

**ALEO London Autumn Forum  
Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019**

Kindly hosted by Westminster City Council

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[https://www.aleo.org.uk/london/meetings/index.php?i=i&event\\_id=20050704224411](https://www.aleo.org.uk/london/meetings/index.php?i=i&event_id=20050704224411)

**Attendees**

Emma Adams	ARP Energy Services
Lochlan MacDonald	City
Elliot Clark	CSE
Mark Dallen	EDF
Sam Tucker	EDF
Syed Ahmed	Energy for London
Rose Chard	Energy Systems Catapult
Ieman Barmaki	Enfield
John Kolm-Murray	GLA
Agnieszka Griffin	GLA
Lucja Paulinska	Hackney
Adrian Wright	Happy Energy
Asa Thomas	Happy Energy
Rory Prendergast	Hounslow
Karen Klomp	ichoosr
Ashwin Patel	Islington
Justine Dornan	Kensington and Chelsea
Ellie Hopkinson	Lambeth
Martin O'Brien	Lewisham (Chair)
Rob Hurworth	Matilda's Planet
Denis Berg	Ofgem
Rachael Mills	SE <sup>2</sup> (Secretariat)
Katrina Lloyd	Sutton
Giles Read	Thinking Works
James Grainger	VRM Tech
Katy Revett	Waltham Forest
Damian Hemmings	Westminster

**Apologies**

Malcolm Bell	Croydon
Tania Jennings	Ealing

## 1. Welcome and introductions

Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Damian Hemmings the Westminster City Council for hosting.

## 2. National policy overview

**Martin O'Brien, ALEO London Chair**

- 2.1 HECA Reports were due at the end of May. Please tell us if you have published yours and we'll add them to the list on our [website](#).
- 2.2 BEIS published the updated [fuel poverty statistics](#) for 2017 in June: the data can be disaggregated to Borough level.. About 400,000 households are in fuel poverty in London (11.8%), 2<sup>nd</sup> in terms of numbers regionally and up on previous years.
- 2.3 In May, Parliament declared a [Climate Emergency](#), followed by the [net zero carbon target](#) by 2050 in June. The majority of London Boroughs have now also declared Climate Emergencies. In August, Martin attended the [LEDNet](#) Climate Emergency Group meeting and supported the call for action to be part of social justice: we must make sure the most vulnerable are not impacted upon.
- 2.4 Over the summer, BEIS consulted on the [fuel poverty strategy](#), to which [ALEO London responded](#).
  - The consultation proposed a new measure of fuel poverty based on low income + low energy efficiency which would align with the EPC-C by 2030 target
  - Four guiding principles are also proposed: worst first principle, cost effectiveness principle (to protect the public purse), vulnerability principle (recognising the needs of those most at risk) and sustainability principle (aligning with clean growth and air quality)
  - In our response:
    - We supported the change in definition.
    - While the four principles make sense individually, there are issues when taken together (eg worst first vs cost effectiveness principles)
    - Vulnerability needs defining – how do we identify them?
    - We support the value of co-benefits and the link to health, the emphasis on carbon reduction and the move away from ECO: more support is needed for locally lead energy efficiency schemes.
  - As part of the End Fuel Poverty Coalition, we also supported their call for energy efficiency to become an infrastructure priority with £1bn needed to deliver on targets.
- 2.5 Ofgem has a call for evidence out on [self-disconnection](#), to which National ALEO is responding. The proposals are positive, requiring suppliers to identify and address customers at risk and writing 'ability to pay' principles into supply agreements (especially for new market entrants). The best protection will be the mass shift to smart meters.

## 3. Regional update

**John Kolm-Murray, GLA**

- 3.1 The fuel poverty statistics show that fuel poverty is at its highest in London since at least 2003. Of the 10% worst districts in England (of which Newham is the worst), only one is rural (in Cornwall): metropolitan fuel poverty is not being taken seriously enough by Government. The Mayor is lobbying for powers similar to those devolved to Scotland to help London get its fair share of ECO: we have 13% of the population by only 7% of ECO funding.
- 3.2 [London Power](#) will go live in December. It will have a very good offer for both the able-to-pay and fuel poor and is 100% green. The GLA are in discussions with the London Boroughs,

particularly in regard to their void social housing properties. For more information please email [londonpower@london.gov.uk](mailto:londonpower@london.gov.uk).

3.3 The second phase of Warmer Homes is being procured and we are also working on a more detailed revised ECO Flex statement. The Warm Homes Advice Service is also up and running again: Lewisham covers the southern Boroughs, Islington covers 15 and K&C covers 6. There is a target of at least 4000 households, but more can be reached if more match-funding is levered in.

Q1: Is there any news on the Commission for Fuel Poverty's £1.2m funding?

A1: No

Q2: Does London Power include pre-payment meters?

