

NEWCASTLE WARM ZONE

2004/05: YEAR 1
PERFORMANCE SUMMARY



OVERVIEW

Newcastle Warm Zone (NWZ) is a four year not-for-profit partnership that aims to eradicate fuel poverty and improve energy efficiency across all homes in Newcastle.



It does this by effectively working across its broad-based partnership to deliver a co-ordinated ward-by-ward programme of free or discounted insulation and heating measures, together with free benefits & energy efficiency advice, initially focussing on the areas most in need.

SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

In its first year, NWZ has successfully established the project with an encouraging overall performance. NWZ has predominantly focussed on six wards (Benwell, West City, Elswick, Moorside, Scotswood & Byker), with other work also being carried out across the city.

- * The NWZ partnership has:
- * completed 10,795 household assessment forms;
- * installed nearly 5,000 insulation measures in over 3,500 homes, with more in the pipeline;
- * carried out over 1,600 benefits checks, helping secure over £238,000 p.a. + £42,000 in back payments, with potentially around the same claim values again currently under progress;
- * employed over 40 back-to-work trainees from deprived Newcastle communities;
- * delivered energy efficiency measures that will reduce CO2 emissions by c4,700 tonnes each
- * year; and
- * improved the quality of life for thousands of people across the city of Newcastle.

See overleaf for further information.

CASE STUDY 1: Mr B, an elderly and infirm war veteran, was visited by a NWZ assessor. He qualified for free loft and cavity wall insulation, saving Mr B an estimated £150 p.a. on his fuel bills.

Mr B also had a free benefits check carried out by the Warm Zone team. NWZ helped him complete the forms and he was awarded £7,055 p.a. in new entitlements with a back-payment of £748. Mr B said "Ever since the Warm Zone fitted the insulation it's been lovely & warm. It's made a big difference ...now I tell everyone about the Warm Zone".



NWZ fact: Fuel poverty

The impacts of fuel poverty include cold and damp-related illnesses, social & economic exclusion and wider costs imposed on the community. NWZ has identified that an average of 34% of all homes assessed to date in Newcastle are in fuel poverty.

WHAT NWZ HAS DELIVERED IN YEAR 1

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	TOTAL
Households assessments completed	10,795
Insulation survey leads issued to contractors	9,362
Properties fitted with cavity / loft insulation measures	3,539
Number of cavity / loft insulation measures installed	4,945
Number low energy lightbulbs (CFLs) delivered	79,944
Number completed benefits checks	1,643
Number of secured benefits claims	147
Value of secured benefits claims	£280,449.83
Number of potential claims pending	247
CO2 emission reductions - insulation & CFLs (tonnes p.a.)	c4,700
Average fuel poverty identified (corrected for 2004 fuel prices)	34%
Homes identified with cold/damp related health issue	35%

THE ESF PROGRAMME

NWZ employed 41 back-to-work trainees from target communities across Newcastle throughout the year, each being offered real work experience (as a core part of the NWZ delivery team) plus formal training and support.

Twenty four trainees were retained to 31 March, with 7 having already secured longer-term employment and 4 others continuing to work with NWZ in Year 2. The NWZ partnership also helped secure 17 NVQ qualifications for the trainees (plus other qualifications). To date 17 new trainees have been recruited for Year 2, with work ongoing to complete recruitment of the full team.



NWZ fact: CO2 emissions

NWZ insulation and low energy lighting measures to date will result in an estimated reduction in CO2 emissions of c4,700 tonnes each year.

That's the equivalent of taking around 1,400 cars off the road!



NWZ is supporting the CarbonNeutral Newcastle project.



NWZ assessment & benefits staff, supported by the European Social Fund & the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.

CASE STUDY 2

Mr M received cavity wall and an additional 200mm of loft insulation free from NWZ, saving c£150 on his annual fuel bill. However, even these measures were not enough to remove Mr M from fuel poverty. The NWZ benefits team then successfully managed 4 claims, helping complete the forms as Mr M is dyslexic. The annual gain for Mr M was £2,205. This, combined with the free insulation, ensured that Mr M was removed from fuel poverty.

BENEFITS ADVICE & CLAIM SUPPORT

Demand for this service has been high, with 40% of all assessed homes requesting advice. It is delivered by a dedicated NWZ team of staff and trainees supported by European Social and Neighbourhood Renewal Funds. NWZ has confirmed that increasing incomes is generally the most effective means of removing a home from the blight of fuel poverty. However, many claimants need additional support via home visits to help complete forms - a service offered by NWZ.

Contact details

If you would like any further information on Newcastle Warm Zone, please contact the NWZ office:

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Web:

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warmzone

LOOKING FORWARD TO YEAR 2

Although NWZ has got off to a good start, it aims to substantially increase the delivery of all measures in 2005/06. This will deliver an even greater impact, best ensuring that all residents in Newcastle can afford to heat their homes and consequently maximising the contribution to the wider agendas of improved public health, local regeneration and carbon emission reductions. NWZ would like to thank all the partners for their work in year one and look forward to an even more successful second year.