

## **Fuel Poverty Schemes Available in Leeds**

### **Total Heat (formerly Heat Lease)**

This is a scheme operated for council tenants in Leeds whereby central heating systems can be installed for a service charge in addition to their rent.

Originally Heat Lease was introduced as a means of levering in investment to provide programmable gas central heating systems. Essentially the installed equipment is leased with an option to purchase at the end of the lease. Tenants then pay a service charge to cover the lease and final purchase costs.

Heat Lease was replaced in 2006 by Total Heat. Under Total Heat the council borrows the money to install programmable gas central heating systems. Tenants then pay a service charge to cover the cost of borrowing. The cost to tenants is the same.

However, the Housing Inspectorate recently took the view that Leeds has some properties with central heating installed where tenants do not pay a service charge as a result of whole improvement programmes prior to the introduction of Heat Lease, thereby resulting in an inequitable situation which should be resolved.

At this stage, Total Heat is still the only mechanism that should be on offer to tenants for the installation of programmable central heating systems. However, a review of future options is currently being undertaken which is also looking at the implications of ceasing the current Heat Lease and Total Heat charging schemes.

### **Warm front**

This is a grant of £3,500 (£6,000 for households in off-gas areas) for owner occupied/private rented properties which can provide heating and insulation measures to households in receipt of a means tested benefit and which include a member under age 16, over age 60 or with a disability.

Insulation measures include cavity wall and loft insulation, hot water tank jackets and in some cases draught proofing. Heating measures include gas central heating or wall heaters, electric storage heaters or in off-gas areas oil central heating or renewable energy

### **Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT)**

This is a scheme funded by the energy companies to provide insulation to owner occupied and private rented households who are divided into the priority group (currently households with a resident over age 70 or in receipt of a means tested benefit) who receive the measures for free, or the able to pay group who can obtain the measures at a subsidised price. This funding is also available to public sector housing providers for their insulation programmes.

The main measures are cavity wall and loft insulation, although in the public sector there may be the potential for funding towards hard to treat properties with measures such as solid wall insulation. Smaller appliances such as powerdown adaptors and energy monitors are also available through this scheme. Low energy lightbulbs are no longer provided under this scheme.

### Health Through Warmth

This is a scheme aimed at owner occupier and private rented households where an occupant suffers from a cold related illness or medical condition. If a householder is eligible for one of the above schemes they will be referred onwards. Alternatively, there is a crisis fund which can assist with up to 50% of the costs.

Measures include heating installation and loft and cavity wall insulation installation.

### Home Improvement Assistance

Leeds City Council's equity release scheme available to owner occupiers in receipt of means tested benefits.

Available for more expensive measures such as solid wall and attic room insulation which can be suitable for hard to treat homes.

### Community Energy Saving Programme CESP

CESP places an obligation on energy suppliers and electricity generators to meet a CO2 reduction target by providing energy efficiency measures to domestic consumers in areas with high levels of low incomes.

This provides a package of measures, to deliver a 'whole house approach', particularly focussing on hard to treat or hard to heat homes (i.e. solid walled or system built homes or those off the gas network).

### Area Based Initiative (yet to start)

Area specific scheme available to households in the 5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> most fuel poor wards of Leeds. Will provide a door-to-door service to bring the above schemes and general energy advice to owner occupiers and private tenants.

### G7 Registered Social Landlord Schemes

These are seven of the largest Housing associations in the Leeds area covering over 10,000 properties which have pursued a policy of joint bidding and information sharing to bring energy efficiency measures to their properties such as cavity wall and loft insulation, condensing boiler installation and renewable energy installation.

### Decent Homes Standard

A requirement introduced by the government to ensure that all council and housing association owned properties are warm, weatherproof and have reasonably modern facilities.

### Housing Health And Safety Rating System

Government legislation which allows the authority to inspect private rented accommodation and serve notice on landlords to ensure that their properties are free from category 1 health and safety hazards including excess cold.

### Care and Repair

Can provide small scale repairs, for example to windows, doors and draught-proofing etc, to owner occupiers.

Green doctor/Groundwork Leeds/Casac

Provides assistance on an area specific basis, including hot water tank jacket installation, draught proofing and energy advice to householders regardless of tenure.

Winter Fuel Payment

A flat rate payment of between £125 and £400 (dependant on circumstances) paid by the pensions service to the over 60's to assist with fuel bills. This is regardless of tenure.

Cold Weather Payment

A payment of £25 made to vulnerable households automatically through the benefits system whenever the temperature falls to 0 degrees celcius for 7 consecutive days over the period 1<sup>st</sup> November – 31<sup>st</sup> March. This is regardless of tenure.

Energy Company Social Tariffs

Beneficial tariffs provided by gas and electricity suppliers to vulnerable households regardless of tenure.