A2: Yes

#### **Agnieszka Griffin, GLA**

3.4 The **London Building Stock Model (LBSM)** is a spatial database of all the buildings in London, with building characteristics and energy attributes. Data is modelled where it's missing (eg with virtual EPCs). It can be used to help design and deliver energy efficiency and fuel poverty projects: for example a MEES map aggregates buildings at a Borough level which you can then do a deep dive on.

Q1: How new is the data?

A1: From 2016, but we will update the database when more data becomes available.

Q2: Could rent deposit data be used to match PRS to MEES data?

A2: The GLA doesn't have access to this data, but perhaps it's available to Boroughs through licencing schemes? There are restrictions on deposit data.

Q3: How are you modelling and identifying flats?

A3: All buildings will be on the map and you'll be able to see the number of floors. EPCs will be similar for all flats in one building: if they're different, an average is derived. You can also drill down into each flat, on either a modelled or actual basis. The more data we get, the better the tool will be.

3.5 The **London Solar Opportunity Map (LSOM)** maps all rooves of all buildings within the M25 to quantify solar opportunities. It uses 3D satellite imagery so more accurate estimates of the available area and orientation/slope can be made. Land suitability is also being assessed and there is an intention to also include existing installations: data is scarce but it might be that drones are used in the future to collect information.

Q4: What is the solar potential?

A4: We don't know yet – it's still work in progress

Q5: TfL are a large landowner: do they have a rich dataset that could be used?

A5: TfL has done its own analysis, hopefully more detailed than ours.

3.6 The GLA hopes to launch both databases by the end of the year. The LSOM will be available to all. The LBSM will have different levels of access: Boroughs will have access to more data than the general public, with a dashboard and analytics. Boroughs will also be able to attach their own datasets, making the whole dataset richer in the process.

#### 4. Supporting Vulnerable Customers

##### Denis Berg, Ofgem

- 4.1 Ofgem published their first vulnerability strategy in 2013, focussing on a) the circumstances of individuals and b) how the market can create vulnerabilities. Disconnections have fallen from 5727 in 2007 to just 6 in 2018 (although there are now more self-disconnections/rationing), customers have been protected from excessive warrant costs (eg charges for installing pre-payment meters), and price protections and back-billing rules have been introduced.
- 4.2 However, this was in need of a refresh due to large upcoming changes in the energy market and so we [consulted](#) on a new strategy to 2025 through the summer. This included 2 strategic questions, 5 themes, 5 priorities for the first year and 14 outcomes. As part of this, we want to encourage the sector to embrace [innovative ideas](#) for supporting people in vulnerable circumstances.
- 4.3 Our priorities for the first year are to:
- Create an analytical framework to consistently assess the impact of our policies on particular groups of consumers in vulnerable situations
  - Strengthen protections to protect consumers in vulnerable situations from self-disconnecting their pre-payment meters.
  - Strengthen the Ability To Pay principles to support consumers in payment difficulty
  - Consult on our proposals for the future energy retail market, including future price protection.
  - Propose a requirement on gas network companies to adhere to a vulnerability principle, similar to the obligation that we have placed on gas and electricity suppliers.

Since the ALEO London meeting, the final strategy has been published and is available to download [here](#).

- Q1: What's the link/interaction between BEIS and Ofgem with regard to vulnerability?  
A1: BEIS is responsible for the national fuel poverty strategy and is not Ofgem's role as the market regulator. However, we do work together in areas such as future markets, and we support BEIS's work on the fuel poverty strategy.
- Q2: As we've heard, London and other cities aren't getting their fair share of ECO: it doesn't favour small properties on gas due to deemed scoring, making them not financially viable for contractors to tackle. This now seems at odds with the 'worst first' principles of the Fuel Poverty strategy: should there perhaps be a vulnerability uplift?  
A2: I don't sit in the ECO part of Ofgem but will feed your comments back to the ECO scheme administrators and ask them in turn to feed back to BEIS as the owner of the scheme.
- Q3: Will your new approach to vulnerability pick up on urban issues?  
A3: We have identified 12 consumer archetypes which we will consider in our Regulatory role. A number of these are mainly urban consumers.
- Comment: It's difficult to persuade people to get works done: greater local authority access to data / better data sharing agreements could help to support this.
- Q4: Water poverty overlaps with fuel poverty – are you working on any joint initiatives? Water can't be disconnected – do you think gas and electricity will go the same way in the future?  
A4: We are working with Ofwat and hope that there will be more joint working on vulnerability in the future. There are already some protections for non-disconnection on gas and

electricity (eg older people in the winter). Disconnection is strongly discouraged. A blanket ban may need a change in legislation.

Q5: How does Ofgem actually support people on the Priority Services Register (PSR)? Are there targets? Are you pro-active? Do you cross-refer to other support agencies (eg bereavement agencies)? Do you run awareness campaigns?

