, S. et al., Quantifying the cost of poor housing, BRE press, 2010). As a result, there are an increasing number of organisations working to improve the energy efficiency, quality, and comfort of housing, in order to have positive outcomes on health and well-being.

We will explore how to use existing databases differently, widening their reach and usage to include organisations involved in housing improvement, relevant research, policies, strategies, plans and partnerships. In this way, we aim to reduce duplication and activate demand.

## KEY PARTNERS

Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group  
Warm and Well  
Citizen's Advice Bureau  
Your Circle Gloucestershire  
Community Wellbeing Agents  
Social Prescribing Providers

Gloucestershire County Council  
Local authorities  
Growth Hub  
University of Gloucestershire  
Healthwatch  
VCSE organisations

# B

## Use innovation to benefit those most in need

### 4

#### Submit Innovate UK bid for PV / battery storage pilot project

This project will deploy a first-of-its-kind Energy Infrastructure as a Service (elaas) encompassing a home battery and PV system into the homes that need it most – social housing communities – and determine the feasibility for this model to scale into every home in the UK. Innovations such as ultra low cost PV/T (combined PV and thermal) integrated with Heat Pump technology will be assessed within a subset of the homes.

Residents will be billed with another first-of-its-kind novel predictable billing scheme where the time of use tariff will be a blended rate encompassing both a bulk negotiated rate with brokers and a discount pegged to real-time energy prices resulting in a simple 18-23% monthly savings for the consumer. Severn Wye will provide the dissemination, training and feedback contact point with all householders involved in the pilot project. Clients will receive behaviour change advice to encourage further savings; environmental impact training to increase awareness of climate change and resource efficiency; training on health and comfort benefits; and instruction on how the technology works, how to use it, and how to get the best from having this smart technology.

Phase 1 of the project will trial the installation on 100 homes, and Phase 2 will roll the service out to 5000 homes.

Throughout the project, detailed data analysis will be done, taking into consideration health data, building stock information, and energy saving trends observed in the immediate months after the installation. An initial training visit will take place with each householder. This will be followed by a visit to assess progress, gain feedback and provide further support. A final visit after 6-12 months (depending on the profile of the install) will review the progress and demonstrate to the resident the impact data gathered from the scheme.

This Action is a bid currently awaiting funding approval.

## KEY PARTNERS

Innovate UK  
Severn Vale Housing  
Puredrive Energy Ltd  
Maximeyes  
Catapult Energy

# C

## Facilitate strategic engagement between energy/retrofit technology companies in the UK and our EU partners

### 5

#### Arrange bi-lateral visit to Andalusia with Puredrive Energy Ltd and Severn Vale Housing to explore energy poverty/efficiency issues in the region

During a Build to Low Carbon meeting of Gloucestershire social housing organisations, Severn Vale Housing provided information and feedback on the work they were doing on retrofit with energy storage and PV as well as developing concepts for building affordable low carbon homes in Gloucestershire using modular technologies. Development was underway and a pilot scheme providing good data on energy and financial savings.

Combining this with training and supply-chain PV opportunities in Spain, a bi-lateral meeting was arranged with the Andalusian Energy Agency to include a delegation from Gloucestershire (Severn Wye, Severn Vale and Puredrive) to meet with Avra (Andalusian Social Housing) and the Andalusian School of Architecture to look at how we could support any PV/storage technology development and learn from the work the school of architecture we're doing on modular design and build.

Due to political factors, PV development in Spain has declined over the last 5 years. However, the market is opening again and there was positive discussion about how Puredrive Energy, a Gloucestershire energy tech company could support the setting up of a manufacturing base for batteries and PV systems linked to the increased demand.

There will be a second bi-lateral meeting in Gloucestershire to further these talks and look at joint investment opportunities and future collaboration between all parties. This opportunity has the potential to register significant future carbon savings, as well as financial, economic and skills growth.

## KEY PARTNERS

Andalusia Energy Agency  
Severn Vale Housing  
Puredrive Energy Ltd  
Avra (Andalusian Social Housing)  
Solihull College  
SGS College, Berkeley Green  
Andalusian School of Architecture

# D

## The energy performance of rental properties will improve, resulting in positive economic and health outcomes for tenants

### 6

#### Promote and process financial instruments for landlords to retrofit properties

Energy performance in the private rental (and ownership) sector is significantly worse than in the social landlord sector. Whilst there is an increasing obligation for private landlords to improve the energy efficiency of their properties, it is relatively easy to gain exemption.

Therefore, any support that can be offered to landlords can stimulate greater activity within the sector will lead to increased energy efficiency improvements being made. In addition, raising awareness to tenants of the opportunities available and their rights can also stimulate the landlords to take action.

