

From Obligation to Opportunity:

AgilityEco's proposals to help the vulnerable and end fuel poverty by 2030

Each year at AgilityEco we help tens of thousands of fuel poor and vulnerable households to reduce their energy bills and stay warm and well. We do this using funding from the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), Warm Home Discount (WHD), gas/electricity network operator grants and other sources. We work with a huge network of partners in the public, private and third sectors and together we have achieved much success.

Yet we believe much more must be done in public policy and in delivery if we are to meet the Government's statutory target to ensure no fuel poor household lives in an inefficient home by 2030. New policies and more funding are required, but also innovative approaches and improved efficiency. We see a great opportunity for all agencies to "work smarter" to maximise our strengths, reduce waste and overcome barriers.

AgilityEco has developed a unique approach that brings together: high quality vulnerable customer support, delivered at scale; funding and delivery of energy efficiency measures; and local partnerships with local authorities at the centre. We have found, and evidenced, that this model has many advantages over conventional "lead generation" that is focused only on identifying opportunities to install measures. These include:

- Money spent on lead generation can instead be channelled into higher quality outreach and referral activity to 'hard to reach' households by frontline staff in councils, health & care services and charities
- All households referred can be given some form of help and support, rather than the small percentage that qualify for and need the energy efficiency measure being promoted
- Households are given the support they need most. Often this will be energy efficiency retrofit measures. Sometimes it will be help with tariffs and Warm Home Discount. Sometimes it will be help with vulnerability such as priority service registration and onward referrals. Sometimes it will be advice around benefits and debt. And in the most life-changing cases it will be all of these
- Because of the deep and broad support being delivered, local authorities that have become disenchanted with successive ECO schemes become enthusiastic partners, reinforcing their LA Flex role, and acting as local rallying points for referral and support activity.

But without confirmation of continuing and increased government support, interventions such as ours will not be enough to deliver the fuel poverty target or provide the support needed to the most vulnerable.



AgilityEco

We make three proposals here which, taken together, will ensure the fuel poverty target is met and the most vulnerable in society are supported.



Delivering 2030: From Obligation to Opportunity



More Money, Better Spent

Recognise the need for more funding to deliver 2030 targets, and greater efficiency through data sharing

- More ECO and a new 'worst first' programme – whether the issue is home or health
- Long-term continuation of the Warm Home Discount scheme with a strong 'Industry Initiatives' element
- Stable funding until 2030, encouraging enduring partnerships
- Driving efficiency through improved data sharing and targeting.

There is widespread agreement that ECO at its present scale and on its own will mean we miss the 2030 fuel poverty "Band C" target by a wide margin. More funding is needed, and it is also vital that the future of Warm Home Discount is confirmed including the essential Industry Initiatives element to safeguard fuel poverty outreach services. Better data sharing between statutory agencies and their delivery partners will enable more effective and cheaper targeting of this funding.



Smarter Local Partnering

Leverage the unique strengths of local authorities by building long-term stable partnerships

- Greater recognition of the unique role of local authorities and their partners (such as providing local coordination and a trusted brand)
- Engaged health services that recognise the benefits of preventative action to health and independent living
- Stimulation of local action by enhancing Local Authority Flexible Eligibility, Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) reporting and utilisation of the NICE guidelines.

Local authorities and their partners are providing strong local leadership and coordinating action to tackle fuel poverty and provide vital help to their vulnerable residents. They need long-term, effective funding and support to develop these partnerships – especially through the involvement of health and social care providers – and to invest and deliver their statutory responsibilities and help ensure warm, safe and efficient homes.



Help for All Vulnerable Customers

Provide help that customers need, including ECO measures and vulnerable customer support

- Signpost customers to proper assessment and support, not just ECO screening
- Holistic interventions including physical measures, tariff switching, energy advice, safety checks and debt and benefit advice
- Require energy suppliers, gas/electricity networks and water companies to identify and support acute and emergency cases.

A narrow focus on installation of ECO measures alone will mean that many vulnerable households don't receive as much help and support as they need. Holistic interventions for fuel poor, elderly and vulnerable customers that reduce energy bills and increase income should be available to every such household. Utilities and other stakeholders that have a responsibility to prioritise their vulnerable customers can help ensure no household in need misses out.

“

The joint approach between Stockport Council and AgilityEco, as part of the work coordinated through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, has provided a strong basis for identifying and providing much needed help and support through the LEAP programme for our vulnerable residents, with practical installation measures being successfully delivered through ECO, ECHO and the Warm Homes Fund.

Andy Kippax, Strategic Housing Lead, Stockport Council

”

Holistic support for vulnerable customers

Cynthia, Portsmouth

Elderly Portsmouth resident living alone on a low income, referred to LEAP by Citizens Advice



LEAP Home Energy Advisor immediately helped with:

- Energy efficiency advice
- Low energy lighting



“

“The National Energy Foundation delivers warmth and wellbeing services on behalf of 11 Local Authorities across Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. We have worked with AgilityEco for the past 3 years and have found them to be an innovative, knowledgeable and trusted partner. They have supported us to achieve our own objectives and their programmes such as LEAP and ECHO have proved to be valuable tools in our fight against fuel poverty and cold homes. We are only too pleased to endorse their services and look forward to working with them in the future.”

**Matt Neal, Project Development Manager,
National Energy Foundation**

”



LEAP Tariff Switching found Cynthia a better energy deal, saving around £160 a year, and ensuring she doesn't lose out on Warm Home Discount

IncomeMax

LEAP Income Maximisation team found additional income, both Council Tax reduction and Personal Independence Payment.

Warmer Homes

Warmer Homes installed gas central heating. £3,800 system installed free of charge and will save £500/year and keep her home

MY ECOHOME POWERED BY LEAP

Also had loft insulation installed, worth £400, fully funded by ECO which will keep her home even cosier and save £80/year on winter heating bills

Improvements



**Energy
Efficiency**



**Low Energy
Lighting**



**Better
Energy Tariff**



**Income
and
Benefits**



**Gas Central
Heating**



**Loft
Insulation**

£4,200 of improvements installed, delivering **£3,740** of annual savings & increased income

Funding from

Energy Companies | WHD Industry Initiative | Warm Homes Fund

Holistic support, delivered at scale, makes a huge difference to vulnerable and fuel poor households



Here's what AgilityEco's activities have delivered in 2018

Sustainable Living

Our activities contribute to the urgent need to consume energy sustainably and reduce greenhouse gas emissions



3.34 million MWh
of lifetime energy savings from
insulation and heating
improvements



93,809
energy efficiency
measures



767,937
tonnes of CO2
emissions abated



153,000 MWh
of energy savings from simple
measures and advice

Financial Support

We give practical help and support to hard-pressed households to escape from fuel poverty



36,272 households given
financial support through
income, benefits, energy
efficiency



£177 million of lifetime
energy bill savings from
measures installed



£5,443,000
income and benefits
identified for households



£197 average savings from
switching to cheaper tariffs
for **1,605** households

Helping Hands

We support the health, safety & wellbeing of the most vulnerable in our society



15,886 visits to the fuel poor
and vulnerable, **53%** elderly,
disabled or health issues



5,122 emergency
heating interventions for
vulnerable customers



9,036 safety and hazard
checks to fuel poor and
vulnerable residents



168 partnerships with local
authorities to target local
residents for support

Economic Impact

We create jobs, fund partners to employ and train local teams and support economic growth



636 jobs supported
in local companies and
social enterprises



£35 million
funding unlocked for
clients and partners



£6.9 million
value to national health
and care services

700%

social return on
investment; **7:1 ratio** of
benefits vs funding.