A5: Suppliers are obligated to promote the PSR, but to add people to it requires their consent. There's no national campaign. There are quite healthy numbers of people on the PSR – more than for water: network companies send letters once a year to see if people should still be on the PSR or if their circumstances have changed. In fact, there's so many it can be hard to tell who needs extra help. It's not about financial support.

Q6: With heat networks likely to come into Ofgem's remit under new regulations, how will the vulnerability strategy extend to those customers?

A6: Regulation will take a couple of years to put into place: we're talking to BEIS. The Ofgem Vulnerability Strategy should apply to those customers too, especially as they're not able to switch providers.

Q7: How much control does Ofgem have over the Warm Homes Discount? Some suppliers only offer an extremely narrow window for applications (eg one supplier only accepted applications for one week)

A7: There's not much we can do about this, but we have made BEIS aware that it's happening.

## 5. Innovation for Vulnerability

### Rose Chard, Energy Systems Catapult

5.1 Innovation can protect customers as we've seen in other industries such as Uber working with healthcare providers and Monza Bank blocking gambling spending. It's about how customers react with and use services.

5.2 Vulnerabilities may change in the future, for example:

Risk factor	Currently...	In the future...
<b>Grid access</b>	Those off the gas grid in rural areas and tower blocks at higher risk	Those without access to low carbon electricity grid or new low carbon energy networks
<b>Fuel</b>	Heating via electricity is more expensive than gas	High carbon emitting fuels for heating may become more expensive
<b>Building</b>	Larger poorly insulated homes cost more to heat	Smaller homes without off-street parking may pay more to charge their electric vehicle
<b>Finance</b>	Customers are penalised for staying with the same supplier for longer	Customers may be penalised for not signing up to a long term contracts that repay the cost of low carbon energy investments.
<b>Occupant</b>	People at home all day need more energy to get comfortable	People out all day may need to use energy at peak times when prices are higher
<b>Devices</b>	People without smart meters will have access to less information on their energy use	Tenants may not be able to install smart devices without their landlord's permission

5.3 We want to harness the opportunities so innovation can benefit all, and pre-empt risks for consumers, mitigating them where possible. Example projects include <https://letsbetafuelpoverty.org/>, Warmth on Prescription and Smart Living Wales Fair Futures.

5.4 Difficulties in designing better services can spring from knowing what householders want and need from energy, and knowing how to find the 'right' people. The [Living Lab](#) helps us to understand what people do, not what they say they do. Last year we tested '[energy as a service](#)', providing 'warm hours' with Bristol Energy. New projects for this year will include work with Citizens Advice on consumer protection in a smarter energy world, a primer for health and the energy sector, and Warmth on Prescription.

Q1: How did heat as a service work?

A1: All participants were on-gas owner occupiers. We didn't upgrade or change their heating, other than installing TRVs and a smart-stat controller in each room. Customers could see their costs and their costs if they changed their behaviour. We analysed their usage before the trial started so we could learn their profile and then made them a personal offer in terms of 'warm hours'. We didn't compare before and after consumption, but we did look at behaviour: only 30% correctly guessed how much energy they used. We didn't measure health outcomes as the participants in this trial weren't vulnerable.

Q2: How are people recruited to the Living Lab?

A2: There's a recruitment website: we also use an agency and reach out through local authorities and community groups. The participants are not particularly eco-friendly or early adopters. 80% of participants remain in the group for the following year and we top-up any drop-outs with new recruits. This winter we're also expanding to include some vulnerabilities (though not the most vulnerable) so we can assess broad co-benefits.

## 6. Partnership working with the NHS Elliot Clark, CSE

6.1 Last winter I spent 1 day/week at Swindon Hospital, across a number of teams to support patients and improving awareness of services where possible. This will continue this winter and be supplemented by 2 days/week at Salisbury District Hospital. We also work with four GP's surgeries where we do targeted mail outs and deliver 'trigger training' to community teams to help prevent readmissions and participate. Our services and the PSR are also listed in the multi-agency Safe and Independent Living (SAIL) referral form.

6.2 The main challenges we've faced are:

- Reaching vulnerable customers: the hospital work is good but slow. There has been increased awareness by staff. The PSR has been a good 'in' for conversations.
- Health services are busy and I don't want to be a nuisance! Flexibility is key. Easy referral routes and follow up are essential.
- Energy efficiency schemes are varied and confusing. Avoid details and just get people referred in: there's always something we can help with.

You can watch a short video of Elliot's work [here](#).

Q1: Are all the hospital patients local to Wiltshire?

A1: No, there's a wide catchment. We can still help though and link to other counties: we have secure referral routes with some other service providers.

Q2: What's the demand for your services? Were the oil radiators popular?