### 7

#### Create a formal partnership structure to support all RSLs and private landlords in an area and increase communication with energy suppliers, public bodies and agencies to provide equal access to opportunities to support residents

Establishing formal communications channels with landlords and property owners' associations aims to join the dots between those responsible for rented homes and the opportunities available to improve the quality of their properties.

An Asset Manager's Partnership representing local social housing landlords has been set up at the suggestion of the Gloucestershire Housing Community Partnership, and it will scope out opportunities to collaborate on energy efficiency related issues and set relevant targets for improvement. This group meets three times a year and will establish it's own action plan.

The national body for private landlords is the National Landlords Association (NLA). Each area has its own representative who meets regularly with the registered landlords.

A formal partnership between Severn Wye and the Gloucestershire NLA to provide energy support is particularly strategic given the recent regulations limiting the letting of properties with an F or G rating on their EPC. Severn Wye will provide annual updates, as well as a series of presentations and workshops to support landlords to progress energy efficiency and retrofit on their properties.

## KEY PARTNERS

Lead Registered Social Landlords Asset Managers  
Gloucestershire Housing Community Partnership  
National Landlords Association  
Environmental Health Officers  
Two Rivers Housing  
DP Paul  
Energy companies

# E

## Increase awareness of fuel poverty indicators for energy efficiency contractors and trainers

8

### Deliver Warm & Well CPD training on fuel poverty to SGS tutors and students

Contractors undergo formal technical training which is usually in a specialist area (e.g. plumbing). It would be beneficial for contractors to be able to identify other issues within a home and have a good understanding of fuel poverty in order to be able to empathise with customers and deliver a high standard of work to support vulnerable consumers; but also to be able to recognise fuel poverty and refer on to relevant agencies.

New CPD training modules will be developed for Plumbing and Construction courses at South Gloucestershire & Stroud College to give new recruits into the industry a holistic outlook.

9

### Upskill property owners and tenants by raising the awareness of processes and responsibilities

Private tenants and homeowners are hard-to-reach in terms of encouraging energy efficiency measures and retrofit. Recent high profile mistakes in national strategies and retrofit has further reduced trust in the sector.

Using current Warm & Well communications channels to distribute relevant information on the Each Home Counts Quality Mark, the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards and – for Cheltenham residents – the Warmer Cheltenham retrofit support, will help householders know what to look out for.

10

### Review procurement processes with the aim of improving standards through contracting and focusing on support for smaller, local businesses

Aiming to increase procurement spend from small businesses is a key national target in developing the economy. This aspect of the programme will support SMEs to consider the role of sustainable, high-quality and cost-effective elements in their procurement processes.

This Action will conduct a review of SME procurement measures, support SMEs through the procurement process, and develop a guide for homeowners and landlords to ensure they ask the correct questions when engaging with a contractor over a retrofit project – further encouraging good practice.

11

### Promote contractors with a set of 'approved' accreditations and insurance

The distrust in the energy retrofit sector is a significant barrier to demand. Residents, and involved in procurement, also do not always know or understand the scope of accreditations and insurance available, and therefore do not ask for evidence or factor these in when selecting contractors.

Promoting Each Home Counts' new 2018 'Trust Mark' as well as other relevant accreditations and insurance to procurement officers and residents aims to restore trust in the sector and educate consumers on how to ensure high quality retrofit.

## KEY PARTNERS

SGS College, Berkeley Green  
Each Home Counts  
GFirst LEP

FSB  
Growth Hub  
IoD  
NFU

CBI  
Chambers of Commerce  
Association of Gloucestershire  
Business Groups

# F

## GFirst LEP will produce and disseminate a countywide Energy Strategy for Gloucestershire

# 12

National targets and industrial strategies focus heavily on clean growth. Energy naturally plays a big part in this, as the UK aims to upgrade energy infrastructure, deliver affordable energy for all, transition to a low carbon economy, and investing in science, research and innovation – including energy storage and grid technologies.

The Local Enterprise Partnership, GFirst, has secured funding from BEIS to develop a countywide Energy Strategy, supported by consultants from the Centre for Sustainable Energy.

The scope of the strategy is far-reaching and covers analysis of opportunities and challenges across the county; estimates of energy demand and carbon emissions over time; technical appraisals of options and their potential economic impacts; a pipeline of energy/low-carbon investment projects; and a prioritised action plan.

A South West Energy Hub will also be established with the support of BEIS to ensure a collaborative and coordinated approach to this strategic plan along with Swindon and Wiltshire, Heart of South West, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and Solent LEPs.

## KEY PARTNERS

GFirst LEP (esp. Energy Business Group)  
Centre for Sustainable Energy  
Gloucestershire County Council