A2: The project only started at the tail end of winter and so only a few heaters were used. We give them away as loan schemes were too complicated (PAT testing, etc). Where they are given out (eg by Occupational Therapy) they have to be referred via us. There may be more of a demand for the rads at the District Hospital.

## 7. Members update

### 7.1 London Environment Co-Ordinators ([LECF](#))

- Our meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> September looked at:
  - Circular economy (LWARB): introducing principles into local authority working plus a case study of Clarion Housing in Merton
  - The Ashden [Climate Action Co-Benefits Toolkit](#)
  - BRREAM Guidance update
- Our next meeting is on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

### 7.2 Members

- **City:** in housing, we're installing new windows in 1200 homes, finally bringing them all up to Decent Homes. We're also installing fire safety and energy efficiency measures where possible.
- **Enfield:** we've got some consultants helping us work how to respond to our declared Climate Emergency. We've also got a major works programme in our estates, installing kitchens, bathrooms and windows, alongside fire safety and energy efficiency works. We're taking gas out of tower blocks and putting heat pumps in.
- **Hackney:** we're looking at a holistic response to our Climate Emergency, to include air quality and biodiversity too. We're involved in Solar Together for the first time and (separately) are installing solar panels on an estate with 50% council ownership. We're involved in the NEA bid for Warmer Homes and are also developing an energy services company (rather than a white label) which will roll out next year.
- **Hounslow:** we're trying to work out what the Climate Emergency means for us. We're updating our Infrastructure Delivery Plans to accommodate future energy demands: it's nice to be working with Planning colleagues.
- **Islington:** we were awarded the LA of the Year at the National Energy Efficiency Awards. We're operating the Warm Homes Service through SHINE in 15 Boroughs. We'll be writing to all Boroughs to consider Angelic Energy as an alternative to London Power. The fifth round of our Community Energy will open this autumn/winter. We're also talking to Abundance about climate emergency bonds.
- **Kensington and Chelsea:** our Climate Emergency was announced yesterday! We're continuing with our grants and home visits. Will launch our cold campaign next week.
- **Lambeth:** we've declared our Climate Emergency, with a 2030 target. We've set up a Citizens Assembly. We're door-knocking at tower blocks to assess and help target vulnerable customers. We're involved in SHINE and SLEEP.
- **Lewisham:** we're busy with the South London Energy Efficiency Project. Lewisham also declared a climate emergency, so we are working up our plans to be carbon neutral by 2030 and we have a research project looking at the local trajectory to carbon neutral against a business as usual scenario. Our Community Energy Fund launched in September. We are currently doing some masterplanning work to update our understanding of decentralised heat opportunities.
- **Waltham Forest:** we've got National Grid funding for two projects working with hospital discharge teams. We've also got match funding with our Better Care Fund (our DFG discretionary fund) which is really good but we're struggling to spend.

- **Westminster:** we announced our Climate Emergency two weeks ago. We're now looking at the internal opportunities for own operations net zero by 2030, wider borough net zero by 2040 and full zero by 2050: the intent is set and now we need to inspire others. Community working and stakeholder engagement will be a big part of this.

### 7.3 Associate Members

- **ARP:** we've got no work in London right now but are busy in Leeds and Scotland. We've done lots of surveys but ECO isn't staking up. We're happy to do surveys free of charge so just get in touch!
- **EDF:** we're very pleased to be working with Happy Energy and SHINE – do please engage with them. Through the Innovation part of ECO we've to approval for Switchee, Airbrick, Radbot and microCHP.
- **Energy for London:** 19 or 20 London Boroughs have now signed a Climate Emergency – cross-Borough working will be essential. I'm co-chairing the Waltham Forest Climate Commission, which is being supported with some analysis by BurroHappold. I also chair **Community Energy London:** the third round of the London Community Energy Fund has just closed and I understand they've been inundated with applications.
- **Happy Energy:** We're working through SHINE with Islington, Hackney, Camden and Croydon. We're hoping to get ECO Innovation funding for a fuel cell / microCHP boiler. And we've opened a new office in Lambeth and are recruiting!
- **ichoosr:** our auction takes place next week. The next round is open for registrations for the February auction.
- **Thinking Works:** we're doing lots of home visits for SLEEP. We've also got funding through CSE's [Power Partners](#) to work with food banks

### 7.4 Other guests

- CSE has launched a [Climate Emergency Support Programme](#) for local authorities.
- **Matilda's Planet** is involved in [Airtopia](#), an indoor air quality measuring service, particularly aimed at social housing providers. We've had some cases where the air quality inside the house is worse than outside!

### 8. AOB

- Martin thanked Ieman Barmaki for his support of ALEO London and contributions as one of our Committee Members: he's changing jobs and so will be stepping down. Anyone who would like to join the Committee should contact [Martin.O'Brien@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:Martin.O'Brien@lewisham.gov.uk)